

Appendix

Occupational Category Definitions: Enumeration of the Governmental Public Health Workforce, 2013

The occupational categories used for the enumeration estimate were identified as part of a CDC-funded study.¹ Definitions for the categories are based on definitions used in the Health Resources and Services Administration's *Public Health Work Force: Enumeration 2000* report.² Although these definitions have been adopted for the purpose of this study, certain data sources used slightly different occupational category definitions in their surveys, which are noted.

Administrative or Clerical Personnel: Staff who work in business, finance, auditing, management, and accounting; trained at a professional level in their field of expertise before entry into public health; staff who perform support work in areas of business and financial operations; and staff who perform nontechnical support work in all areas of management and program administration.

Behavioral Health Professional: Workers who provide psychological support and assess, coordinate, and monitor provision of community services for patients or clients. Includes social workers.

Emergency Preparedness Staff: Workers whose regular duties involve preparing for (e.g., developing plans, procedures, and training programs) and managing the public health response to all-hazards events.

Environmental Health Worker: Staff who plan, develop, implement, and evaluate standards and systems to improve the quality of the physical environment as it affects health; manage environmental health programs; perform research on environmental health problems; and promote public awareness of the need to prevent and eliminate environmental health hazards.

Epidemiologist: Staff who investigate, describe, and analyze the distribution and determinants of disease, disability, and other health outcomes and develop the means for disease prevention and control; investigate, describe, and analyze the efficacy of programs and interventions. (Note: The 2010 Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Epidemiology Capacity Assessment characterized workers by their job tasks, rather than their job title, unlike the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials or the National Association of County and City Health Officials profile surveys that obtain workforce data that are based on job titles.)

Health Educator: Workers who design, organize, implement, communicate, evaluate, and provide advice regarding the effect of educational programs and strategies designed to support and modify health-related behaviors of persons, families, organizations, and communities.

Laboratory Worker: Staff who plan, design, and implement laboratory procedures to identify and quantify agents in the environment that might be hazardous to human health, biologic agents believed to be involved in the etiology of diseases among animals or humans (e.g., bacteria, viruses, or parasites), or other physical, chemical, and biologic hazards; and laboratory technicians who plan, perform, and evaluate laboratory analyses and procedures not elsewhere

classified, including performing routine tests in a medical laboratory for use in disease diagnosis and treatment; preparing vaccines, biologics, and serums for disease prevention; preparing tissue samples for pathologists or taking blood samples; and executing laboratory tests (e.g., urinalysis and blood counts). The 2011 Association of Public Health Laboratories National Laboratory Capacity Assessment developed specific definitions for laboratory worker job classifications, including aide or assistant, technician, scientist, scientist-supervisor, scientist-manager, developmental scientist, deputy director, and director.³

Nutritionist: Staff who plan, develop, implement, and evaluate programs or scientific studies to promote and maintain optimum health through improved nutrition; collaborate with programs that have nutrition components; might involve clinical practice as a dietitian.

Public Health Dental Worker: Staff who plan, develop, implement, and evaluate dental health programs to promote and maintain the public's optimum oral health, including public health dentists who can provide comprehensive dental care and dental hygienists who can provide limited dental services under professional supervision.

Public Health Informatics Specialist: Workers who systematically apply information and computer science and technology to public health practice, research, and learning (e.g., public health information systems specialists or public health informaticists).

Public Health Manager: Health service managers, administrators, and public health directors overseeing the operations of the agency or of a department or division, including the senior agency executive, regardless of education or licensing.

Public Health Nurse: Workers who plan, develop, implement, and evaluate nursing and public health interventions for persons, families, and populations at risk for illness or disability. This title covers all positions identified at the registered nurse (RN) level, unless specified as performing work defined under another professional title, and includes graduates of diploma and associate degree programs with the RN license. The 2012 University of Michigan Center of Excellence in Public Health Workforce Studies Public Health Nurse Workforce Survey specifically defined this category of workers as “all RNs employed or contracted by the health department,” without regard for job title, task, or function.⁴

Public Health Physician: Physicians who identify persons or groups at risk for illness or disability and who develop, implement, and evaluate programs or interventions designed to prevent, treat, or ameliorate such risks; might provide direct medical services within the context of such programs, including medical doctor and doctor of osteopathy generalists and specialists, some of whom have training in public health or preventive medicine.

Public Information Specialist: Staff who represent public health topics to the media and public, act as a spokesperson for public health agencies, engage in promoting or creating good will for public health organizations by writing or selecting favorable publicity material and releasing it

through different communications media, or prepare and arrange displays, make speeches, and perform related publicity efforts.

Other Public Health Professional: Workers in positions in a public health setting occupied by professionals (prepared at the baccalaureate level or higher) who are not listed under the specific categories listed previously. Includes licensed practical or vocational nurse, animal control worker, community health worker, nursing aide and home health aide, primary care director, nurse practitioner, and physician assistant.

Uncategorized Public Health Worker: Workers who cannot be placed in any category because of underreporting by the public health agency or missing data.

References

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