

Action Area 2 Implementation Group for the WHO Roadmap for Global Public Health and Emergency Workforce Action Plan 2025-2027

1. Purpose of the group

Public Health has been defined as, “*the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health, through organised efforts of society.*” (1)

Public health is designed to promote health and prevent illness and injury in whole communities and populations. Large-scale, evidence-based solutions are needed to help all people live longer, healthier lives. (2). To achieve this, public health professionals must be appropriately educated and trained in the competencies needed to deliver the essential public health functions.

The purpose of the AA2 Implementation group is to drive the adoption of the broad set of materials developed through the WHO Public Health and Emergency Workforce Roadmap process to ensure that, globally, public health teaching and training programmes are fit-for-purpose, through adoption of the Global Competencies and Outcomes Framework for the Essential Public Health Functions.(3,4) It is therefore primarily a committee set up to drive public health education content and training standards, from the global level. The AA2 implementation group is not a WHO committee and is convened under the leadership of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) and the Global Network for Academic Public Health (GNAPH).

The lead organisations are therefore members of the WHO Roadmap Steering Committee representing multiple and diverse public health education collaborations, with a global brief, to provide the focus of the work of the AA2 sub-group. These meetings are co-chaired by GNAPH and WFPHA, the two WHO partner organisations that co-chair the WHO Roadmap Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and supported by a secretariat provided by GNAPH. Other lead agencies from the Steering Committee include the International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI) and Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET). The group is also supported by WHO colleagues leading the WHO AA2 Technical Advisory Group, and WHO AA2 TAG members who are directly associated with teaching programme design and internationally recognised experts in public health workforce development.

Changing education programmes is a lengthy process, and public health degrees need to be similarly designed in terms of content and transferability for employment worldwide, the primary focus of the work of this group is to support the development of competency-based training programs, seek ways to ensure harmonisation of public health education programs, and enhance community impact.

Ensuring the quality of program content is achieved through accreditation and through national policy processes. Accreditation agencies will ensure that accreditation is based on the WHO roadmap documents and the competency sets contained therein.

The original terms of reference for the group are laid out in Appendix I.

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2. Functions

The main functions of this group are to:

1. Promote uptake of the Global Competency and Outcomes Framework for the Essential Public Health Functions through regional and national members
2. Provide advice on resources needed to support uptake by schools and programs for public health training and emergency workforce development, for example, training-the-trainer, experiential, and other learning approaches
3. Support national and international organisations seeking to secure funding to support implementation

Primary functions are discussed in more detail below.

2.1. Acting as a reference and advisory resource for schools and programmes of public health to support the development of competency-based approaches to public health education in alignment to the WHO Roadmap (3)

- 2.1.1. Work with the WHO to support the resolution (EB156) *Accelerating Action on the Global Health and Care Workforce by 2030* adopted at the 78th World Health Assembly which acknowledges the importance of the public health sector, in particular items 2 and 5, namely:

Requests the Director General to:

2) to accelerate support to Member States, upon request, on the implementation and monitoring of the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030, to promote investments in education, training, employment and retention of the health and care workforce, accelerate progress towards meeting target 3.c of the Sustainable Development Goals, and strengthen capacities to prevent, prepare for and respond to public health emergencies, including workforce surge capacity during public health events, with a special focus on countries and regions facing the most critical health and care workforce challenges, providing technical and methodological support for rebuilding and strengthening the health workforce in countries impacted by conflicts and the loss of professional staff.

5) to support countries, in collaboration with associations, institutions and schools of public health, to implement technical guidance and tools to strengthen workforce capacity to deliver essential public health functions, including health emergency prevention, preparedness and response, and the implementation of the International Health Regulations, building on existing initiatives to strengthen availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of a skilled, trained and multidisciplinary global health emergency workforce while ensuring a safe and healthy working environment.

(5,6)

- 2.1.2. To prepare a statement of principles as a briefing document for the Director General of WHO. A draft listing of principles is attached as Appendix 2 for discussion and using existing frameworks such as the ASPHER-WHO EURO roadmap for professionalisation of the public health workforce. (7)
- 2.1.3. Work with the WHO Collaborating Centre for Public Health Workforce Development at Maastricht University (8)
- 2.1.4. Work with and explore existing and planned resources, including:
- LOOOP curriculum planning resource team (9)
 - TUFH repository (<https://tufh.org/events/93025>) *

- COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning and Virtual Exchange; <https://coil.suny.edu/>) platform as a way to stimulate framework uptake while strengthening the breadth of public health insights for different contexts by those already putting the framework to use.

