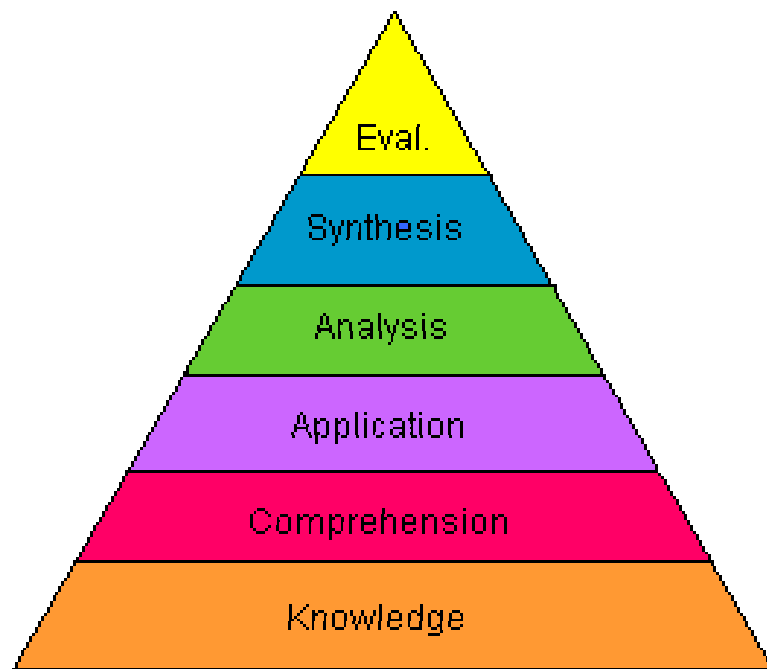


ASTDD Competencies for State Oral Health Programs



Bloom's Taxonomy



**ASTDD Leadership Committee
September 2009**

Background and Purpose

The Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) is pleased to release *ASTDD Competencies for State Oral Health Programs*, also posted on the ASTDD website (Search for the title under the A-Z tab.) The Competencies were developed as a companion tool to *ASTDD Guidelines for State and Territorial Oral Health Programs*. They focus on core public health functions and essential services categorized under 7 domains; clinical skills are not included. A set of Guiding Principles outlines overarching concepts that should be reflected throughout a program. These competencies represent those skill sets needed for a successful state oral health program, whether they are present in oral health program staff or are obtained from other programs or outside sources. Every individual working in an oral health program need not be proficient in each competency. Competencies can help states determine where the program stands and what are realistic expectations and aspirations. The competencies promote identifying, leveraging and sharing of resources and collaboration with partners to maximize skill sets. To reflect varying levels of skills, four levels of attainment are included for each competency. Higher level skills are built on lower level skills, and lower level skills are embedded in higher level ones.

In developing the *Competencies* document, the ASTDD Leadership Committee reviewed numerous professional public health competencies as well as the performance standards for the Public Health Accreditation Board's national accreditation standards for health departments. Selected states participated in a prioritization exercise, and feedback was obtained during numerous national presentations to a variety of groups to arrive at the final product. A state oral health program that has access to expertise reflected in the competencies should be in a better position to carry out the activities outlined in the *ASTDD Guidelines for State and Territorial Oral Health Programs*, a companion document. ASTDD hopes that others such as territorial, federal, regional, tribal and local oral health programs might be able to adapt these competencies for their own settings.

Potential Ways to Use the Competencies:

- Assess the current skills of people available to the oral health program; identify where there are gaps for the program or skills that are not currently being used to benefit the program
- Look for expertise in other state agency personnel or in community partners to fill gaps
- Use assessment findings to inform strategic planning
- Use assessment findings to justify requests for additional resources
- Share competencies with other health department units, policymakers and community partners to demonstrate the skill sets and commonalities needed for public health programs
- Set goals for program advancement using the competency levels of attainment and evaluate on a periodic basis.
- Create professional development opportunities for the program or individuals to increase skills in specific competencies
- Create scopes of work based on relevant competencies
- Design job applicant interview questions around relevant competencies

- Develop individual performance plans and use competency levels of attainment to evaluate performance

ASTDD encourages states to use *ASTDD Competencies for State Oral Health Programs* in a variety of ways and provide feedback on their use. Technical assistance is available from ASTDD to help states use the competencies. To request such assistance, email Christine Wood at cwood@astdd.org.

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ASTDD Competencies for State Oral Health Programs

Guiding Principles

State Oral Health Program Competencies should reflect the following principles throughout the program rather than devoting a single competency to each concept:

1. Integrating oral health and general health
2. Programming for all life stages (lifespan approach)
3. Recognizing and reducing oral health disparities
4. Identifying, leveraging and using resources
5. Social responsibility to advocate for/serve underserved populations
6. Demonstrating an understanding and respect for other professions, their goals and roles
7. Respecting diversity and attaining cultural competency, including fostering health literacy
8. Dedication to lifelong learning and quality improvement.

Specific Domains and Competencies (Skill Sets)

Domain 1. Build Support: State oral health programs establish strong working relationships with stakeholders to build support for oral health through promotion, disease prevention and control.

- Establish and maintain linkages with key stakeholders
- Communicate in writing and electronically with professional and lay audiences
- Communicate orally with professional and lay audiences
- Compile compelling stories about oral health issues and programs
- Use the media, advanced technologies and community networks to strategically communicate information
- Listen to others in an unbiased manner, respecting and promoting differing points of view
- Advocate for oral health programs and resources
- Use collaboration strategies to build and sustain partnerships
- Lead or participate in groups to address emerging issues
- Present the business case for oral disease prevention
- Facilitate use of coalitions as change agents for oral health
- Develop social capital and political savvy to navigate organizational systems quickly
- Facilitate group interactions and decision-making
- Participate in national groups to facilitate support for and implementation of oral health programs

Domain 2. Plan and Evaluate Programs: State oral health programs develop and implement evidence-based interventions and conduct evaluations to ensure ongoing feedback and program effectiveness.

