



NEW ENGLAND PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING CENTER

Fall 2015 Newsletter

In its first year, the New England Public Health Training Center (NEPHTC) made great strides toward achieving its goal to strengthen the technical, scientific, managerial and leadership competencies of the region's current and future public health workforce. **680 unduplicated and 1,562 duplicated local public health professionals participated** in NEPHTC trainings, most of which were conducted within a distance-learning modality.

"Academic partners from all six states were able to come together to form a cohesive region-wide approach to training the current and future public health workforce," states Dr. Anne Fidler, NEPHTC Principal Investigator and Assistant Dean for Public Health Practice at Boston University School of Public Health. "In each state, we developed new partnerships and strengthened our existing ones to identify and address the needs of the variety of public health workers who provide critical services to their communities."

Creating a Framework for Success

A newly formed **Executive Committee** with representatives from all six New England states planned strategically to meet common training needs. The Committee provided input on the Student Placement Handbook. It also informed the creation of a Technical Assistance (TA) Plan, which outlines the role of Boston University School of Public (BUSPH) as NEPHTC's Regional Center office in providing TA to the various Local Performance Sites (LPS). The TA Plan covers needs assessments, training development including Learning Management Systems, the subject matter expert pool, student field placements, faculty-student collaborative projects, and evaluation and reporting.

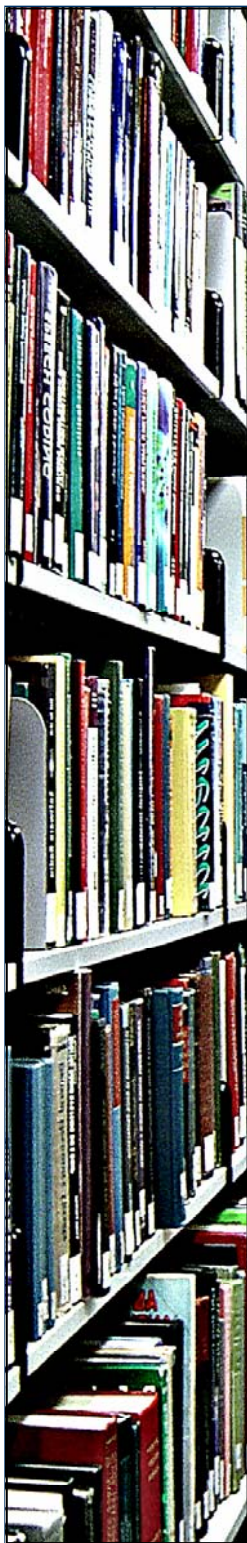
Also this past year, NEPHTC partner Yale School of Public Health conducted a **standardized needs assessment** across the region, which uncovered commonalities among the states in Council on



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Linkages Public Health Core Competencies, such as Financial Planning and Management and Public Health Sciences. These findings are informing planning for Year 2 training deliverables so they will be designed to best meet the region's public health training needs.

Finally, throughout the year, NEPHTC worked closely with funder **HRSA and the National Coordinating Center** to promote the work of the PHTC network; generate content and develop cross-cutting trainings; collaborate with other federal programs and state and local partners; and share best practices and evaluation findings.

Strengthening Public Health through E-Learning

While BUSPH worked with the various LPS to convert their existing trainings to a distance-based delivery design, online trainings that were developed by former PHTCs in New England are still made available to the public health workforce. As a result of these collaborative efforts,



54 remote trainings were conducted throughout the region this year, including 21 live webinars (which were then archived), 32 self-paced online classes, and one blended. These distance learning trainings, which are available online 24/7/365, fell into the following 5 categories:

- ◇ **Administration/Management** (e.g. Foundations for Local Public Health; Affordable Care Act and Local Public Health; Managing Effectively in Today's Public Health Environment)
- ◇ **Emergency Preparedness** (e.g. Emergency Dispensing Site Management; Public Health Workforce Protection)
- ◇ **Environmental/Regulatory** (e.g. Bathing Beaches; Hazardous Waste & Materials; Food Protection)
- ◇ **Healthy Homes** (e.g. Hoarding; Bed Bugs; Injury Prevention)
- ◇ **Population Health** (e.g. Health Numeracy, Hepatitis C Testing Recommendations; National HIV Strategy; Disease Case Management)

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"Wonderful training. Valuable tool as we work with our communities and to give to our partners for their work. Thank you for offering this!"

-Student in Health Numeracy Course

Further, LPS UMass Amherst ran two pilots of a **10-module Community Health Worker Core Competency Training**, as well as a Community Health Worker Supervisors training. These trainings will enable NEPHTC to support the thousands of community health workers across the region who play important roles in connecting low-income racial or ethnic minority residents to clinical and preventive services.