2.2. Developing a repository of case studies of implementation of the competency and outcomes framework (see Appendix 3):

- 2.2.1. By national governments and health ministries: WHO update
- 2.2.2. By specialist public health disciplines / representative bodies e.g. health promotion and education (IUPHE), environmental health (IFEH), field epidemiology (TEPHINET)
- 2.2.3. By professional public health associations (schools of public health, associations of public health)
 - Eg ASPHER Core curriculum programme alignment case study (Appendix 3)
 - CAPHIA Australasia curriculum mapping
 - CEPH
 - Faculty of Public Health UKFPH (Statutory consultation on curriculum 2025 – 2026)
 - Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH)
 - New Zealand/Aotearoa
 - NEHA – USA
 - CIPHI – Canada
 - REHIS/CIEH - UK
- 2.2.4. Recognizing the three professional areas - core public health personnel, health and care workers, and occupations allied with public health - and linking this back to the work of AA3

3. Funding opportunities

The group will explore opportunities for funding which are consistent with the objectives of the group and which can achieve substantial improvement in capacity and quality of the public health workforce.

4. Publication and dissemination

4.1. Conference presentations:

- 4.1.1. SEAPHEIN Webinar Landscape of Public Health Education Programs in the SEAR
- 4.1.2. World Congress of Public Health September 6-9th 2026 Cape Town: An abstract or abstracts to be submitted based on principles and case studies (<https://www.wfpha.org/world-congress-on-public-health/>)
- 4.1.3. And look at how workforce considerations can get into plenaries. (Rome congress had a whole plenary on workforce)
- 4.1.4. World Health Summit Oct 12-14, 2025 in Berlin, Germany (<https://www.worldhealthsummit.org/events/annual-whs>)
- 4.1.5. WHO technical meeting on Public Health Orientation of Health Systems and Measurement Approaches in Geneva September 30 - October 1, 2025 (<https://indico.un.org/event/1019761/>)
- 4.1.6. IFEH World Congress on Environmental Health April 27 – May 1, 2026, in Dubrovnik, Croatia (<https://www.ifeh-wceh2026.com/>)

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- 4.1.7. Preparatory work towards World Health Assembly 2026 May 18 – 23 in Geneva, Switzerland
- 4.1.8. UKHSA Conference September 22-23, 2026 Manchester, England
- 4.1.9. EUPHA conference November 12 – 14, 2025 Helsinki, Finland; November 10 – 13 2026 Bilbao, Spain (<https://ephconference.eu/>)
- 4.1.10. EDI in curriculum work by ASPHER (<https://www.aspher.org/diversity.html>)
- 4.1.11. 4th Interdisciplinary World Health Congress on Health Research and Education in the MENA Region April 12 – 17, 2026 Sousse, Tunisia (<https://www.medecinesousse.com/fra/articles/1010/4th-interdisciplinary-world-health-congress-on-health-research-and-education-in-mena>)

4.2. Formal publications (see Appendix IV for requirements):

- 4.2.1. BMC Global and Public Health call for papers <https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/ephw>
- 4.2.2. International Journal of Environmental Health Research (paper + editorial) <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cije20/current>
- 4.2.3. Global Health: Science and Practice <https://www.ghspjournal.org/>*
**temporarily shut down as of February 2025*
- 4.2.4. Journal of Public Health (JPH) <https://academic.oup.com/jpubhealth>
- 4.2.5 WHO Bulletin <https://www.who.int/publications/journals/bulletin>
- 4.2.6 BMJ <https://www.bmj.com/>

4.3. Webpage news items

- 4.3.1 Add a 'home' for group materials
- 4.3.2 IFEH will promote on its website and member magazine
- 4.3.3 Social media strategy (direct appropriate audiences to information and resources around implementation)

5. Schedule of meetings

Proposed two meetings in rapid succession to move the agenda forward consider July or two in early Autumn to sign off on the action plan and move forward on identifying resources and operationalizing the framework, including through examination of the role of accreditation. After that move to a 2-monthly regular cycle December, February, May, September

July or September 2025

Major agenda item: Detailed consideration of implications of Maastricht collaborating centre work plan : implications for regions other than Europe.

