

The CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion

Short version

This is a short version of The CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion Handbook (Dempsey, C., Battel-Kirk, B. & Barry, M.M., 2011, Paris: IUHPE). The CompHP Framework was developed as part of the project 'Developing Competencies and Professional Standards for Health Promotion Capacity Building in Europe (CompHP)', which is funded by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) – Project number 20081209.

Information on the project and the full version of the Handbook including a glossary is available at: <http://www.iuhpe.org/index.html?page=614&lang=en>

What are Competencies?

In the CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion Handbook, competencies are defined as a combination of the essential knowledge, abilities, skills and values necessary for the practice of health promotion. Core competencies are defined as the minimum set of competencies that constitute a common baseline for all health promotion roles.

Who are the CompHP Core Competencies for?

The core competencies are primarily designed for use by health promotion practitioners whose main role and function is health promotion and who hold a graduate or post graduate qualification in health promotion but may also be useful to those working in other areas whose role includes health promotion.

The CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion comprises domains of core competency which are illustrated in Figure 1. Ethical Values and the Health Promotion Knowledge Base are depicted as underpinning all Health Promotion action detailed in the nine other domains. Ethical Values are integral to the practice of health promotion and form the context within which all the other competencies are practiced. The Health Promotion Knowledge domain describes the multidisciplinary concepts, theories and research that make health promotion practice distinctive.

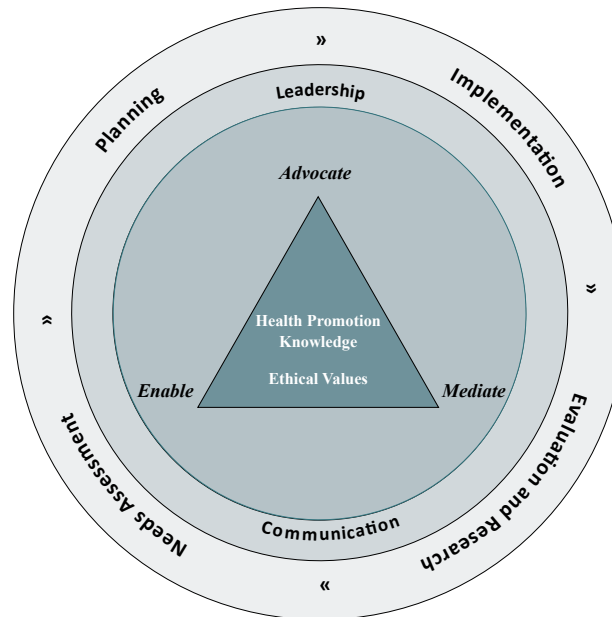


Figure 1: The CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion

The remaining nine domains, including; Enable Change, Advocate for Health, Mediate through Partnership, Communication, Leadership, Assessment, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation and Research, each deal with a specific area of health promotion practice with their associated competency statements articulating the necessary skills needed for competent practice. It is the combined application of all the domains, the knowledge base and the ethical values which constitute the CompHP Core Competencies Framework for Health Promotion.

Ethical Values Underpinning Health Promotion Core Competencies

Ethical values and principles for health promotion include a belief in equity and social justice, respect for the autonomy and choice of both individuals and groups, and collaborative and consultative ways of working.

Ethical health promotion practice is based on a commitment to:

- Health as a human right, which is central to human development
- Respect for the rights, dignity, confidentiality and worth of individuals and groups
- Respect for all aspects of diversity including gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, ethnicity, race, and cultural beliefs
- Addressing health inequities, social injustice, and prioritising the needs of those experiencing poverty and social marginalisation
- Addressing the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, behavioural and biological determinants of health and wellbeing
- Ensuring that health promotion action is beneficial and causes no harm
- Being honest about what health promotion is, and what it can and cannot achieve
- Seeking the best available information and evidence needed to implement effective policies and programmes that influence health
- The empowerment of individuals and groups to build autonomy and self respect as the basis for health promotion action
- Sustainable development and sustainable health promotion action
- Being accountable for the quality of one's own practice and taking responsibility for maintaining and improving knowledge and skills.

Knowledge Base Underpinning Health Promotion Core Competencies

The core competencies require that a health promotion practitioner draws on a multidisciplinary knowledge base of the core concepts, principles, theory and research of health promotion and its application in practice.

A health promotion practitioner is able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- The concepts, principles and ethical values of health promotion as defined by the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986) and subsequent charters and declarations
- The concepts of health equity, social justice and health as a human right as the basis for health promotion action
- The determinants of health and their implications for health promotion action
- The impact of social and cultural diversity on health and health inequities and the implications for health promotion action
- Health promotion models and approaches which support empowerment, participation, partnership and equity as the basis for health promotion action
- The current theories and evidence which underpin effective leadership, advocacy and partnership building and their implication for health promotion action
- The current models and approaches of effective project and programme management (including needs assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation) and their application to health promotion action
- The evidence base and research methods, including qualitative and quantitative methods, required to inform and evaluate health promotion action
- The communication processes and current information technology required for effective health promotion action
- The systems, policies and legislation which impact on health and their relevance for health promotion.

