INTRODUCTION

Through the utilization of the Student Caucus of the Utah Public Health Association (UPHA-SC), public health students can become better connected with professionals, allowing for future public health professionals to be more prepared and skilled for the challenges. 

This project focused on environmental health, epidemiology, international health, and desire for activities that involve individual time with a professional. Additionally, the researchers hypothesized that in the utilization of the UPHA-SC, public health students will be better connected with professionals, allowing for them to be more prepared and skilled workforce members.

METHODS

• Online, exploratory survey
• Distributed to all public health students in Utah (undergraduate and graduate)
• Designed to capture the attitudes and objectives of students regarding their professional and practical experiences
• Data was analyzed using SPSS.

OBJECTIVES

• A recent Institute of Medicine report stated that the current educational training is not adequately preparing the future public health workforce to address these challenges (1).
• A primary reason is the lack of relationships between academic and public health professionals.
• This study was designed to find a solution to this gap through the utilization of the Utah Public Health Association.
• By following the principles of community-based participatory research, the UPHA Student Caucus created and distributed a survey to all public health students in the state of Utah.
• The survey had an increased focus on students completing a graduate-level program.
• The survey, a qualitative instrument, was designed to capture the attitudes and beliefs of current public health students regarding their professional and practical experiences.
• Results from the survey allowed researchers to develop a model for a sustainable student organization affiliated with a professional public health organization.
• The researchers hypothesized that through the utilization of the UPHA-SC, public health students will be better connected with professionals, allowing for them to be more prepared and skilled workforce members.

RESULTS

As a result of this survey, we have gained a better understanding of what students hope to gain from UPHA membership and areas in which UPHA could improve its relationships with student members. We hope to achieve the following:

• Enhance relationships with all universities.
• Overcome barriers to student participation.

Survey Response by School and Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Doctoral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brigham</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disability

The health of our communities will only be as strong as the health of our workforce.

Students are eager for more one-on-one interaction with professionals.
There is a need for mentors willing to teach future professionals.
The health of our communities will only be as strong as the capabilities of its public health workforce.

Focus

Aging & Public Health
Alcohol, Tobacco & Drugs
Community Health & Policy
Disability
Environmental Health
Epidemiology
Food & Nutrition
Health Administration
Health Policy
Injury & Emergency Health
International Health
Maternal & Child Health
Medical Care
Mental Health
Occupational Health
Oral Health
Reproductive & Sexual Health
Education & Promotion
Statistics
Other: Infectious Disease
Other: Genomics

Significant Predictors Adjusted for Other Areas of Interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>1.37 - 18.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>0.81 - 6.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Health</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>1.53 - 8.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>1.61 - 27.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Health Promotion</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.17 - 4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Infectious Disease</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>0.46 - 79.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES

We would like to express our appreciation to the following individuals for their contributions to this project:
- Meghan Arnold (Advisor)
- Stephen Alder, University of Utah
- Darrin Sluga, Utah Public Health Association
- Paul Wightman, Utah Public Health Association

References: