

Staffing Up: Determining Public Health Workforce Levels Needed to Serve the Nation

Partners

The **Public Health National Center for Innovations (PHNCI)**, a division of the Public Health Accreditation Board, identifies, implements, and spreads innovations in public health practice to help meet the health challenges of the 21st century in communities nationwide. PHNCI acts as a leader to coordinate and align national initiatives and share innovative ideas as communities transform to improve health outcomes. PHNCI is funded by the de Beaumont Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The **de Beaumont Foundation** creates and invests in bold solutions to build healthier communities. The foundation advances policy, builds partnerships, and strengthens public health to create communities where people can achieve their best possible health.

Workforce Initiatives

“Staffing Up” is part of a larger effort to strengthen and align workforce development in public health. In October 2020, the de Beaumont Foundation reconvened the National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development to align and connect workforce development efforts, develop a national workforce agenda, engage partners in action, and identify ways to strengthen and support the public health workforce. The Consortium focuses on the broader need in the field to create and act upon a shared workforce agenda to develop, train, recruit, and retain a skilled governmental public health workforce. The Consortium and “Staffing Up” are separate but complementary initiatives.

Learn More and Get Involved

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The [Public Health National Center for Innovations](http://phnci.org) (PHNCI) is partnering with the [de Beaumont Foundation](http://debeaumont.org) on a new workforce initiative, “Staffing Up: Determining Public Health Workforce Levels Needed to Serve the Nation.” The goal of the initiative is to develop recommendations for staffing levels in the governmental public health system in the United States.

Background

Since 2008, there has been a 20% decrease in the governmental public health workforce, which was already operating with minimally sufficient levels of staff. Continued funding reductions (which lead directly to staff reductions) have severely impacted staffing capacity and hindered the ability of our nation’s health departments to address community needs and protect and promote health in the communities they serve.

The COVID-19 crisis has increased awareness of these critical gaps in public health among stakeholders and community members outside the field. However, a lack of consistent data on the current state of public health infrastructure, including funding and staffing, makes it difficult for health departments to identify and champion the right level of staffing to respond to public health needs.

About the Initiative

The goal of “Staffing Up” is to develop staffing level recommendations that can be used to:

- Advocate for increased funding for the governmental public health system.
- Inform decisions about how to staff health departments.
- Build upon the recommendations to more clearly communicate the value and role of public health workers to other fields.

From September 2020 through May 2021, the de Beaumont Foundation and PHNCI are engaging public health experts, including representatives from state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments, federal partners, non-governmental partners, and academia, to serve on a [Steering Committee](#) and a [Research Advisory Committee](#).

The Steering Committee will use research-based recommendations from the Research Advisory Committee and additional qualitative data to articulate the types and numbers of staff needed in health departments to perform the [foundational public health services](#).

To learn more, email info@phnci.org.