



SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION
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**GLOBAL CONSENSUS CONFERENCE REACHES ACCORD AND ISSUES
STATEMENT ON DOMAINS OF CORE COMPETENCY, STANDARDS, AND
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HEALTH PROMOTION AND HEALTH
EDUCATION**

GALWAY, IRELAND – In response to the global health crisis, 26 leading authorities in competency-based and accreditation movements in global health promotion, health education, and public health reached an accord last week on what should comprise the domains of core competency in health promotion and health education.

The conference, the first of its kind, was co-chaired by Prof. Margaret Barry of the National University of Ireland, Galway, who serves as the global vice-president for capacity-building, education and training for the Paris-based International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), and Prof. John Allegrante of Columbia University, a past president of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) in Washington, DC.

The conference addressed the development and implementation of credentialing systems to strengthen global capacity in health promotion—a critical element in achieving goals for the improvement of global health.

A consensus statement issued by the organizers identified eight domains of core competency that are required to engage in effective health promotion practice. They are Catalyzing change, Leadership, Assessment, Planning, Implementation, Evaluation, Advocacy, and Partnerships.

The statement also asserts that “Acquiring proficiency in the domains of core competency will require setting standards and developing quality assurance mechanisms that are practice-based and periodically updated,” and that “standards and quality assurance mechanisms . . . need to be in place in all countries.”

Barry, professor of health promotion and public health, and director of the Health Promotion Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway, said that “The transcontinental quality-assurance efforts share common goals: to protect the public by establishing and assuring a minimum acceptable standard of quality and performance for practitioners of health promotion; to improve or strengthen academic preparation through

systems of peer review; and to promote continued professional development of the workforce.”

The consensus statement will now be circulated among professionals, employers, and other interested groups for comment over the next six months. The final statement, along with the background papers that informed the conference deliberations, will be published by IUHPE and SOPHE within the next year. The draft consensus statement, along with links to a public comment page where comments, suggestions, and recommendations may be posted, can be found at www.iuhpe.org and www.sophe.org.

Allegrante, who is professor of health education and chairman of the Department of Health and Behavior Studies at Columbia University Teachers College, and adjunct professor of public health in sociomedical sciences at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, said that “The final consensus statement will constitute a roadmap by which nations around the world can strengthen workforce capacity.” He also said that “This will be essential if both rich and poor countries are to make progress in creating the social circumstances that we know can improve health and the human condition.”

Other participants in the Galway Consensus Conference included: Prof. Collins Airhihenbuwa, Pennsylvania State University, USA; M. Elaine Auld, Society for Public Health Education, USA; Barbara Battel-Kirk, National University of Ireland, Galway; Dr. Janet Collins, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA; Prof. Randall Cottrell, University of Cincinnati, USA; Jerome Foucaud, Institut National de Prévention et d’Education pour la Santé, France; Alison Gehring, Royal Society for the Promotion of Health, UK; Jenny Griffiths, Royal Society for the Promotion of Health, UK; Emmanuelle Hamel, Institut National de Prévention et d’Education pour la Santé, France; Dr. Elizabeth Howze, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA; Laura Rasar King, Council on Education for Public Health, USA; Marie-Claude Lamarre, International Union for Health Promotion and Education, France; Dr. William C. Livingood, Duval County (Florida) Health Department, Institute for Health, Policy and Evaluation Research, USA; Linda Lysoby, National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, USA; Prof. Gudjon Magnusson, Reykjavik University, Iceland; Dr. David McQueen, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA; Prof. Kathleen Miner, Emory University, USA; Prof. Maurice Mittelmark, University of Bergen, Norway; Martha Perry, International Union for Health Promotion and Education, France; Dr. Keiko Sakagami, Japanese Society for Health Promotion and Education, Japan; Dr. Arantxa Santa Maria Morales, Madrid Regional Health Authority, Spain; Dr. Viv Speller, University of Southampton, UK; Prof. Alyson Taub, New York University, USA; and Dr. Lynn Woodhouse, Council of Accredited MPH Programs, USA.

In addition to IUHPE and SOPHE, key participant organizations of the Consensus Conference included the American Association for Health Education, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Council of Accredited MPH Programs, Council on Education for Public Health, National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, and the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health in the United Kingdom.

The Galway Consensus Conference was convened June 16-18, 2008, and was hosted by the National University of Ireland, Galway.

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The Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) is a non-profit organization founded in 1950 to improve the health of the public through research, education, and policy change. SOPHE represents some 4,500 researchers and practitioners trained in health education who work in federal, state, and local public health agencies, schools and universities, medical care settings, community agencies, and worksites. For more information visit: www.sophe.org or call (202) 408-9804.

The mission of The International Union for Health Promotion and Education (the IUHPE) is to promote global health and to contribute to the achievement of equity in health between and within countries of the world. The IUHPE fulfils its mission by building and operating an independent, global, professional network of people and institutions to encourage the free exchange of ideas, knowledge, know-how, experiences, and the development of relevant collaborative projects, both at global and regional levels.