Evaluator Hope Kenefick, PhD, worked with each LPS to **standardize the evaluation method for all NEPHTC trainings**, which will be administered beginning in Year 2.

Real-World Training for Students

NEPHTC not only trains current local public health professionals; it also works with public health graduate students. The aim is to contribute to the mastery of public health competencies, with a focus on balancing the educational and practice needs of the students with the needs of the community.



In year one, 18 students were divided evenly in stipended **internship placements in the six states**. These field experiences were structured opportunities for students to apply their acquired knowledge and skills in a public health practice setting. The public health students were placed in hospitals, community-based organizations, schools, state and local health departments, state public health associations, and schools and programs of public health.

Two additional students participated in **faculty-student collaborative projects**. In these projects, students and faculty advisors collaborate with a public health agency to enhance public health services to medically underserved communities and address specific public health issues among a specified target population.

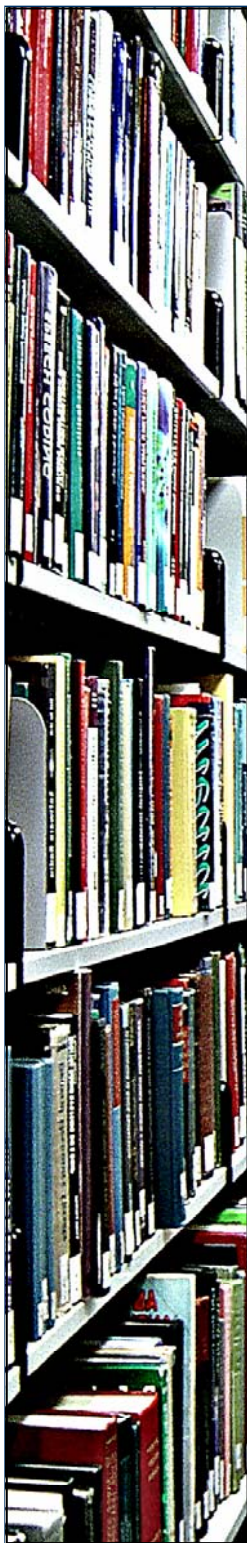
The expectation is that each collaborative project will contribute to the achievement of public health competencies in specific areas of public health expertise and the development of leadership skills for the student. These projects can range from three to six months and must have a deliverable. The two year-one projects included a survey of all local



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health departments in Connecticut to determine the extent to which they offer services in languages other than English and an evaluation of the satisfaction with BUSPH's Spring Break Challenge (community-based learning experience in Boston's South End which involved students, faculty, and community members) and change in knowledge of the students.

STUDENT EVALUATION FINDINGS

- ◇ 83.3% completely agreed that their field placements met their learning objectives
- ◇ 88.9% agree the field placement was appropriate for their skill level
- ◇ 88.9% say the information learned is relevant to their future career plans
- ◇ 94.4% would recommend the field placement to other students
- ◇ 94.4% acknowledged their knowledge increased as a result of their field placement
- ◇ 100% reported that they will use at least one thing they learned in field placement in their future work in public health.

Looking Ahead

As NEPHTC looks to Year Two (beginning October 2015), we intend to capitalize on the momentum from Year One by increasing the number of trainees by at least 5%; formally evaluating trainings, placements and projects; prioritizing training needs based on assessment findings; developing additional distance-based trainings; and continuing to coordinate student field placements and collaborative projects.

According to Fidler, "We are looking forward to furthering our work to improve the health of the public by continuing to strengthen the workforce that serves it."

Available Trainings

[Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts](#)

[Maine Center for Disease Control Training Portal](#)

[Yale School of Public Health On-demand recorded webcasts](#)

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Thank you to our Local Performance Sites for a Successful First Year!!!



Boston University School of Public Health



Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**Welcome to
University of Vermont
who joins us as an LPS in year 2!**



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PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING CENTERS (PHTC)

The purpose of the Public Health Training Centers (PHTC) Program is to improve the nation’s public health system by strengthening the technical, scientific, managerial, and leadership competence of the current and future public health workforce. Emphasis is placed on developing the existing public health workforce as a foundation for improving the infrastructure of the public health system.

NEPHTC is one of ten Regional PHTC’s established as partnerships between accredited schools of public health, related academic institutions, and public health agencies and organizations. These Regional PHTCs are funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which also awarded the National Network of Public Health Institutes a four-year Cooperative Agreement to serve as the National Coordinating Center for Public Health Training (NCCPHT). The purpose of the NCCPHT is to provide technical assistance to the Regional PHTCs to enhance their capacity and infrastructure to improve the Nation’s public health system by strengthening the technical, scientific, managerial, and leadership competencies of the public health workforce.

