

Academic Partnerships Meeting

February 11, 2014

1:00-2:30 PM

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Public Health Council Room
250 Washington Street, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Minutes

Attending:

DPH Staff:

Monica Bharel, MD, MPH
Eileen Sullivan
Thomas Land
Lisa Swanson
Kerley Aime
Juna Pierre
Bonnie Andrews

Representatives from University Partners:

Shan Mohammed, Northeastern University
Harold Cox, BU School of Public Health
Kathleen MacVarish, BU School of Public Health
Lisa Sullivan, BU School of Public Health
Jean Flatley McGuire, Northeastern University
Wenjun Li, UMass Medical School
Chandra Jackson, Harvard School of Public Health
Milagros Rosal, UMass Medical School
Stephenie Lemon, UMass Medical School
Cynthia Dantas, Tufts University School of Medicine
Virginia Chomitz, Tufts University School of Medicine
Debra Lerner, Tufts Medical Center
Angela Jackson, Boston University School of Medicine

Meeting Goals:

- To obtain input on how best to work together to:
 - Promote public health as a profession;
 - Create meaningful internship experiences for students;
 - Enhance capabilities of current staff; and
 - Work together in partnership to optimize public health research and practice.

Welcome and Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DPH has recently applied for accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board• Opportunity to collaborate in our areas of expertise in a structured, systematic, organized way to engage learners meaningfully	Monica Bharel, MD, MPH <i>Commissioner</i>
Promoting the Public Health Profession <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DPH aiming to make the process of working with us more organized and centralized• Important to promote public health as a profession, as well as (ideally) DPH as a place to work• Close to 25% of workforce will retire in the next five years• There are training needs for existing staff, but also must consider recruiting workforce of	Eileen Sullivan <i>Chief of Staff</i>

