

WHO-ASPHER Competency Framework for Public Health Workforce in the European Region – a tool for professional development

Katarzyna (Kasia) Czabanowska

Department of International Health, CAPHRI, FHML

Past President ASPHER



Maastricht University



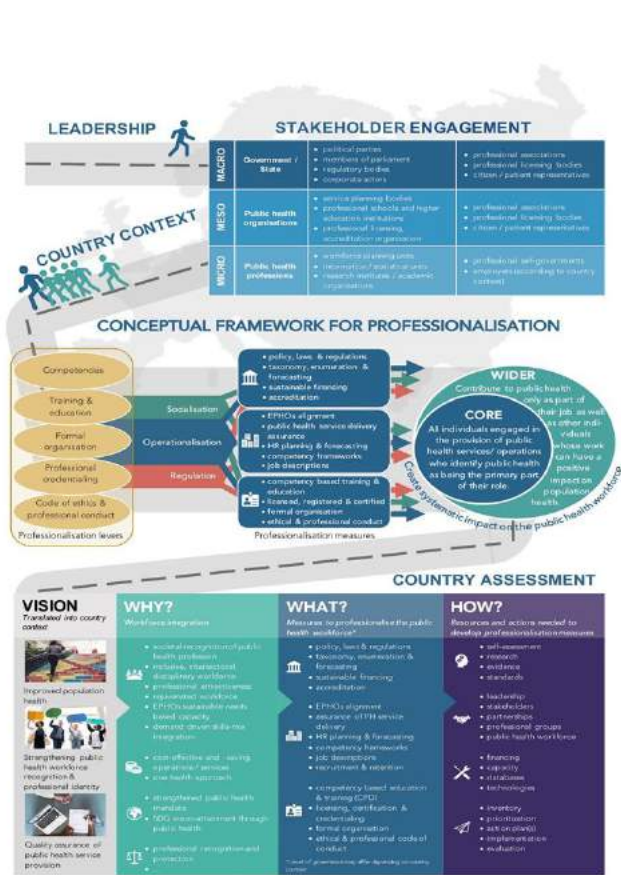
Maastricht UMC+



The Association of Schools of Public Health
in the European Region

Professionalisation

WHO – ASPHER Projects Road Map to Professionalisation Competencies for PH Workforce Accreditation & Credentialing



WHO-ASPHER Competency Framework for the Public Health Workforce in the European Region

2020



https://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/444576/WHO-ASPHER-Public-Health-Workforce-Europe-eng.pdf

WHO-ASPHER Competency framework for PHW

Assist employers of the public health workforce

- Staffing
- Job description
- Training and retraining
- Appraisal
- Recruitment
- Resource management

Support continuing professional development and credentialing,

Educational programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate curricula)

Standardized assessment of public health knowledge and capabilities at:

individual

service

organisational (institutional)

local, regional, national level

WHO-ASPHER Competency framework for PHW



For whom

- Public health professionals
- Governments (national / local) & agencies
- Public health professional bodies
- Education & training organisations

Development process

- ⇒ Review of PH competencies frameworks worldwide **through** online resources, hand search and expert consultations
- ⇒ Analysis and synthesis
- ⇒ Rounds of consensus expert review panels
- ⇒ **60 experts** contributed to development of the WHO-ASPHER Competency Framework (individual experts, IANPHI, EUPHA, ECDC, EURONet, ASPHER....)

- **Three** main domains
- **Ten** themes
- **84** competencies



Level 1 (Expert)

- Focuses on the central aspects of a problem
- Performs intuitively and only occasionally needs deliberation
- Reflects on how the system works
- Assesses quality of the work done in their organisation
- Assumes leadership roles
- Develops strategies and assigns leadership responsibilities to others
- Has substantial authority and responsibility
- Supervises multiple tiers of staff

Level 2 (Proficient)

- Makes decisions via intuition & analytical thinking
- Sees situation as a whole & interconnectedness of decisions they make
- Assumes leadership roles
- Has supervisory responsibility

