

Allen County Public Health

Workforce Training Needs Assessment *Summary of Results*

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Project Team

The following individuals were instrumental in planning, developing, conducting, and summarizing this workforce training needs assessment:

- **Kathy Luhn, Kim Rieman, Brandon Fischer, Denise Hoehn, Cheri Krites, Michell Holmes, and Jackie Mericle** at Allen County Public Health, for serving on the planning team.
- **Michael Bisesi, Ph.D.**, Director, Center for Public Health Practice and Senior Associate Dean at The Ohio State University College of Public Health for serving as Principal Investigator and **Melissa Sever**, Senior Program Manager in the Center for Public Health Practice, for serving as overall project manager.
- **Juan Peng** at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center for assistance with data analysis and reporting.

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Introduction

One of the goals for *Healthy People 2020* is “to ensure that Federal, State, Tribal, and, local health agencies have the necessary infrastructure to effectively provide essential public health services.” An important aspect of the public health infrastructure involves training, supporting, and sustaining a capable and qualified workforce. In addition, Accreditation Standard 8.2 requires that agencies: “Ensure a competent workforce through the assessment of staff competencies, the provision of individual training and professional development, and the provision of a supportive work environment” (Public Health Accreditation Board, *Standards and Measures*, Version 1.5).

This training needs assessment survey was based on a set of fifteen organizational competencies adopted by Allen County Public Health (ACPH) that are aligned with the *Council on Linkages Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals* (June, 2014). The survey included two self-reported assessment measures: 1) importance to job; and, 2) personal ability. These self-reported assessment measures were collected for each of the fifteen organizational competencies.

In addition to the competency-related questions, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with three cultural competency-related statements. Preferences for training delivery methods, course types, and motivators and barriers to participation in training were also measured. Lastly, the survey asked respondents to rate their level of interest in a set of nineteen wellness-related topics.

This document is a summary of results across the agency.

Methods

Need Score: A need score was calculated for each individual competency as the *personal ability* score minus the *importance to job* score. The need score could range from -3 to +3, with a negative score indicating a possible need for training. This report includes the percentage of employees whose response resulted in a negative score, indicating a possible need for training, by competency (Figure 1).

Cultural Competency: Respondents rated their level of agreement to a set of three cultural-competency related statements. Responses were rated on a four-point Likert scale (Table 1).

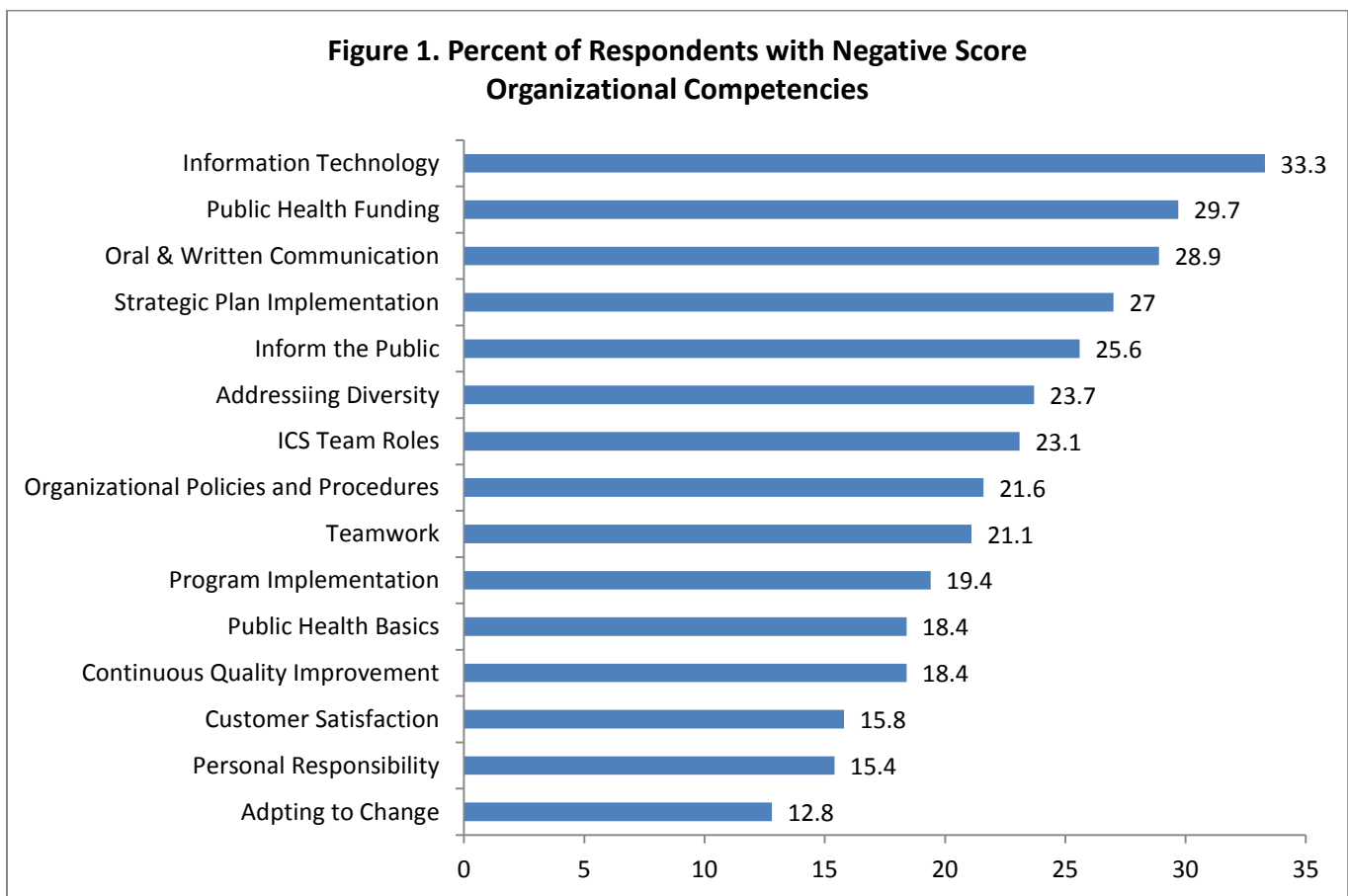
Influencing Factors: Respondents rated levels of motivators for participation in training, barriers to participating in training, preferred course types and delivery methods. Responses for these categories were rated on a four-point Likert scale (Tables 2 - 5).