<p>the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Soliciting thoughts and suggestions on how best to promote public health as a career. Do students ask about working in government?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One school has a database of all practicum experiences of former students with lists of preceptors and projects, as well as recommendations of who at DPH to reach out to ○ Some schools would be interested in building an interface with information about how to connect with us independent of prior individual connections ○ Understand that DPH staff struggle with capacity issues and that in many cases taking on a student can mean more work. Must think about structuring a process that will work for DPH staff as well as students ○ Also must figure out needs of a transitioning workforce—one faculty member wondered if faculty from universities could help plug gaps as the DPH workforce transitions ○ Could use some assistance with the match process: matching students with available opportunities takes a lot of staff capacity. Electronic portal might be useful. Clinical and translational science centers also have experience with this process ○ Possible daylong or afternoon shadowing opportunities? Some schools have collaborated on such initiatives in the past ○ Recently there was a daylong conference for DPH epidemiologists—perhaps opening that up to students would be helpful? ○ Opening up public health grand rounds to students? ○ Doctoral programs could work to build capacity to financially support students in working on projects ○ MDs are often looking for massive databases for their policy and research interests—access to DPH data would be a plus in terms of collaboration 	
<p>Partnering to Create A Meaningful Internship Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central concern is ensuring that students are getting value out of their experience here • Must ensure that work assigned is commensurate with level of experience of the student • Also would like to promote that public health has many needs (for example data analysis, financial needs, etc.)—students may not know these employment needs exist in public health departments • Need to connect with schools around terms of internship/practicum experiences (for example, number of hours; paid/unpaid). • Seeking to develop an application process for internships. Still internship opportunities available for 2015 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools would like to collaborate on development of application process to make sure questions make sense for each institution and/or program ○ Would be wonderful for institutions to share materials with DPH that they use to track applicants and opportunities for student experience to help to develop application materials • <i>What kinds of internship opportunities are available for students? Paid? Unpaid? Number of credits?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools shared their requirements for field experience—some schools required experience of undergraduates, while others had master’s, PhD, and DrPH requirements. Many have requirements that the project be of some value to the site (DPH) rather than a project conducted on-site with little/no applied value ○ Common language for DPH to use could be “student experience” vs. practicum, co-op, or internship ○ Important considerations for student experiences include socializing them to the structure and function of state public health here—may be different from where they are from 	<p>Kerlley Aime <i>Investigations and Recruitment Manager, DPH HR</i></p> <p>Juna Pierre <i>Diversity Officer, DPH HR</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Important to consider that students are often afraid to impose on preceptors—many of these students are socialized to value mentorship ○ Suggestion for universities from DPH would be to invest time in applications for use of data—requirements for DPH data are not the same as writing a mini-R01 application and including that kind of information could make the process of getting approval to use data longer and more complicated. DPH will also establish a point person for universities to talk to for applications in progress 	
<p>Staff Training: Current Landscape and Future Directions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted an employee skills survey to determine training needs. Approximately 1400 staff surveyed-- ~30% response rate for Tier 1; ~50% for Tier 2 (managers). • Training needs identified included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Several public health core competencies ○ Better understanding of interrelationship among local, state, and federal public health infrastructure, as well as relationships with health care systems ○ Assessing cultural competence of programmatic activities and developing culturally appropriate programs ○ Evaluation of effectiveness of community engagement strategies ○ Data collection and analysis, particularly methods for delivering valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data ○ Variety of formats or multiple sessions might be necessary for some topics, as seating capacity at DPH is limited • <i>What kinds of training opportunities may your institutions provide or assist with?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could develop ~1.5 hour sessions (some available online) on core public health competencies ○ Through a HRSA public health training center grant, distance learning can be supported (BU) ○ Have developed some orientation materials for roles of local boards of health—may be useful to do the same for state public health ○ PRCs/CTSA have options in terms of training development ○ Suggestion: could also develop training materials on cutting-edge topics (for example, Ebola response) 	<p>Lisa Swanson <i>Training and Staff Development Director, DPH HR</i></p>
<p>Government-Academic Partnerships: Developing an Advisory Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPH in the process of developing data warehouse to store its ~300 datasets and link across where possible; will enhance privacy and security of data and streamline process for data access both for internal staff and external researchers. • Vision is eventual linkage to other data warehouses where possible • Will enable asking/answering more complex questions about the effects of programs on health outcomes and health care costs, since datasets could be examined in the context of other datasets • Met with small planning group over the summer to develop a draft advisory structure that could evolve into governance • Would include three distinct groups working together to achieve common goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data Use and Scientific Inquiry (epidemiologists, biostatisticians, health services researchers, community-based researchers) ○ Project Operations (data owners, state agencies, privacy and security) ○ Ethics and Public Interest (experts in health equity, local public health, clinicians, consumers) • Would foster collaboration among data owners, clinical and community partners, state agencies, academic institutions, and other organizations working in the public interest to optimize surveillance, program evaluation, and research • <i>Are we on the right track? Any perspectives missing?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could require staff training on probabilistic linkages to better understand those processes and how they operate 	<p>Bonnie Andrews <i>Manager, Data Warehouse Advisory Group, Office of Data Management and Outcomes Assessment</i></p> <p>Thomas Land <i>Director, Office of Data Management and Outcomes Assessment</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could use Prevention and Wellness Trust as a pilot, since that project requires understanding data in that complex a context ○ Could be a very complicated, multi-year process to engage these partners and complete this project ○ Will require meeting initially over several sessions and developing a common language, as these partners have not all engaged in this way before ○ DPH is still in the process of drafting and developing these ideas as well as seeking feedback 	
<p>Discussion/Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How is it best to communicate with you?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Institutions like the idea of publishing a list of contact people at DPH for different issues ○ Need to survey institutions to develop list of offices to contact for various issues ○ Meeting once per year to give annual updates would be helpful <p>Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Please let Kerlley (Kerlley.aime@state.ma.us) know contact information for point person for student experiences at each institution so they may reach out and begin the process of developing internship materials</i> • <i>Please reach out to Lisa (lisa.swanson@state.ma.us) with information about how your institution may assist in providing training opportunities to DPH staff</i> • <i>DPH to develop survey for institutions with questions about who to contact for different issues</i> • <i>DPH to develop list of staff to contact for particular issues and will circulate/post</i> • <i>Will plan to meet as a group once per year; probably not February as weather is prohibitive</i> 	<p>Eileen Sullivan <i>Chief of Staff</i></p>