**Public Health Competencies for Chiropractors – A Project Summary**

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Most would agree that chiropractors, regardless of their practice type and locale, intentionally or inadvertently engage in activities that intersect with the domain of public health. But public health is a large and diverse field with many areas of specialized study and practice. What aspects of public health are most relevant to practicing chiropractors, or the chiropractic profession? What competencies in the scope of public health should chiropractors possess to optimize the care of their patients, health of their communities, and integration of chiropractic among the health care work force? Those questions guided a working group of APHA chiropractic health care section members – Dana Madigan, Michele Maiers, and me – in a project to develop a list of public health competencies for contemporary chiropractors that could encourage and guide doctor of chiropractic programs to modify their curricula to best prepare their students for practice.

The working group was born of a discussion at the 2015 annual meeting of the APHA CHC section in Chicago. At that meeting, the membership discussed a project from fifteen years earlier that sought to address the paucity and disparity of public health material presented in chiropractic colleges. The sixteen collaborators on that project included representatives from eight chiropractic schools, two schools of public health, the Association of Chiropractic Colleges (ACC), and the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE). The work received funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Association of Schools of Public Health, and led to the development of a public health workshop that was delivered in conjunction with the ACC annual meeting in 2001. The project culminated in the production of a seventy-six page document, *A Model Course for Public Health Education in Chiropractic Colleges: A Users Guide*, in 2002 that was distributed to chiropractic colleges and other stakeholders. Unfortunately, it appears that little, if any, utilization or implementation of that resource occurred.

Our group’s work began with presentations to the chief academic officers and chief clinic administrators groups of the ACC at the 2016 ACC-RAC conference. Both groups expressed interest and support for a project that would yield public health competencies that could help standardize and enhance the relevance of public health education in chiropractic programs. We conducted a literature search of publications that suggested public health competencies for various health professions. Of 227 identified abstracts, 12 articles were found to be relevant and were included in our review. The healthcare realms represented by those articles were chiropractic, allied health, dentistry, undergraduate medicine, public health professionals, family medicine, primary care, nursing, physical activity, and UK medical schools. Those articles identified 217 individual competencies, which our group edited to 87 in 7 categories after review for redundancy and applicability.

The initial collection of edited competencies has been progressively refined with input from stakeholder groups. Participation of the CHC section members at the 2017 APHA annual meeting consolidated the list to 23 competencies in 4 categories: relevance of public health, principles of public health, public health policy, and practical applications of public health.

At the 2018 ACC-RAC conference, our group conducted a workshop entitled Establishing Core Public Health Competencies for Doctor of Chiropractic Programs, which was intended to obtain further collaborative input, this time primarily from academicians and clinicians from chiropractic colleges. The workshop was attended by 25 highly engaged participants including representatives from 7 chiropractic programs, 2 VA hospitals, and the private practice sector, as well as leaders from the NBCE and American Chiropractic Association.

Our group is currently working on a final review and refinement of the competencies, which will be presented at the 2018 APHA annual conference. We plan to work with leaders of initiated chiropractic schools to develop engagement strategies to incorporate these public health competencies into educational programs. We also intend to continue to engage with the Council on Chiropractic Education and NBCE to facilitate alignment of curricula, accreditation standards, and expectations for licensure.