

Practitioners in Roles of Leadership in Public Health

HOD Fact Sheet

House of Delegates

Fall 2017

Nutrition and dietetics practitioners must be well equipped to pursue higher level positions and lead organizations to create a culture of health promotion and disease prevention in the public health arena.

Meeting Objectives:

Delegates and Meeting Participants will be able to:

1. Understand the relevance of public health leadership roles to the profession.
2. Recognize themes or significant trends among leaders that facilitated their rise to public health leadership.
3. Stimulate discussions on what systems, structures, and collaborations must be in place to help nutrition and dietetics practitioners pursue this high level of leadership.
4. Identify key action steps nutrition and dietetics practitioners can take to:
 - a. prepare for and pursue public health leadership positions
 - b. advocate for current and future opportunities.

Mega Issue Question

How can nutrition and dietetics practitioners secure influential public health positions in institutions, organizations, and government bodies?

Introduction

In order to promote health and disease prevention and meet public health practice needs in the next 3-5 years, nutrition and dietetic practitioners must be in leadership positions to sustain national policy efforts. At the same time, the public health workforce, including RDNs and NDTRs, is also facing numerous challenges from workforce recruitment and retention to diversity and job satisfaction.

Aging Workforce

When looking at public health as a practice area, 59 of the 119 respondents (50%) have been in the field 20+ years and 54 of the respondents reported being in the position for 10+ years

Academy's 2015 Compensation and Benefits Survey

Community Public Health Work Setting

Between 7-14% of RDNs and 10-18% of NDTRs note they work in community and public health

23 of the 119 (19%) respondents reported responsibilities as a director, manager or higher

Academy's 2015 Compensation and Benefits Survey and Academy's 2016 Needs Assessment Survey

Workforce Capacity

Without an adequate supply of credentialed nutrition and dietetics practitioners, the competitive space for RDNs and NDTRs may be challenged

The Landscape

Leadership Positions

Leadership positions, particularly those within government and government-sponsored organizations, are being threatened through position elimination or the hiring of non-nutrition professionals

Public Health Priorities

A 2012 systematic review suggested that the U.S. public health workforce is facing several urgent priorities:

- developing an ethnically/racially diverse workforce for a diverse nation
- recruiting and retaining highly trained, well-prepared employees, as well as succession planning
- building public health workforce infrastructure while also recognizing the continued shortage of public health workers
- ensuring job satisfaction including competitive salaries, career advancement, and strong organizational cultures.

Integration of Public Health and Primary Care

An effort has been made to integrate public health and clinical care. The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA's) top priorities match many of the trends identified through the profession's environmental scans:

- health equity
- public health and primary care
- research, evaluation, and data
- workforce
- collaboration

Future Trends and Current Gaps in Practice

Several of the **change drivers**, identified in the Council on Future Practice's *Visioning Report 2017: A Preferred Path Forward for the Nutrition and Dietetics Profession*, relate to the current dialogue:

- ❖ The Aging Population Dramatically Impacts Society
- ❖ Embracing America's Diversity
- ❖ Consumer Awareness of Food Choice Ramifications Increases
- ❖ Population Health and Health Promotion Become Priorities
- ❖ Creating Collaborative-Ready Health Professionals
- ❖ Food Becomes Medicine in the Continuum of Health

Environmental scans, stakeholder interviews, and past mega issue discussions, including dialogues in leadership, management, and public health have **identified gaps in competence and practice**. Select areas are listed below:



The Standards of Practice (SOP) and Standards of Professional Performance (SOPP) for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs) in Public Health and Community Nutrition is a tool for registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) currently in practice or interested in working in public health and community nutrition, to assess their current skill levels and to identify areas for professional development.

- The individuals that would be creating and/or filling higher level roles in the public health arena would be at the expert level, but it is vital that nutrition and dietetics practitioners advance their skill levels along the continuum.

With a societal shift toward health promotion and disease prevention, and an aging workforce, nutrition and dietetics practitioners need to be positioned to qualify for these leadership opportunities.

Resources	
<p><u>Academy Vision</u> <i>A world where all people thrive through the transformative power of food and nutrition</i></p> <p><u>Academy Mission</u> <i>Accelerate improvements in global health and well-being through food and nutrition</i></p> <p>http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/leadership/board-of-directors/strategic-plan</p>	
Committee for Public Health/Community Nutrition (CPHCN)	http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/leadership/volunteering/committees-and-task-forces/public-health-community-nutrition-committee
Public Health and Community Nutrition DPG	http://www.phcnpg.org/page/resources
Public Health and Community Nutrition Resources	http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/practice/practice-resources/public-health-and-community
Continuing Professional Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing Your Role as a Leader (Level 1) Advancing Your Role as a Leader (Level 2) Executive Management (Level 2) <p>http://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/career/professional-development/distance-learning/online-learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificate of Training Program: Public Health Nutrition http://www.eatrightstore.org/collections/public-health-nutrition
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation	http://eatrightfoundation.org
Academy Advocacy Initiatives	http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/advocacy
Academy Alliances	http://www.eatrightpro.org/resources/about-us/alliances-and-collaborations/other-academy-alliances
Past HOD Backgrounders * Includes past public health, leadership, and management backgrounders	https://www.eatrightpro.org/resource/leadership/house-of-delegates/mega-issues-and-backgrounders/archived-mega-issue-backgrounders

Capitalize on Opportunities

The Academy and its members have laid the foundation to help nutrition and dietetics practitioners meet the needs of a changing society to create and fill influential public health positions. Nutrition and dietetics practitioners are strategically positioned to positively influence the existence of career ladders and high-level opportunities for RDNs and NDTRs in public health. It is time to move beyond the leadership conversation to capitalize on the opportunities to serve in and advocate for influential positions.

Additional Information

The HOD Backgrounder, including references for the above information, is available at:

www.eatrightpro.org/resources/leadership/house-of-delegates/about-hod-meetings

(Eat Right Pro> Leadership> House of Delegates> About HOD Meetings> Fall 2017 HOD Meeting Materials)

Find your delegate at: www.eatrightpro.org/leadershipdirectory