Resources and reports from potential case studies (UCD – consistency of ASPHER Core Curriculum Programme with C&O framework [Appendix III])

Environmental health case studies

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October 2025

October 22 6:00 – 7:30 AM ET Dedicated meeting for consideration of accreditation issues global, regional, national and application of the road map toolkits for accreditation

Late Fall 2025

Additional meetings scheduled for:

- November 19 6:00 – 7:30 AM ET Case study of ASPHER core curriculum programme and AA2 documentation; environmental health case studies
- December 10 6:00 – 7:30 AM ET

6. Risk register**6.1. Implications for the group consequent on WHO reorganisation**

Changes at WHO will necessitate other groups and organisations taking on a more prominent role if the goals of the road Map for PHEWF are to be delivered. This AA2 group is not a WHO committee and is convened under the leadership of WFPHA and GNAPH. We may need to consider alternative repositories for information, with relocation of references collection developed at WHO?

6.2. Implications for the group consequent on risks to accreditation

- 6.2.1. Accreditation of all higher education in the US is under threat, consequent on conditions the current administration is seeking to impose on higher education.
- 6.2.2. Accreditation is weak in other parts of the world and the group will consider how best to broker support for protection and development of independent accreditation resources.

6.3. Other risks: loss of funding to partner organisations

- 6.3.1. Loss of human resources
- 6.3.2. Loss of knowledge, databases etc
- 6.3.3. Reputational risks: protecting Public Health against the undermining professional expertise
- 6.3.4. Costs of inaction: fiscal calculation of cost to communities/regions that fail to introduce competency framework across the whole PH workforce (e.g., days lost to illness, etc.)

References

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2. Johns Hopkins University. What is public health? <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/about/what-is-public-health>
3. National workforce capacity for essential public health functions : a road map: 'Permanent page': hosted papers. <https://www.who.int/teams/health-workforce/PHEworkforce/>
4. Global competency and outcomes framework for the essential public health functions. World Health Organization. (2024). Global competency and outcomes framework for the essential public health functions. Geneva: World Health Organization. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/376577>. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
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5. World Health Organisation. Accelerating action on the global health and care workforce by 2030. WHO executive paper EB156(27). Geneva, February 2025. [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB156/B156_\(27\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB156/B156_(27)-en.pdf)
6. GNAPH Statement on WHA workforce resolution <https://globalnetworkpublichealth.org/accelerating-action-on-the-global-health-and-care-workforce-by-2030-a-landmark-resolution-at-the-world-health-assembly/>
7. World Health Organization European Office and Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) Roadmap to professionalizing the public health workforce in the European Region. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2022. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Available at:
<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/351526>
<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/351526/WHO-EURO-2022-4808-44517-63144-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
8. World Health Organisation European Office. Launch of the WHO collaborating centre for public health leadership and workforce development. WHO Euro, 12th June 2025. <https://www.who.int/europe/news/item/12-06-2025-who-designates-new-collaborating-centre-on-public-health-leadership-and-workforce-development>
9. Berlin Charite. LOOOP - the non-commercial, international network for curriculum development and curriculum mapping. Website (under redevelopment) <https://loop.charite.de/en/>

Appendix I Terms of Reference (*modified from January 2024*)

Background

The WHO Roadmap provides an evidence-based approach to align population health needs, competency-based public health education and comprehensive mapping to enable understanding of gaps and requirements needed to deliver services for a local workforce. Over the next year, WHO and Roadmap partners aim to work with 100 countries to apply these resources, as part of their health system recovery and strengthening. Revision of upskilling, workplace development, and academic teaching programmes will be a long-term part of this process.

This group, derived from the WHO Roadmap AA2 Technical Advisory Group for the competency-based education component, is moving forward with the implementation phase and has identified valuable partners whose insight, guidance, and engagement will be critical to the success of this important work. As the key organisations internationally involved with the education of the public health workforce, and accreditation, registration and regulation of public health programmes, departments and personnel, we are in a unique position to ensure that this reorientation of our programmes can occur in a coordinated way.

