

Title:

Advancing the Capacity of Public Health Nursing in Maine Through a Targeted Leadership Development Program

Jennifer L. Morton, DNP, MPH

Nursing, University of New England, Portland, ME, USA

Session Title:

Leadership Posters Session 2

Keywords:

leadership training, mentoring and public health nursing

References:

American Public Health Association (2016). Strengthening Public Health Nursing in the United States, APHA Policy Statement, Retrieved from <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2014/07/23/11/02/strengthening-public-health-nursing-in-the-united-states>

Abstract Summary:

Participants who attend this session will gain insights into the barriers public health nurses are faced with in gaining educational and leadership development opportunities. This presentation highlights a program, the Population-focused Nurse Leadership Institute that addresses this problem by providing development for Maine public health nurses.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
Participants will describe population level data that supports the need for advanced leadership training for public health nurses (PHN's)	workforce data and lack of funding.
Participants will describe the benefits of an emerging nurse leader development program for PHN's.	Advanced public health skills and leadership training.
Participants will describe how a mentor/mentee relationship aligned with the Quad Council Competencies can advance skills and capacities of practicing PHN's.	Mentor/mentee relationship targeted at leveled public health skills for the participant.

Abstract Text:

Public Health Nurses (PHN's) are the largest component to the public health workforce. Decreases in public health funding at federal, state and local levels have resulted in the reduction or elimination of essential public health resources, services and programs (APHA, 2016). There are also significant voids in education and training needs, as well as recruitment and retention for PHN's (Keller Io, 2007). Additionally, given the resource constraints of organizations that employ community based, public health and population-focused nurses, monies for conference travel and educational development are often sparse.

With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, there is a particular impetus for nurses to play a vital role in leading change and advancing health. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Triple Aim posits that optimal health care should improve patient or population outcomes, while ensuring the best patient experience and lowering costs. The Future of Nursing Report (2011) provides a blueprint for the nursing profession's role, noting that nurses must take a leadership role in defining the future healthcare system, one that measures quality, safe care to diverse populations; promotes wellness and disease prevention; improves health outcomes; and puts the patients and their family at the center of all that we do. In order to achieve this, increasing the capacity of the public health workforce is vital.

The purpose of the Population-focused Nurse Leadership Institute was to provide a longitudinal Leadership forum for emerging nurse leaders working in population focused/community based environments to hone in on existing and learn new skills that will improve outcomes for, advance the practice of nursing. Following a Health Resources and Services Administration award (2012) aimed at improving immigrant and refugee health through innovative programs in nursing leadership and interprofessional education and collaborative practice, a year-long training program was developed to enhance and build skills in advanced public health nursing and leadership in interprofessional team based care.

To date, 3 cohorts of emerging nurse leaders (n = 20) working in population focused environments have completed the program. Cohort practice settings include home health care, school health, district level public health, veterans primary care, and nursing education. The education and training components of the Population-focused Nurse Leadership Institute included a DISC Leadership Profile, Interprofessional and Collaborative Practice basics/TeamSTEPPS, the QUAD council competencies, and mentored implementation of an Evidence-based project designed to better understand a practice problem and/or an intervention to addressing an existing practice issue. The institute took place during four meeting periods over 1 year for each cohort.

Evaluation data suggests that program completers experienced significant gains in cultural sensitivity, leadership capacity, communicating and advocating with other members of the team and confidence in the implementation of an evidence based project.