

## CORE COMPETENCIES FOR INCLUDING PEOPLE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

Colleen Roche, BS, The Boggs Center, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, John Palatucci, PhD, MPA, Rutgers Center for State Health Policy, Nila Uthirasamy, BS, The Boggs Center, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Patricia Findley, DrPH, MSW, Rutgers School of Social Work, Caroline Coffield, PhD, The Boggs Center, Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

### INTRODUCTION

A 2015 survey of accredited public health (PH) schools and programs found that more than half of the curricula lacked disability content. When present, content about people with developmental disabilities (DD) was limited to electives and single-course lectures.<sup>1</sup>

Individuals with DD often receive expensive medical interventions across the lifespan.<sup>2</sup> Yet, they rarely have access to preventative services, and their chronic conditions are often poorly managed<sup>2</sup> as a result of significant gaps in PH education and training.

### OBJECTIVE

Identify core competencies to inform training for PH students and professionals on how to support and care for individuals with DD.

### METHODS

- Conducted literature review on PH education and DD
- Identified 11 key informants including disabled self-advocates, family members, policy experts, PH students, educators and workers
- Developed a needs assessment script and interview questions
- Interviewed informants about their lived experiences, academic and career training, professional development and continuing education
- Transcribed interviews verbatim and reviewed them to identify recurring themes



### FINDINGS

Seven recurring themes were identified as core competencies that key informants want included in trainings for the PH workforce:

- 1 Disability Identity
- 2 Centering the lived experiences of people with DD
- 3 Impact of DD Across the Lifespan
- 4 Policy and Systems Change
- 5 Empathy, Ethics and Etiquette
- 6 Communication and Access to Resources
- 7 Clinical Presentations of DD

### FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

To address service gaps for people with DD and build resiliency in PH infrastructure:

- Use recurring themes from key-informant interviews to inform the development of an asynchronous multi-modular online training designed to teach the PH workforce how to competently interact with and effectively care for people with DD and their families.
- Develop training evaluation tools.
- Identify existing and potential community partners and professional and academic programs to pilot the training which may include:
  - Graduate and undergraduate academic programs- Rutgers University
  - Colette Lamothe-Galette Community Health Worker Institute
  - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
  - Centers for Independent Living

*This project is funded by the Expanding the Health Workforce initiative of the Administration for Community Living.*

### REFERENCES

1. Lollar, D. J., & Andresen, E. (2010). *Public health perspectives on disability*. Springer New York.
2. Chapter 11 "Public Health as a Change Agent for Disability" from Drum, C. E., Krahn, G. L., & Bersani, H. (Eds.). (2009). *Disability and public health*. APHA Press.