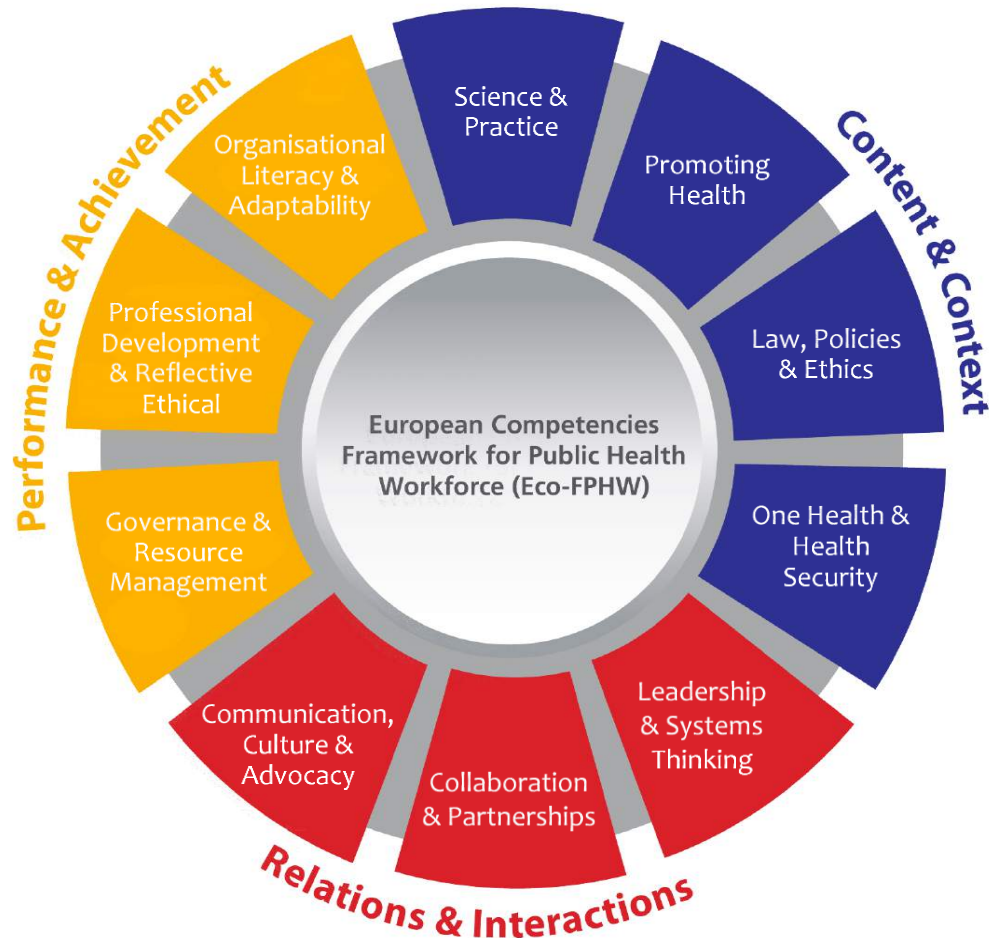
Level 3 (Competent)

- Foundational training in a health-discipline
- Relies heavily on their core public health competencies
- Recognises that complex work requires non-routine decision making, to which hard and fast rules do not clearly apply
- May supervise smaller groups of staff

Relations & Interactions

6. Collaboration & Partnerships

Effective collaboration; Building Alliances and Partnerships; Networking and Connecting; Working with and Building Interdisciplinary and Inter-sectoral Networks; Dealing with and managing stakeholders



- 6.1 Works across sectors at the local/national/international level organisational structures
- 6.2 Understands the interdependency, integration, and competition among healthcare sectors and different actors who have interests in public health issues
- 6.3 Identifies, connects and manages relationships with stakeholders in interdisciplinary and inter-sectorial projects to improve public health services and achieve public health goals
- 6.4 Builds, maintains and effectively uses strategic alliances, coalitions, professional networks and partnerships to plan, generate evidence and implement programmes and services that share common goals and priorities to improve the health and wellbeing of populations
- 6.5 Evaluates partnerships and addresses barriers to successful collaboration in order to improve public health services
- 6.6 Understands and applies effective techniques for working with boards and governance structures including regulatory, professional and accreditation agencies

Communication, culture, advocacy
Relations & Interactions

Level 1 (expert)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level of expertise in breadth and/or depth Sets strategic direction Leadership responsibility and autonomy to act
Level 2 (proficient)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autonomy and responsibility in coordinating work reflecting wider and deeper expertise in own area of work
Level 3 (competent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autonomy in specified areas and/or works under supervision

