

**Recommendations for
enhancing retention in a
shared staff model between a
university
and state public health
department**

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Background

- UNH & NH DPHS began shared staffing model in October 2003 with the hiring of a Maternal & Child Health Epidemiologist
 - Later added:
 - Public Health Veterinarian
 - Chronic Disease Epidemiologist
- No turnover...yet

Background

- Shared staff are full-time UNH non-tenure track faculty
 - Research Assistant Professor
 - Clinical Assistant Professor (x2)
- Time split DPHS/UNH
 - 60/40
 - 90/10 (x2)

Assumption

Employers want to
retain the staff in
these roles

Primary research questions

Q1: What are the strengths and limitations of
of
the UNH – DPHS shared staffing
model in
the context of staff retention?

Q2: What would enhance staff retention in
these positions?

Methods

Qualitative

- Authors (DL, JS, LA) in staffing roles
 - Guided discussion using predetermined framework
- Stakeholders
 - Included: supervisors (including author RC) , architects of model, HR, contract managers
 - Short interviews specific to two primary research questions with probes determined by guided discussion with staff

Probes

- funding source
- job security
- job satisfaction
- promotion
- balancing the demands of multiple roles and bosses
- performance reviews
- salary
- professional development
- fit of employee to position
- communication

Q1: Strengths/Benefits

in the context of staff retention

- High job satisfaction
 - Intellectually challenging position that helps individuals build a dual academic-practice career in public health
 - Connecting theory and practice
 - More than crunching numbers – policy work
 - Large variety and scope of work
 - Opportunities for applied public health research
 - High autonomy

Q1: Strengths/Benefits

in the context of staff retention

- Job security
 - University system may have more stable funding sources
 - Same compensation level would require “unclassified” position in State government
 - would be more exposure to risk of being cut
- Decreased red tape (e.g. travel bans)
- Competitive Salary
 - more than State could offer alone

Q1: Limitations

in the context of staff retention

- Job security
 - Grant funding not always stable
 - Sometimes multiple funders involved
 - Differing funding timelines for same position
- Limited career advancement opportunities
 - Not tenure track
- Professional Development
 - Difficult when dealing with “mundane day-to-day tasks”

Q1: Limitations

in the context of staff retention

- Demands of juggling multiple supervisors, projects, work locations, schedules
 - Uneven split can make work priorities different
 - Process is usually time/effort focused, rather than output focused
 - Incentives not aligned between organizations
 - Staff forced to compartmentalize work
 - Potential for staff in these roles to be “citizens of no man’s land” and “serve many masters”

Q1: Limitations

in the context of staff retention

- Compensation
 - Unable to provide bonuses or other out-of-system perks
- Can't easily change the formal scope of work quickly
- As time decreases, the need for specific deliverables increases

Q2: How to enhance retention?

- Find common agendas across organizations
- Identify stable funding from both organizations
- Improve communication
 - Meet regularly (staff, both supervisors)
 - Clarify arrangement and expectations of all
 - Identify “point person” if there must be more than two supervisors

Q2: How to enhance retention?

- Improve communication (cont'd.)
 - Collaborate on performance reviews, salary, setting priorities
 - Enhance contract by including performance evaluations, specific objectives
 - Discuss opportunities for career advancement
 - Discuss opportunities for professional development

Q2: How to enhance retention?

- Find the right person for the job
 - Person-Job Fit is critical
 - Go beyond skills and abilities
 - Characteristics such as:
 - Responsible and accountable
 - Ability to work autonomously
 - High productivity and quality
 - Ability to multi-task
 - Desire for mix of teaching, research, and practice
 - Able to deal with government system (i.e. red tape)

Q2: How to enhance retention?

- Ensure incentives are aligned
 - Mission match
 - Medicaid reimbursement DJL1
 - Grant funding acquisitions

DJL1

What do these two mean???

Lafamme, David, 10/26/2007

Recommendations

1. Keep the number of stakeholders, supervisors, and funding sources to a minimum (two is ideal)
2. Identify stable funding sources
3. Do not go below a 20% partition (i.e. 1 day/week) for any one shared staff
4. Communicate well from the start
 - Be specific in the contract
 - Meet regularly

Recommendations

5. Take the time to find the right person
6. Consider recruiting tenured faculty with applied interests for shared staff positions
7. Consider defining a special non-traditional tenure track with innovative requirements related to teaching, research, and practice

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 - Architects of shared staffing model

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