- Assess oral health needs of the population
- Conduct internal and external needs and assets assessments (SWOT assessment)
- Involve community members to develop program goals and objectives that reflect the community's needs and assets
- Match intervention strategies to accomplish selected goals and objectives
- Apply principles of cultural competency to program design and evaluation
- Tailor information to reflect the community's needs
- Formulate program, research, and policy evaluation questions
- Implement an evaluation plan that includes process and outcome measures
- Use logic models to inform decisions
- Use evaluation findings to guide decision making, generate recommendations and improve programs
- Monitor oral health needs using oral health surveillance methodology and indicators
- Respond to health hazards that affect oral health and the oral health workforce
- Create emergency preparedness and response plans

Domain 3. Influence Policies and Systems Change: State oral health programs promote and implement strategies to inform, enhance or change the health-related policies of organizations or governmental entities capable of affecting the health of populations.

- Use key informants and opinion leaders to assess public perceptions of oral health issues
- Communicate with change agents that are capable of effecting policy or systems changes
- Broaden the range of stakeholders who are engaged in policy development
- Combine data and stories to create compelling arguments to influence policies.
- Develop comprehensive risk communication strategies for oral health issues
- Apply historical perspective of the development, structure and interaction of public health and health care systems to current oral health policy issues
- Use health economics and business concepts and language to describe the value of oral health programs

Domain 4. Manage People: State oral health programs oversee and support the optimal performance and growth of team members.

- Manage effective teams
- Prioritize work responsibilities to accomplish multiple tasks
- Use time management skills
- Maintain a diverse workforce
- Assess team member skills and match skills to tasks
- Identify and resolve conflicts
- Conduct performance appraisals using constructive feedback
- Support professional and personal development

- Value and support personal and professional balance
- Facilitate productive meetings
- Motivate individuals and teams to achieve goals

Domain 5. Manage Programs and Resources: State oral health programs ensure the administrative, financial and staff support necessary to sustain activities and to build opportunities.

- Manage oral health programs within budget constraints
- Prioritize potential funding opportunities
- Prepare proposals to create a diversified funding base
- Justify a line item budget and an activity based budget
- Negotiate budgets and contract requirements with both funders and contractors
- Navigate bureaucratic systems to fulfill management functions
- Implement public health laws, regulations and policies related to oral health programs
- Provide technical assistance where needed or requested
- Manage information systems for collection, retrieval and use of data

Domain 6. Use Public Health Science: State oral health programs gather, analyze, interpret and disseminate data and research findings to assure that oral disease prevention and control approaches are evidence-based.

- Articulate the underlying causes and management of oral diseases, including behavioral, medical, genetic, environmental and social factors
- Use scientific evidence to inform program and policy decisions
- Assess determinants of oral health and how they create oral health disparities
- Use approaches to problems that take into account population differences
- Apply ethical principles to the collection, maintenance, use and dissemination of data and information
- Identify data and information sources
- Use accepted methods to collect oral health and program related data and information
- Use accepted methods for analyzing data and information
- Analyze oral epidemiologic and surveillance data to identify disease burden and trends, as well as potentially effective intervention strategies
- Identify promising models or best practice for possible adaptation or replication
- Identify factors that influence delivery and use of public health and oral health programs and services

Domain 7. Lead Strategically: State oral health programs create strategic vision, serve as a catalyst for change and demonstrate program accomplishments.

- Demonstrate critical thinking
- Respond with flexibility to changing needs
- Leverage resources, both monetary and human
- Create key values and a shared vision
- Foster incorporation of new ideas

- Apply problem-solving processes and methods to challenging situations
- Facilitate integration between oral health programs and other state and local health related programs
- Create a culture of ethical standards within organizations and communities
- Oversee the development and implementation of a state oral health plan
- Translate policy into organizational plans, structures and programs
- Identify policy agendas for state oral health programs
- Assess state oral health program capacity within the context of the *Essential Public Health Services to Promote Oral Health* and core functions.
- Assist primary care providers, organizations and health plans to develop, implement or evaluate models of family-centered care or services across the lifespan

Example: Levels of State Oral Health Program Competencies

Domain 1. Build Support: State oral health programs establish strong working relationships with stakeholders to build support for oral health through promotion, disease prevention and control.

Competency	Level 1 (Basic)	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4 (Advanced)
Establish and maintain linkages with key stakeholders	Identify key stakeholders	Communicate with stakeholders on a regular basis	Conduct collaborative activities with stakeholders	Evaluate linkages with stakeholders
Communicate in writing and electronically with professional and lay audiences	Use clear, concise, grammatically correct written language	Format written documents in easy to read style	Adapt information for a variety of written and electronic formats	Solicit and use feedback on written and electronic communication to make improvements
Communicate orally with professional and lay audiences	Use clear, concise, grammatically correct language in oral presentations	Increase interest and relevance of communication through examples, stories, etc.	Adapt oral communication for different population groups or situations.	Solicit and use feedback on oral communication to make improvements.
Compile compelling stories about oral health issues and programs	Collect or document examples of a variety of OH issues and programs	Develop examples into stories	Use language and format to create compelling stories	Acquire feedback to see if stories raised emotions or prompted action.
Use the media, advanced technologies and community networks to strategically communicate information	Identify various media channels, technologies and community networks	Develop strategies to fit the selected channels, technologies and networks	Use the selected strategies to communicate information	Evaluate and revise communication strategies

* SOHP = State Oral Health Program *OH = oral health