

January 2021

HEALTHCARE HIGHLIGHTS

The Rural AHEC Student Newsletter



January's Healthcare Career Focus:

Public Health Educator

Public Health Educators have become a very important part of our modern healthcare system. More colleges and universities are offering public health major studies and master's programs. Public health educators serve in many roles and may develop and implement programs that inform communities about chronic disease care, vaccinations and other preventative practices, public health crises, ways to improve nutrition, and healthy lifestyle choices. If you enjoy helping people, this is a good career choice.

What might I do as a Public Health Educator?

Practice in a variety of settings, such as federal, state and county health departments

Assess needs of groups, individuals, and communities regarding health education, often in collaboration with physicians and other medical staff

Thoughtfully design education/training programs and interventions

Implement health education in public settings

Compile, evaluate, and communicate research data

Act as a resource and public education expert on health, chronic disease, addiction issues, exercise, nutrition, contagious disease, vaccinations, and other topics

Inform community members about behaviors that will help them to restore and maintain best health outcomes

Use best practices and professionally designed instruction to motivate, engage, and reach people of all ages across all demographic groups and economic circumstances



How do I become a Public Health Educator?

- Complete coursework including psychology, human development, and a foreign language
- Graduate from a bachelor degree program in public health or related field
- May want to continue on to earn a master's degree in public health
- Complete certification in public health to be a Certified Health Education Specialist
- Years of higher education range from 4—6 years

Median Salary:
\$55,220 in May 2019

What is it really like to be a Public Health Educator?

Students interested in becoming Public Health Educators are likely those that want to improve the health of the people around them. They might also be natural leaders or influencers. Potential program candidates should have an interest in presenting information to others in a clear, engaging way.

If you think you would like to pursue this field, you should work to develop the following skills and attributes:

- Interpersonal skills—good listeners and culturally sensitive
- Instructional skills—good facilitators and collaborators
- Communication skills, both written and verbal
- Problem-solving skills—creative thinkers who can overcome barriers
- Analytical skills—good evaluators who can determine needs of the communities they serve

Watch this video about what public health is and what public health educators do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMZvam-EMTE>

Meet Meckell, a public health educator who works for a university: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G7hiiVlcxUw>
And listen to why public health educators do what they do: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nrgpnx8Tgl>



“... as the medical field approaches a personalized perspective, public health approaches should consider this as well...”

Haley Delgado
MPH, Community Health

“Public health provides the foundation for practicing preventative medicine, which is crucial for overall wellness in a community...”

Kyanna Williams-Pate
MPH, Generalist

“Public health is the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual empowerment of individuals and communities...”

Melissa Otterbein
MPH, Physical Activity



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Health Educators and Community Health Workers, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/health-educators.htm> (visited Feb 3, 2021).

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center

20 Duncan Street, Warsaw, New York 14569

585-786-6275

lgreen@r-ahec.org

www.r-ahec.org

Please contact us if you have questions about healthcare career opportunities or educational pathways to healthcare careers!

Western New York Rural Area Health Education Center (R-AHEC) is one of nine centers in the New York State Area Health Education Center (NYS AHEC) organization. Our mission is to improve health and healthcare through education.

Acknowledgement: The NYSAHEC System is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Award titled Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Program (U77). The content and information is solely the responsibility of the authors and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

This organization is an equal opportunity provider and employer