Wellness Topics: Respondents were asked to rate their level of interest in nineteen wellness-related topics. Responses were rated on a four-point Likert scale (Table 6).

Key Findings

This section presents the summary of results across the entire agency. A total of 39 of 56 employees responded, for a response rate of 69.6%.

Of the fifteen organizational competencies assessed, one presented a higher overall percentage of respondents with a negative score, *utilize personal computers and other office information technologies for working with documents and other computerized files* (Information Technology) at 33.3%. This was followed by *describe public health funding mechanisms* (Public Health Funding) at 29.7% and *communicate in writing and orally with linguistic and cultural proficiency* (Oral & Written Communication) at 28.9%. Rounding out the top four was *contribute to the implementation of the organizational strategic plan* (Strategic Plan Implementation) at 27.0%. Five competencies fell into the 20-25% range, and five fell into the 15-19% range. *Adapt to changing business needs, conditions, and work responsibilities* (Adapting to Change) was the competency with the lowest percentage of respondents with a negative score at 12.8%. See Appendix A for a key to the competency abbreviations used in Figure 1 below.



*Negative score calculated as 'ability' score minus 'importance to job' score. A negative score indicates a possible need for training.

Key Findings *(continued)*

The survey asked respondents to rate their level of agreement to three cultural competency-related statements. Over 89% of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” to all statements presented.

Table 1: Cultural Competency

	Agree or Strongly Agree		
	n	Count	%
I understand the environmental, social, and economic conditions that impact health.	39	36	92.3%
I can explain the environmental, social, and economic conditions that impact health to my co-workers.	39	35	89.7%
It is important to understand the beliefs and values of the residents and community members served by our agency.	39	36	92.3%

In addition to the competency-related questions, respondents were asked about motivators and barriers for participation in training, preferred training delivery methods, and preferred course types. Results are highlighted in Tables 2 – 5 below.

Four of the six motivators for participation in training included in the assessment are a “motivator” or “very much a motivator” for over 75% of respondents. Nearly 85% of respondents indicate that *increasing my competency in public health practice* and *accomplishment of the mission of the agency* are a “motivator” or “very much a motivator” for participation in training. The motivator with the lowest percentage is *professional networking opportunity* (74%). Despite this being the lowest scoring motivator, it is still considered a “motivator” or “very much a motivator” by nearly three-quarters of respondents.

