

# Increasing Workforce Capacity Through Competency Development at CDC

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## Objective

To build public health workforce capacity through competency development and targeted planning of professional development activities

## Abstract

In support of workforce competency, the CDC:

- Develops competency models
  - for mission-critical occupations
  - to assess individual employee needs
  - to identify appropriate developmental opportunities
  - to ensure preparedness for ongoing and emerging public health challenges
- Defines a competency for CDC context
- Details a competency development process
  - engages the workforce
  - solicits feedback from employees and supervisors
  - employs rigorous self- and supervisor assessment measures
  - determines core, functional, and occupational competencies
- Addresses mission-critical components and critical gaps in attaining targeted competencies
- Creates developmental curricula and opportunities to sustain a workforce equipped to improve health and prevent disease and injury
- Discusses competency development for three of CDC's mission critical occupations
  - general health scientists, epidemiologists, and medical officers
- Defines and implements
  - strategies to address proficiency gaps
  - interventions to address gaps through education and training
- Uses technology and performance assessments to determine competency gaps

## Methods for Developing a Competency Model



## Results

**Competency models for three occupational series resulted:** general health scientists, epidemiologists, and medical officers. Gap assessments revealed shortages in mission-critical competencies for each series.

**General Health Scientist gaps:** Integrity, Health Science Knowledge, Research, Data Collection, Data Analysis and Interpretation, Synthesis of Data, Information, and Knowledge

**Epidemiologist gaps:** Research, Surveillance Systems, Data Analysis and Interpretation, Etiology, Research Ethics

**Medical Officers gap:** Integrity

The process described resulted in two key outcomes:

- A competency model for the epidemiologist subgroup was developed that included a series of definitions and key behaviors.
- The previously developed competency model and proficiency requirements associated with the General Health Scientist workforce were reviewed and revised to reflect the more narrowly defined population.

## Recommendations

- Population should set proficiency levels
- Use information to plan professional development
- Use competency models to develop Individual Development Plans
- Report gaps and interventions to human capital planning stakeholders
- In developing curriculum, continually monitor and synthesize pertinent data elements (competency work, employee demand for specific training, environmental scans, input from advisory groups, etc.)



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