1. Enable Change

Enable individuals, groups, communities and organisations to build capacity for health promotion action to improve health and reduce health inequities.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 1.1 Work collaboratively across sectors to influence the development of public policies which impact positively on health and reduce health inequities
- 1.2 Use health promotion approaches which support empowerment, participation, partnership and equity to create environments and settings which promote health
- 1.3 Use community development approaches to strengthen community participation and ownership and build capacity for health promotion action
- 1.4 Facilitate the development of personal skills that will maintain and improve health
- 1.5 Work in collaboration with key stakeholders to reorient health and other services to promote health and reduce health inequities.

2. Advocate for Health

Advocate with, and on behalf, of individuals, communities and organisations to improve health and well-being and build capacity for health promotion action.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 2.1 Use advocacy strategies and techniques which reflect health promotion principles
- 2.2 Engage with and influence key stakeholders to develop and sustain health promotion action
- 2.3 Raise awareness of and influence public opinion on health issues
- 2.4 Advocate across sectors for the development of policies, guidelines and procedures across all sectors which impact positively on health and reduce health inequities
- 2.5 Facilitate communities and groups to articulate their needs and advocate for the resources and capacities required for health promotion action.

3. Mediate through Partnership

Work collaboratively across disciplines, sectors and partners to enhance the impact and sustainability of health promotion action.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 3.1 Engage partners from different sectors to actively contribute to health promotion action
- 3.2 Facilitate effective partnership working which reflects health promotion values and principles
- 3.3 Build successful partnership through collaborative working, mediating between different sectoral interests
- 3.4 Facilitate the development and sustainability of coalitions and networks for health promotion action.

4. Communication

Communicate health promotion action effectively, using appropriate techniques and technologies for diverse audiences.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 4.1 Use effective communication skills including written, verbal, non-verbal, and listening skills
- 4.2 Use information technology and other media to receive and disseminate health promotion information
- 4.3 Use culturally appropriate communication methods and techniques for specific groups and settings
- 4.4 Use interpersonal communication and groupwork skills to facilitate individuals, groups, communities and organisations to improve health and reduce health inequities.

5. Leadership

Contribute to the development of a shared vision and strategic direction for health promotion action.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 5.1 Work with stakeholders to agree a shared vision and strategic direction for health promotion action
- 5.2 Use leadership skills which facilitate empowerment and participation (including team work, negotiation, motivation, conflict resolution, decision-making, facilitation and problem solving)
- 5.3 Network with and motivate stakeholders in leading change to improve health and reduce inequities
- 5.4 Incorporate new knowledge to improve practice and respond to emerging challenges in health promotion
- 5.5 Contribute to mobilising and managing resources for health promotion action
- 5.6 Contribute to team and organisational learning to advance health promotion action.

6. Assessment

Conduct assessment of needs and assets in partnership with stakeholders, in the context of the political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, behavioural and biological determinants that promote or compromise health.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 6.1 Use participatory methods to engage stakeholders in the assessment process
- 6.2 Use a variety of assessment methods including quantitative and qualitative research methods
- 6.3 Collect, review and appraise relevant data, information and literature to inform health promotion action
- 6.4 Identify the determinants of health which impact on health promotion action
- 6.5 Identify the health needs, existing assets and resources relevant to health promotion action
- 6.6 Use culturally and ethically appropriate assessment approaches
- 6.7 Identify priorities for health promotion action in partnership with stakeholders, based on best available evidence and ethical values.

7. Planning

Develop measurable health promotion goals and objectives based on assessment of needs and assets in partnership with stakeholders.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 7.1 Mobilise, support and engage the participation of stakeholders in planning health promotion action
- 7.2 Use current models and systematic approaches for planning health promotion action
- 7.3 Develop a feasible action plan within resource constraints and with reference to existing needs and assets
- 7.4 Develop and communicate appropriate, realistic and measurable goals and objectives for health promotion action
- 7.5 Identify appropriate health promotion strategies to achieve agreed goals and objectives.

8. Implementation

Implement effective and efficient, culturally sensitive, and ethical health promotion action in partnership with stakeholders.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 8.1 Use ethical, empowering, culturally appropriate and participatory processes to implement health promotion action
- 8.2 Develop, pilot and use appropriate resources and materials
- 8.3 Manage the resources needed for effective implementation of planned action
- 8.4 Facilitate programme sustainability and stakeholder ownership of health promotion action through ongoing consultation and collaboration
- 8.5 Monitor the quality of the implementation process in relation to agreed goals and objectives for health promotion action.

9. Evaluation and Research

Use appropriate evaluation and research methods, in partnership with stakeholders, to determine the reach, impact and effectiveness of health promotion action.

A health promotion practitioner is able to:

- 9.1 Identify and use appropriate health promotion evaluation tools and research methods
- 9.2 Integrate evaluation into the planning and implementation of all health promotion action
- 9.3 Use evaluation findings to refine and improve health promotion action
- 9.4 Use research and evidence-based strategies to inform practice
- 9.5 Contribute to the development and dissemination of health promotion evaluation and research processes.