

Frameworks for Building Capacity: The Essential Services and Core Competencies in Training Development

Using Essential Services & Core Competencies

Advantages

- Provides widely accepted standards
- Guides curriculum development to support basic roles
- Encompasses broad range of skills and understanding

Challenges

- Not as simple as it sounds
- Not a 1-to-1 “map” for training
- Must be careful not to read too narrowly

Designing Appropriate Training

- Essential services and competencies are a framework – not a to-do list
- Remember principles of Adult Learning
- Use additional educational frameworks
 - Theory base
 - What's already been evaluated?
- Ask trainees what they need...
- ...Listen to the answers!
- Be prepared to be flexible

Example 1

- Essential Service:
 - **Informing, educating, and empowering** people about environmental health issues
- Relevant Core Competencies:
 - **Assessment**
 - **Management** – problem solving; economic and political issues; organizational knowledge and behavior; collaboration
 - **Communication** – education; communication; conflict resolution
- How to train people for this???

One Essential Service = Many Training Modules

- Community Needs Assessment
 - Know the community's situation
- Environmental Justice
 - Understand the community's perspective
- Environmental Health Law
 - Explain the practitioner's responsibilities and roles
- Environmental Health and the Media; Risk Communication
 - Communicate effectively
- Mediation and Conflict Resolution
 - Manage and resolve conflict, build trust

Example 2

- Essential Service:
 - **Diagnosing and investigating** environmental health problems and health hazards in the community
- Relevant Core Competencies:
 - **Assessment** – research; data analysis and interpretation
 - **Management** – problem solving; computer/IT; reporting, documentation and record-keeping; collaboration
 - **Communication** – education; communication
- How to train people for this???

Overlapping Training Needs = Overlapping Modules

- Collecting and understanding critical environmental health data: epidemiology and environmental exposure information; GIS
 - Gather and understand data
 - Connect data to community
- Community Needs Assessment
 - Identify assets and needs
- Environmental Health and the Media; Risk Communication
 - Communicate effectively

Southern Center of Excellence in Environmental Health Practice (SCEEHP)

Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University
Atlanta, GA

Years 1 & 2

- Training using on-campus and distance methods
- 10 modules, based on *Core Competencies and Ten Essential Environmental Health Services*
- Building network among local health department and school of public health personnel

Year 3

- Evaluation – site visits and interviews
 - Participants and non-participants
- Materials revision
 - Litigation and environmental justice videos
 - Environmental health law briefings
- Dissemination
 - How to make materials widely accessible

Training Modules

1. Collecting and understanding critical environmental health data: epidemiology and environmental exposure information
2. Measuring prevention effectiveness and cost-effectiveness:
 - Part 1: Community Needs Assessment
 - Part 2: Program Evaluation
3. Environmental Health and the Media
4. Risk Communication
5. Environmental Health Law

Training Modules

6. Environmental Justice and Litigation
7. GIS
8. Mediation and Conflict Resolution
9. New approaches to the basics and emerging issues in environmental health:
 - Social Marketing
 - Urban Planning and Sprawl
 - Pollution Prevention
 - Wrap-up of all sessions

Lessons Learned (1)

- Competition for the time and attention of public health officials
- “Eclipse phenomenon” – bioterrorism overshadows other responsibilities
 - Course proposed pre-Sept 11
 - Now different priorities on the job
- Tension between “old” and “new”
Environmental Health
- Pressing need for program evaluation skills
- Need for networking among grantees to share experiences and resources

Lessons Learned (2)

- Participants' priorities differed from ours
- Unfamiliar software = real challenges
- Participants more comfortable learning in person than online
- Academic institutions provide access to resources different from those health departments usually have
 - Network of specialists in various topics
 - Facilities (and expert designers) for training

Coming soon, to a screen
near you...

Swimming With Sharks

Environmental Health in the Context of Litigation

Filmed on location at the Rollins School of Public Health of Emory
University
Atlanta, GA