- 7.1 Communicates strategically by defining the target audience, listening and developing audience-appropriate messaging
- 7.2 Communicates and shares information and responsibility effectively at different organisational levels to gain political commitment, policy support, and social acceptance for a particular health goal or programme
- 7.3 Communicates facts and evidence effectively within the context of translating science and evidence into practice and policy for various actors in the system and populations of concern in particular to increase the effectiveness of responses to risks, threats, and damages to health**
- 7.4 Communicates health messages (including risks to health) in an effective way (both in writing and verbally) through a range of modern media and social marketing to lay, professional, academic and political audiences
- 7.5 Understands and applies cultural awareness and sensitivity in communication with diverse populations
- 7.6 Communicates with respect when representing professional opinions and encourages other team members, including community members and patients, to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making
- 7.7 Prepares and delivers outputs to facilitate communication within and between organisations such as meeting agendas, presentations, reports and project dissemination
- 7.8 Advocates for healthy public policies and services that promote and protect the health and well-being of individuals and communities

Based on the Dreyfus Five-Stage model of Adult Skills Acquisition (Bull Sci Technol & Soc 2004(3);24:177-181) and Koo and Miner (Annu. Rev. Public Health 2010; 1:253-69)



WHO
 Essential
 Public Health
 Operations



Competency	Level 1 (expert)	Level 2 (proficient)	Level 3 (competent)
7.4 Communicates health messages (including risks to health) in an effective way (both in writing and verbally) through a range of modern media and social marketing to lay, professional, academic and political audiences	I am an expert in using social media and social marketing tools which are increasingly important tools to help me engage with the academics, professionals and the public.	I have some proficiency in using social media and social marketing tools. Where needed, I know how to access social media expertise.	I recognise that that social media and social marketing are increasingly important tools.



Content & Context

2. Promoting health



Education and Promotion through social participation; Health literacy at community, organization and individual levels; Citizen empowerment; Health needs assessment; Screening and secondary prevention; Evaluation of health promotion interventions and programmes.








- 2.1 Assesses the focus and scope of initiatives to promote health through assessment of the need to achieve positive changes in individual and community health
- 2.2 Knows, supports and engages in and supports health-promoting and health literacy activities and programmes for the implementation of good practice to promote health at a population-level and specific organization or institutional-level
- 2.3 Uses evidence-based methods and strategies, social participation and inter-sectorial approaches as tools for promoting health and influencing public policies impacting health
- 2.4 Evaluates the effectiveness of activities to promote health geared toward producing changes at the community and individual level, in public or social policy to benefit health and quality of life
- 2.5 Fosters citizen empowerment and engagement within the community, developing capabilities that are valuable to actively participate in the development and decision making of a healthy community
- 2.6 Where needed, generates or promulgates information to counteract industry marketing in relation to nutrition, tobacco cessation, alcohol consumption reduction, etc.
- 2.7 Knows the basis of secondary prevention and screening programmes
- 2.8 Understands and addresses the upstream fundamental causes of health inequalities and downstream consequences (such as drug, alcohol abuse and smoking) in ensuring equitable access to health services





Content & Context

2. Promoting health

Education & Promotion through social participation; Health literacy at community, organisation and individual levels; Health needs assessment; Evaluation of health promotion interventions and programmes

Competency		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
2.1 	Assesses the focus and scope of initiatives to promote health through assessment of need to achieve positive changes in individual and community health	I have responsibility for health promoting activities which are informed by assessments of need. I have expertise in using health promotion theory and utilise this knowledge when appraising options for delivery of health promoting initiatives.	I am proficient in using health promotion theory and the options for delivery of health promoting initiatives.	I am competent in health promotion theory and the options for delivery of health promoting initiatives.
2.2  	Knows, supports and engages in and supports health promoting and health literacy activities and programmes for the implementation of good practice to promote health at a population level and specific organisation or institutional level	I have expertise in health promotion. I act on opportunities to raise awareness of public health issues among the people or groups that I work with. Whether it is a formal or informal setting, I ensure that health education and health literacy activities are informed by evidence and/or theory.	I am proficient in health promotion. As part of my role I raise awareness of public health issues among the people or groups that I work with. Whether it is a formal or informal setting, I ensure that health education and health literacy activities are informed by evidence and/or theory.	I take every opportunity that I can to promote the health of the public. This includes utilising opportunities to raise health literacy.
2.3  	Uses evidence-based methods and strategies, social participation and inter-sectorial approaches as tools for promoting health and influencing public policies impacting health	I have expertise in using evidence-based methods for influencing public policies and strategies impacting health across different sectors and organisations. I provide guidance and supervision for others to use these methods. .	I am proficient in using evidence-based methods for influencing public policies and strategies impacting health. I support others to use these methods. .	I am competent in using evidence-based methods for promoting health in my daily practice.
2.4  	Evaluates the effectiveness of activities to promote health geared toward producing changes at the community and individual level, in public or social policy to benefit health and quality of life	I have expertise in evaluating the effectiveness of activities to promote health and use this to lead change at various levels across different sectors.	I am proficient in evaluating the effectiveness of activities to promote health. The outputs of these evaluations are used to influence change.	I am competent in contributing to the evaluation of the effectiveness of activities to promote health.

