Four Universities and Three Public Health Organizations Collaborate to Address Public Health Workforce Educational Needs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Objectives:
The learner will be able to:
- Describe a public health collaborative with four institutions of higher education and a state public health system.
- Design a needs assessment for local and state public health practitioners.
- Develop a core curriculum for the public health workforce.

The Kentucky Institute for Public Health Practice Enhancement (Institute) was established in 2007 to address the educational needs of the public health workforce in Kentucky. The Institute is a collaborative effort between Eastern Kentucky University, Kentucky Department for Public Health, Kentucky Health Departments Association, University of Louisville, Western Kentucky University, and the College of Public Health at the University of Kentucky.

The Institute provides a forum for collaborative assessment of needs and opportunities to extend public health continuing education throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The goals of the Institute include the following:
- Expose all public health workers to training in the core public health concepts.
- Conduct a needs assessment to determine the continuing education needs of the public health workforce at the local health department level.
- Create an academic ladder at the undergraduate level that offers continuity through the doctoral level.

The Institutes participants have identified an Undergraduate Certificate in Public Health as an important need of the public health workforce in Kentucky. The Undergraduate Certificate will offer courses in the five core areas of public health. Each course is designed to provide three college credits and can be offered by any of the participating Universities utilizing a common syllabus. The first of the five courses was offered in the spring semester of 2009.

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