Public Health Nurse Ready:
Assisting New and Returning Public Health Nurses with Education in Core Public Health Nursing Competencies

Michelle Cravetz, MS, RN-BC, APHN; Dawn Bleyenburg, MS; Cheryl Reeves, MS, MLS
Center for Public Health Continuing Education, University at Albany School of Public Health, Rensselaer NY

What is *Public Health Nurse (PHN) Ready?*

PHN Ready is:
- A free online certificate program
- Designed for nurses who are new or returning to public health nursing
- Self-paced
- Available 24/7, anywhere there is internet
- Based on the Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organization Competencies
- An approved provider of nurse contact hours
- Tracked in a learning management system

There is **_no_** cost for courses, **_no_** cost for the continuing education credits, and **_no_** cost for the certificate.

The program was launched December 3, 2010. Males over the age of 18 must provide proof of registration with the Selective Service System.

Intended Audience for Public Health Nurse Ready:

- Those with a nursing background
- Those new to public health nursing practice
- Nurses with Associate degrees
- Those re-entering public health nursing practice after an absence from the field
- Nurses wanting a refresher on public health topics

Course Work:

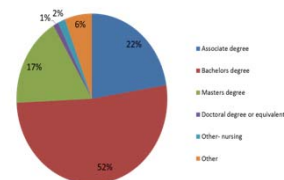### *Core - 7 courses requiring 10.5 hours to complete:*

- Orientation to Public Health
- Exploring Cross-Cultural Communication
- Field Epidemiology
- Health Literacy and Public Health, Module 1
- Public Health Nursing Standards and Credentials
- Healthy Places Leading to Healthy People: Community Engagement Improves Health for All
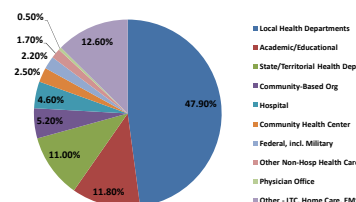
Electives – Learner selects 5 hours:

- Introduction to Public Health Surveillance
- Introduction to Assessment
- Practicing Cross-Cultural Communication (Chose 1 of 4):
  - Hepatitis A Outbreak
  - The Bamboo Dragon
  - Community Health Workers
  - Flood Module
- From Evidence to Practice: A Systemic Approach to Address Health Outcomes
- Strategies for Addressing Low Health Literacy (Module 2)
- The Messenger Chronicles: Effective Communication Strategies for Difficult Conversations
- Public Health Works and the Future of Public Health

Results:

- Total Enrollees = 726; Graduates = 116; Users in Progress = 613
- Gender Profile: 3.4% Male; 96.6% Female
- Distribution: 46 States
- Top states: New York (82); Tennessee (77); Ohio (67); Florida (41); Texas (41); Washington (38); Pennsylvania (37); New Jersey (32); California (29); South Dakota (21); Michigan (19).
- Rural nurse enrollment is approximately 30%.
- Educational Levels:

- Practice Settings:

Conclusions:

1. There was a larger "found" audience than initially anticipated.

   "Found" Audience for Public Health Nurse Ready:
   - Practicing Public Health Nurses and Supervising Public Health Nurses
   - Nurses with Bachelor's degrees and higher
   - College professors/university nursing faculty
   - Students of public health nursing
   - Those wishing to enter public health nursing
   - Nurses practicing in the community setting

2. There is a pent-up need for free, convenient, online, competency-based, continuing education among public health nurses and others working in the community.

3. PHN Ready courses can easily be embedded into existing public health nursing coursework.

4. PHN Ready courses can also be used for:
   - Inservice education to enhance the skills of PHNs
   - Supporting certification requirements
   - Public health agency accreditation
   - Standardizing orientation

5. Advantages of PHN Ready include:
   - Online accessibility means there is no travel cost
   - Flexibility for the learner
   - Low cost – only cost is PHN's time
   - Tracking in the Learning Management System
   - Freshness - Offerings are added and updated periodically

For more information, please visit out website:
www.phnready.org

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY State University of New York