Table 2: Motivators for Participation in Training

	Motivator or Very Much a Motivator		
	n	Count	%
Increasing my competency in public health practice	39	33	84.6%
Accomplishment of the mission of the agency	39	33	84.6%
Personal satisfaction	39	32	82.1%
Maintain a license or certification	39	31	79.5%
Personal career advancement	39	29	74.4%
Professional networking opportunity	39	28	73.7%

Key Findings *(continued)*

Over half of all respondents indicate that *agency budget restrictions* and *individual costs* are a “barrier” or “very much a barrier” for participation in training. Less than 25% indicate that *lack of supervisor support* (20.5%) and *nearing retirement* (7.7%) are barriers for participation in training.

Table 3: Barriers for Participation in Training

	Barrier or Very Much a Barrier		
	n	Count	%
Agency budget restrictions	39	28	71.8%
Individual cost	39	21	53.8%
Time away from work	39	17	43.6%
Family commitments	39	14	35.9%
Desired topics not available	39	14	35.9%
Travel restrictions	39	11	28.2%
Lack of opportunity to apply what I have learned	39	10	25.6%
Lack of supervisor support	39	8	20.5%
Nearing retirement	39	3	7.7%

Face-to-face and *blended (online and face-to-face)* are the preferred delivery methods for over three-quarters of respondents at 82.1% and 76.9% respectively. *CD-ROM* is the least-preferred, with just over one-third (35.9%) of respondents indicating they are “interested” or “very interested” in this training delivery method.

Table 4: Preferences for Training Delivery Methods

	Interested or Very Interested		
	n	Count	%
Face-to-Face	39	32	82.1%
Blended (Online and Face-to-Face)	39	30	76.9%
Web-based synchronous learning	39	27	69.2%
Online - self study	39	23	59.0%
Audio/Podcasts	39	20	52.6%
Telephone conferencing	39	17	43.6%
CD-ROM	39	14	35.9%

Key Findings *(continued)*

Nearly three-quarters of respondents (74.4%) indicate they are “interested” or “very interested” in courses that provide *continuing education credit for professional licensure*. This was followed closely by *certificate programs – a series of courses that when successfully completed lead to a certificate* (61.5%). *Courses for academic credit* are the least preferred course type, with less than half of respondents (41.0%) indicating they are “interested” or “very interested”.

Table 5: Preferences for Course Types

	Interested or Very Interested		
	n	Count	%
Continuing Education: courses that provide continuing education credit for professional licensure	39	29	74.4%
Certificate Programs: series of courses that when successfully completed lead to a certificate	39	24	61.5%
Institutes: 6-12 month, ongoing development in specific content area	39	17	43.6%
Courses for Academic Credit: courses that can be applied toward an academic degree	39	16	41.0%

Lastly, respondents were asked to indicate their interest in nineteen wellness topics. Responses are located on the following page.

Key Findings *(continued)*

Over three quarters of respondents indicate they are “interested” or “very interested” in *stretching / flexibility* (84.6%) and *physical fitness* (79.5%). Over 50% indicate *healthy eating, healthy cooking, self-care, job stress management* and *financial planning* as topics of interest. *Smoking cessation* and *substance abuse* were the topics of least interest, with only 7.7% of respondents indicating they are “interested” or “very interested”.

Table 6: Wellness Topics of Interest

	Interested or Very Interested		
	n	Count	%
Stretching / flexibility	39	33	84.6%
Physical fitness	39	31	79.5%
Healthy eating	39	29	74.4%
Healthy cooking	39	28	71.8%
Self-care	39	21	53.8%
Job stress management	38	20	52.6%
Financial planning	38	20	52.6%
Accepting change	38	18	47.4%
Dealing with aging parents	38	18	47.4%
Financial management	39	18	46.2%
Vision care	39	17	43.6%
Sleep disorders	39	15	38.5%
Time management	38	14	36.8%
End of life issues	39	14	35.9%
Treatment for depression	38	13	34.2%
Home safety	38	9	23.7%
Anger management	39	8	20.5%
Smoking cessation	39	3	7.7%
Substance abuse	39	3	7.7%

Recommendations

The following recommendations and priority items are suggested based on the results of this training needs assessment. These recommendations represent areas that may serve as initial priorities for the agency relative to the development of the workforce.