Examples of job descriptions

Positions and their descriptions per governmental tier					
EPHO	JOB LEVEL	UPHC	rPHC	MOH	Comments
 EPHO1: Surveillance of population health and wellbeing	1	Head of Unit on NCDs Surveillance 5.1 Inspires and motivates others to work towards a common vision, programme, and/or organizational goals 5.2 Acts as a role model, builds trust and demonstrates positive and engaging behaviour 5.7 Effectively leads interdisciplinary teams to work in a coordinated manner in different areas of public health practice 6.3 Identifies, connects and manages relationships with stakeholders in interdisciplinary and inter-sectorial projects to improve public health services and achieve public health goals 7.1 Communicates strategically by defining the target audience, listening and developing audience-appropriate messaging 8.6 Is proactive in designing and monitoring quality standards and applies quality improvement methods and tools to identify internal and external facilitators and barriers that may affect the delivery of the Ten Essential Public Health Operations			The selected competencies are good for a high level staff member (Head of Unit) however it will be advisable to add some specific field competencies which are expected for this job description. Or state that the Head of Unit should also have a specialist knowledge
			 EPHO9: Advocacy communication and social mobilisation for health	1	Senior specialist 5.2 Acts as a role model, builds trust and demonstrates positive and engaging behaviour 6.4 Builds, maintains and effectively uses strategic alliances, coalitions, professional networks and partnerships to plan, generate evidence and implement programmes and services that share common goals and priorities to improve the health and wellbeing of populations 6.5 Evaluates partnerships and addresses barriers to successful collaboration in order to improve public health services 7.1 Communicates strategically by defining the target audience, listening and developing audience-appropriate messaging 7.8 Advocates for healthy public policies and services that promote and protect the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities

Individual competency self-assessment tool

7.1 Communicates strategically by defining the target audience, listening and developing audience-appropriate messaging

Which of the following best describes you?

- I effectively use my communication skills verbally at board meetings, within professional networks, conferences etc. Written communication include papers for meetings with senior colleagues, journal articles etc. I recognise the importance of communication via social media. Whether in formal or informal settings, when I communicate I define the target audience and develop audience-appropriate messages.
- Clear communication is important both with my line manager and with people that I supervise. As well as communicating within my organisation, I also communicate with people externally, whether other organisations or individuals. It is important to adjust the communication style according to the audience and the message.
- I communicate verbally e.g. in meetings and in writing e.g. via reports and newsletters. As part of this I consider who I am speaking too or writing for and tailor the length and wording I use accordingly.

How often do you use this competency in your day-to-day work?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much confidence do you have in your ability to show this competency?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Confident	confident	confident	confident	confident
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.6 Contributes to or leads community based health needs assessments ensuring that these assessments consider biological, social, economic, cultural, political physical determinants of health and wider determinants of health such as deprivation

How often do you use this competency in your day-to-day work?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much confidence do you have in your ability to show this competency?

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Confident	confident	confident	confident	confident
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which of the following best describes you?

- I have expertise in conducting health needs assessments and I have performed and supervised needs assessment. I also have the knowledge and skills to review routine data and the literature to decide on what actions need to be taken.
- I have proficiency in conducting health needs assessments. I can conduct or request one of my colleagues to perform a health needs assessment. I have the knowledge and skills to do a quick search of routine data and the literature to inform a discussion of next steps.
- I am competent in conducting health needs assessments. I contribute to conducting health needs assessments or I am able to do a quick search of routine data and the literature to inform a discussion of next steps.

Way forward

- ⇒ Developing an online self- assessment tool
- ⇒ Competency self-assessment for professional development
- ⇒ Identify training needs
- ⇒ Quality assurance
- ⇒ Job descriptions, appraisal, recruitment

(e.g.

Conclusion

The public health professional presented in the Framework:

- **Builds and strategizes** the knowledge base and infrastructure for public health interventions;
- **Activates** system-wide and cross-sectoral networks of relations and interactions that enable the implementation of comprehensive responses;
and
- **Delivers** high-quality achievements in public health.

.....and WHO-ASPHER Framework can support PH professionals in achieving these goals.....