Co-Chairs

In line with the arrangement for the WHO Roadmap AA2 Technical Advisory Group, the AA2 Competency Based Education Implementation Group will be co-chaired by senior members from two leading partner organisations for the WHO Roadmap project, namely:

- Global Network for Academic Public Health
- World Federation of Public Health Associations' Professional Education & Training Working Group

Secretariat

GNAPH will provide the secretariat for the AA2 Competency Based Education Implementation Group

Membership

Partner Organisation

World Health Organization
Global Network for Academic Public Health (GNAPH)
World Federation of Public Health Associations' (WFPHA) Professional Education & Training Working Group (PETWG)
Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation (APHEA)
Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)
International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI)
International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH)
International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE)
Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET)
Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)

Invited Experts

Professor in Public Health Leadership and Workforce Development, Maastricht University

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Members do not receive any remuneration for their participation in this group.

Functions

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1. Promote uptake of the WHO Competency and Outcomes Framework for the Public Health and Emergency Workforce through regional and national members
2. Provide advice on resources needed to support uptake by schools and programs for public health and emergency workforce development
3. Support national organisations to seek out and secure funding to support implementation

Appendix II 12 Points That Make for a Profession of Public Health

1. Is the need for a robust well-resourced public health system, service, function, and profession, expressed in local, national, or international policy statements? **The vision, mission, values, policy, and strategy for protecting and improving the health of people and planet.**
2. What knowledge and expertise professionals should have? **Competencies in essential public health functions**
3. What Schools and Programmes should therefore teach? **Curriculum**
4. Whether schools and programmes teach it to an acceptable standard? **Accreditation**
5. Whether graduates achieve the standard they have been taught? **Qualifications**
6. Whether graduates achieve a standard in relation to practice and experience, as well as knowledge and expertise? **Credentials**
7. Whether professionals maintain their expertise? **Continuing professional development** and Whether professionals practice to published standards? **Public health (clinical) audit; and professional appraisal.**
8. Whether professionals fit the requirements of their employers in the tasks they undertake? **Job task analysis; Skills and knowledge frameworks**
9. Whether professionals behave appropriately? **Codes of conduct**
10. Whether professionals are supported in what they do? **‘Chambers’, ‘colleges’, ‘associations’.**
11. Whether they can be removed if they do not maintain standards? And break codes of conduct? **A Regulatory body.**
12. Are professionals supported in their terms and conditions of work? **Trade unions.**

From [WHO-ASPHER EURO Roadmap for Professionalisation \(2022\)](#)

Appendix III Case Study Example

Alignment of the ASPHER Core Curriculum for Public Health with the WHO Global Competency & Outcomes Framework: A Case Study using Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Management

Authors: Conor O'Rourke, Karl F. Conyard, John Middleton, Mary Codd

Introduction: The 2024 ASPHER Core Curriculum for Public Health (CCP), incorporating 35 Subject Areas in 4 domains, is a comprehensive guide for Public Health (PH) education (<https://www.ccp.aspher.org/>). The 2024 WHO Global Competency and Outcomes Framework (GCOF) addresses education and training of PH Practitioners for 12 Essential PH Functions (EPHFs) (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240091214>). This case study examines the alignment of the CCP and the GCOF in relation to education and training for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Management (EPDM).

Methods: CCP Subject Areas are organised into Themes and Curricular Elements (CEs) with 42 CEs in EPDM. EPHFs of the WHO GCOF are organised into 5 subfunctions supported by Practice Activities (PAs). The alignment of CCP CEs and PAs of GCOF EPHF2 (Effective PH Emergency Preparedness and Response) and selected PAs of EPHFs 5,6,9,10,11 was assessed.

Results: There is strong alignment of curriculum and competencies between the CEs of CCP EPDM and PAs of GCOF EPHF2 and with selected PAs of EPHFs 6,9,10. Two important PAs in EPHFs 5,11 are moderately aligned, with two very important PAs of EPHFs 5,6 weakly aligned.

Conclusion: Two comprehensive guides to PH curricula developed from different perspectives show remarkable alignment, with attention warranted on specific areas.

Keywords: ASPHER Core Curriculum; WHO Competency Framework; PH Education; PH Training

Appendix IV Journal Submission Requirements

Journal/Publication	Cost	Requirements
BMC Global & Public Health	Current APC, subject to VAT or local taxes: £1790.00/ \$2490.00/ €2090.00*	Submission guidelines
BMJ	Varies	Author resources
<i>Global Health: Science and Practice*</i> <i>*temp. d/c-ed</i>	None	Author instructions
IJEHR	None	Submission instructions
JPH	Open access charge £2,213	Author instructions
WHO Bulletin	None	Guidelines for contributors

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