- Review results with agency employees and engage in conversation to probe for deeper meaning and consider implications for future workforce development initiatives within the agency.
- Consider addressing areas where the greatest need for knowledge and skills are observed, such as *Information Technology* which had the highest percentage of respondents with a negative score.
- Identify training opportunities that include both face-to-face and online self-study components as these are the delivery methods preferred by employees.
- Consider training that provides continuing education credit.
- Explore solutions to address identified barriers to training which are primarily financial and include agency budget restrictions and individual cost.
- Employees indicated that top motivators for training were increasing competency in public health practice and supporting the mission of the organization. When choosing training, consider opportunities that align personal development goals with the mission and strategic direction of the agency.
- Consider expanding upon this assessment in the future, assessing professional public health staff on all Council on Linkages Core Competencies and/or conducting discipline-specific assessments (e.g. nursing, environmental health, administrative assistants/clerks).
- Utilize these data as a baseline and re-assess the workforce on an every 2-3 year basis as a means by which to guide progress and re-prioritize workforce development initiatives.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Melissa Sever, MPH, MCHES, in the Center for Public Health Practice in the College of Public Health at The Ohio State University: (614) 292-2047 or msever@cph.osu.edu.

Appendix A: Figure 1 Key

The table below is a key for Figure 1 (pg. 2) and includes the full competency statement for each abbreviated title in the bar chart.

Abbreviate Title	Competency Statement
Information Technology	Utilizes personal computers and other office information technologies for working with documents and other computerized files.
Public Health Funding	Describes public health funding mechanisms
Oral & Written Communication	Communicates in writing and orally with linguistic and cultural proficiency
Strategic Plan Implementation	Contributes to implementation of the organizational strategic plan
Inform the Public	Informs the public about policies, programs, and resources that improve health in a community
Addressing Diversity	Addresses the diversity of individuals and populations when implementing policies, programs, and services that affect the health of a community
ICS Team Roles	Clarify the roles of team members in an Incident Command structure
Organizational Policies & Procedures	Adheres to organizational policies and procedures
Teamwork	Promotes cooperation and commitment within a team to achieve goals and deliverables
Program Implementation	Implements policies, programs, and services
Public Health Basics	Describes the foundation of the field of public health
Continuous Quality Improvement	Applies strategies for continuous quality improvement
Customer Service	Builds and maintains customer satisfaction with the products and services offered by the organization
Personal Responsibility	Takes personal responsibility for the equality and timeliness of work and achieves results with little oversight
Adapting to Change	Adapts to changing business needs, conditions, and work responsibilities

Appendix B: Assessment Instrument

Fab 4 Training Needs Assessment Survey

1. Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to complete this Public Health Workforce Training Needs Assessment. The survey includes questions addressing organizational competencies, cultural competency, motivators and barriers for participation in training, and preferences for course types and delivery methods. The information gathered will be used to identify and prioritize training and development initiatives within your agency. Allen County Public Health staff will also be asked a series of questions related to wellness topics of interest.

The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and is entirely confidential. No personal identifiers will be collected and results will be reported in summary. In addition, your participation is voluntary. You may choose to leave the survey at any time.

The survey is not timed, which allows you to take as long as you need to complete the assessment. However, if you close your browser window before submitting the data, all information you may have entered up to that point will be lost.

Please complete this survey by Wednesday, February 18th. If you have questions about this survey or encounter technical difficulties while attempting to complete, please contact:

Melissa Sever, MPH, MCHES
 Center for Public Health Practice
 The Ohio State University College of Public Health
 (614) 292-2047
 msever@cph.osu.edu

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful participation.

2. Organizational Competencies

This section of the survey addresses a set of 15 organizational competencies. For each competency listed below you will be asked to rate the degree to which the activity is important to your job and your ability to perform the function. You will rate each question using a four-point scale: 1 – low to 4 – high.

1. Clarify the roles of team members in an Incident Command Structure

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Apply strategies for continuous quality improvement

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Communicate in writing and orally with linguistic and cultural proficiency

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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4. Address the diversity of individuals and populations when implementing policies, programs, and services that affect the health of a community

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Describe the foundation of the field of public health

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Adhere to organizational policies and procedures

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Contribute to implementation of the organizational strategic plan

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Describe public health funding mechanisms

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Promote cooperation and commitment within a team to achieve goals and deliverables

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Implement policies, programs, and services

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Build and maintain customer satisfaction with the products and services offered by the organization

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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12. Inform the public about policies, programs, and resources that improve health in a community

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Utilize personal computers and other office information technologies for working with documents and other computerized files

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Adapt to changing business needs, conditions, and work responsibilities

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Take personal responsibility for the quality and timeliness of work and achieve results with little oversight

	1 - Low	2	3	4 - High
a) Importance to your job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Your personal ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. In the space below, please provide any additional comments you have related to the questions you just answered and/or other training related needs.

