Academic Health Department Learning Community: Strengthening Public Health through Collaboration

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Chair, Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice

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(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose
Overview

- Introduction to Academic Health Departments (AHDs) and the AHD Learning Community
- Recent and Upcoming AHD Activities
- Small Group Discussions on AHDs and Health Reform
- Discussion and Next Steps
Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice

To improve public health practice, education, and research by:

- Fostering, coordinating, and monitoring links among academia and the public health and healthcare community;
- Developing and advancing innovative strategies to build and strengthen public health infrastructure; and
- Creating a process for continuing public health education throughout one’s career.

20 National Public Health Organizations:

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing
- American College of Preventive Medicine
- American Public Health Association
- Association for Prevention Teaching and Research
- Association of Accredited Public Health Programs
- Association of Public Health Laboratories
- Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
- Association of University Programs in Health Administration
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Community-Campus Partnerships for Health
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Association of Local Boards of Health
- National Environmental Health Association
- National Library of Medicine
- National Network of Public Health Institutes
- National Public Health Leadership Development Network
- Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations
- Society for Public Health Education

Funded by CDC
Staffed by PHF
Academic Health Department (AHD) Learning Community

- National community of professionals focused on developing, maintaining, and expanding AHDs
  - More than 300 members
  - Practitioners, educators, and researchers
  - Primarily working in public health

- Facilitates shared exploration of the AHD concept
Academic Health Department

- Affiliation of a health department and an academic health professions institution
- Public health’s version of the teaching hospital/medical school partnership
- Collaborative relationship to enhance public health education and training, research, and service
- Strengthens linkages between academia and public health practice
AHD Elements

- Relationship between an academic and a public health practice organization
- Formal written partnership agreement
- Collaborative public health education or training
- Joint research projects
- Shared provision of public health services
- Shared personnel
- Shared resources
- Compensation for services provided
How Might an AHD Get Started?

- Collaborative public health education or training
  - Student internships or practica
  - Guest lectures by health department staff

- Joint research projects
  - Letters of support for funding proposals
  - Access to community populations and health data
  - Participation in Practice-Based Research Networks

- Shared provision of public health services
  - Consultations
  - Direct service delivery in community
Where Might This Lead?

- Collaborative public health education or training
  - Workforce development training
  - Faculty appointments for health department staff

- Joint research projects
  - Collaborative funding proposals
  - Shared data collection and analysis

- Shared provision of public health services
  - Collaborative community health assessments and improvement plans
AHD Benefits

- Address community health needs more effectively
- Build and use practice-based evidence
- Maximize resource use
- Better prepare students for public health practice careers
- Support recruitment of qualified professionals
- Facilitate lifelong learning
- Increase awareness of public health
- Meet accreditation standards
- Improve public health system and community health
What Can Help an AHD Develop?

- Open communication
- Understanding and respect for organizational culture
- Informal relationships
- Champions in all partner organizations
- Leadership and staff support
- Mutual buy-in
- Time and patience
- Sharing of responsibilities and benefits
AHD Learning Community

- Launched in January 2011
- Supports development, maintenance, and expansion of AHD partnerships
- Brings together practitioners, educators, and researchers to share experiences and collaborate
- Promotes knowledge sharing, collaborative learning, and resource development
AHD Learning Community Discussion

› Meetings
  › Conference calls and webinars
  › In-person

› PHF Pulse Blog
  › AHDs and the Learning Community
  › Steps in AHD Development
  › AHDs in an Evolving Public Health Environment
  › Exploring Health Reform Opportunities for AHDs

› Add your comments at http://www.phf.org/phfpulse
AHD Learning Community Resources

- Concept Paper
  - Describes basic elements of the AHD model
  - Working draft

- Bibliography
  - List of AHD-related literature
  - Updated as new materials are discovered

- Partnership Agreements
  - Sample agreements for guidance
  - Seeking to expand collection
AHD Learning Community Profiles

Personal profiles for AHD Learning Community members to share their experiences

Available online
Recent AHD Learning Community Activities

▶ Membership
  ▶ Rapid growth to 300+ members
  ▶ Primarily U.S. public health professionals
  ▶ Involvement from a variety of public health sectors

▶ Meetings
  ▶ Introductory webinar meetings
    ▶ Held 2 in May and archived for reuse
    ▶ Provided an overview of AHDs and the AHD Learning Community
    ▶ Available directly and through TRAIN
  ▶ September conference call meeting
    ▶ Focused on potential roles for AHDs in the education, training, and practice of public health workers around health reform
Upcoming AHD Learning Community Activities

- Conducting a needs assessment
  - Identify activities, topics, and resources desired by members
  - Help guide future activities
- Refining the AHD definition
  - Propose stages of AHD development
  - Help in identifying/recognizing AHD partnerships
- Considering a survey on AHD characteristics
  - Learn more about AHD partnerships
  - Working with researchers at the University of Tennessee and Washington University in St. Louis
Additional AHD Activities

- American Public Health Association
  - Health Administration Section
    - Hosted this meeting
    - Expressed interest in other opportunities for supporting AHD awareness and development
  
- Academic Public Health Caucus
  - Hosted a session this morning on Linking Public Health Teaching and Practice (Session 4075.0)
  - Session included an overview of the AHD Learning Community
Additional AHD Activities

- **Association for Prevention Teaching and Research**
  - Selected Effective Academic-Practice Collaborations as one theme for the Teaching Prevention 2014 annual meeting
  - Invited abstracts on building academic public health departments

- **National Association of Local Boards of Health**
  - AHDs is the topic for April 2014 Ned E. Baker Lecture

- **Journal of Public Health Management and Practice**
  - Preparing a theme issue on AHDs
  - Planned for release in 2014
Small Group Discussions on AHDs and Health Reform

- How can practice organizations get involved in health reform and engage academic partners?

- How can academic institutions get involved in health reform and engage practice partners?

- Report back from groups
  - Next steps?
What’s Next for the AHD Learning Community?

- Needs assessment
  - Identify priorities for Learning Community activities

- Topic-specific subgroups
  - Help capture and share knowledge in a specific area

- Improved profiles
  - Support connecting and sharing experiences

- Mentorship program
  - Facilitate learning and building expertise
Let’s Keep the Conversation Going!

➢ If you’re not yet a Learning Community member, join us
  ➢ Contact Kathleen Amos at kamos@phf.org

➢ Watch for more regular Learning Community emails

➢ Sign up for the Council on Linkages Update
  ➢ Contact Kathleen Amos at kamos@phf.org

➢ Visit us online at http://www.phf.org/programs/AHDLCC

Thank you!