3. Cultural Competency

This section of the survey includes three statements addressing cultural competency. Please rate your level of agreement to each of the following items on a four-point scale. (1 - Strongly Disagree to 4 - Strongly Agree)

1. I understand the environmental, social, and economic conditions that impact health.

1 - Strongly Disagree
 2
 3
 4 - Strongly Agree
 Unsure

2. I can explain the environmental, social, and economic conditions that impact health to my co-workers.

1 - Strongly Disagree
 2
 3
 4 - Strongly Agree
 Unsure

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3. It is important to understand the beliefs and values of the residents and community members served by our agency.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 - Strongly Agree Unsure

4. In the space below please provide any additional comments you have related to cultural competency.

4. Motivators for Participation in Training

What motivates you to participate in training? Please rate your level of motivation related to each of the following items on a four-point scale (1 - Low Motivation to 4 - High Motivation)

1. Increasing my competency in public health practice

- 1 - Low 2 3 4 - High

2. Personal satisfaction

- 1 - Low 2 3 4 - High

3. Professional networking opportunity

- 1 - Low 2 3 4 - High

4. Accomplishment of the mission of the agency

- 1 - Low 2 3 4 - High

5. Personal career advancement

- 1 - Low 2 3 4 - High

6. Maintain a license and/or certification for my job

- 1 - Low 2 3 4 - High

7. In the space below please provide any additional comments you have related to motivators for participation in training.

5. Barriers for Participation in Training

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What prevents you from participating in training? Please rate how much of a barrier the following items are for participation in training on a four-point scale (1 - Not a Barrier to 4 - Very Much a Barrier)

1. Individual/personal cost

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

2. Time away from work

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

3. Family commitments

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

4. Travel

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

5. Agency and/or grant budget restrictions

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

6. Desired topics not available

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

7. Nearing retirement

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

8. Lack of supervisor support

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

9. Lack of opportunity to apply what I have learned

1 - Not a barrier 2 3 4 - Very much a barrier

10. In the space below please provide any additional comments you have related to barriers for participation in training

6. Preferences Related to Course Types

Please rate your level of interest for each of the following course types on a four-point scale (1 - Not Interested to 4 - Very Interested)

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1. Continuing Education Courses: courses that provide continuing education credit for professional licensure

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

2. Courses for Academic Credit: courses that can be applied toward an academic degree (Note: At this time, ACPH does not provide tuition reimbursement for academic courses, but information about academic courses can be shared with staff for personal development.)

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

3. Certificate Programs: series of courses that when successfully completed lead to a certificate

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

4. Institutes: 6-12 month, ongoing development in specific content area

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

5. In the space below please provide any additional comments you have related to course types.

7. Preferences for Training Delivery Methods

Please rate your level of interest in training delivery methods for each of the following items on a four-point scale (1 - Not Interested to 4 - Very Interested)

1. CD-ROM

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

2. Online - Self Study

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

3. Face-to-Face

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

4. Web-based Synchronous Learning (e.g. live webinar)

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

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5. Telephone Conferencing

- 1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

6. Audio/Podcasts

- 1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

7. Blended (Online and Face to Face)

- 1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

8. In the space below please provide suggestions for additional training delivery methods.

8. Agency

This question will allow us to stratify results by agency. In addition, Allen County Public Health staff will be taken to an additional set of wellness questions. All other respondents will be taken to the end of the survey.

* 1. I work at:

- Allen County Public Health
 Auglaize County Health Department
 Mercer County - Celina City Health Department
 Van Wert County Health Department

9. Wellness Topics of Interest

As part of our employee survey, ACPH staff expressed interest in learning more about personal wellness topics. Please rate your level of interest for each of the following wellness topics on a four-point scale (1 - Not Interested to 4 - Very Interested).

1. Physical fitness

- 1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

2. Healthy eating

- 1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

3. Healthy cooking

- 1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

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4. Stretching / flexibility

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

5. Smoking cessation

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

6. Substance abuse

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

7. Home safety

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

8. Treatment for depression

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

9. Sleep disorders

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

10. Job stress management

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

11. Accepting change

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

12. Anger management

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

13. Vision care

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

14. Self care

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

15. Financial management

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

16. Financial planning

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

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17. Time management

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

18. Dealing with aging parents

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

19. End of life issues

1 - Not interested 2 3 4 - Very interested

20. In the space below, please provide any additional comments you have related to wellness topics of interest.

10. Thank You

You have completed this training needs assessment. Please select "Done" to submit your responses. Thank you for your time.