



Building a curriculum- based approach to LHD Career Exploration

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Session Overview

CCPHC Background

Why did we pursue LHD 101 Curriculum?

Test your knowledge=audience participation!

Curriculum

- Teaser Video
- Methods
- Design
- Implementation

Central California Public Health Consortium (CCPHC)

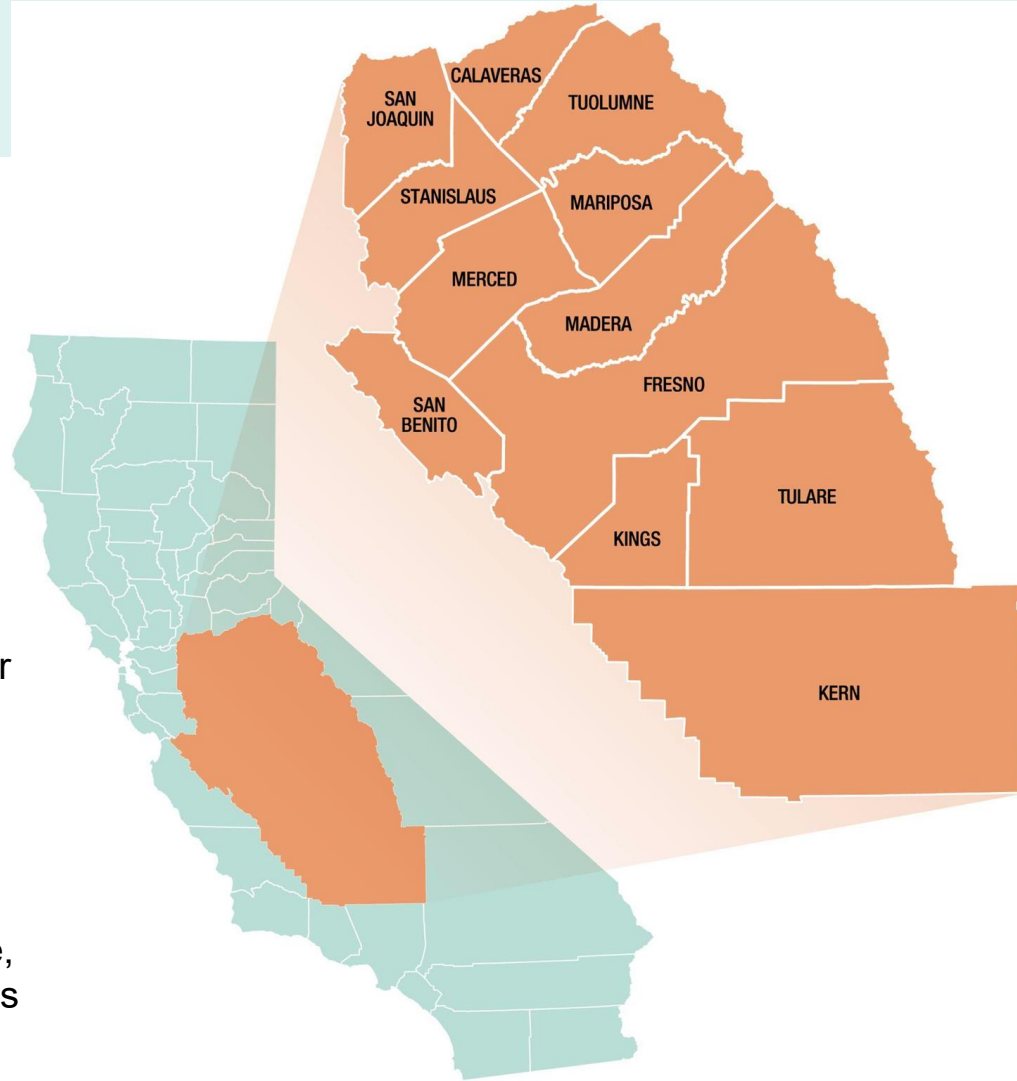
We are a regional consortium that represents Public Health Directors and Health Officers within our 12-county coalition. We aim to elevate the voices, health needs, and priorities of all residents within Central California.

What do we do?

We play multiple roles based on the needs of our LHDs, community and regional partners. We act as:

- Conveners
- Facilitators
- Technical Assistance Providers

Our work is driven by our Leadership Committee, local data trends, and emerging regional priorities and equity frameworks.



****The Challenge****



LHDs in Central CA face chronic recruitment and retention challenges, especially in rural areas and in positions requiring specific certifications.



Students and potential workers are unaware of LHD careers.



We need a more robust and representative public health workforce pipeline.

= Develop an introduction to public health careers

Project Purpose



Develop easily deployable and accessible content for students and non-students



Expand understanding of LHD career opportunities



Offer tools for gaining experience and employment



Incorporate user feedback to enhance content

Methods & Development Process



- Data-informed design using 2023 survey



- Multi-sector advisory board guidance



- Two rounds of user feedback: survey + pilot



- Collaboration with: Academic partners, LHJ staff, Students

Interactive Audience Survey

- Introduction to 2023 CCPHC Survey

Take the abbreviated version live!



- Real-time comparison with 2023 data



Key Findings

Join SLIDO!

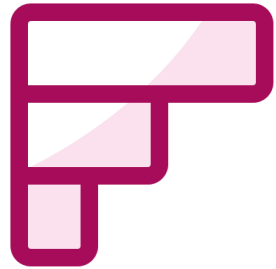
- Go to **slido.com** and enter code **2496064**

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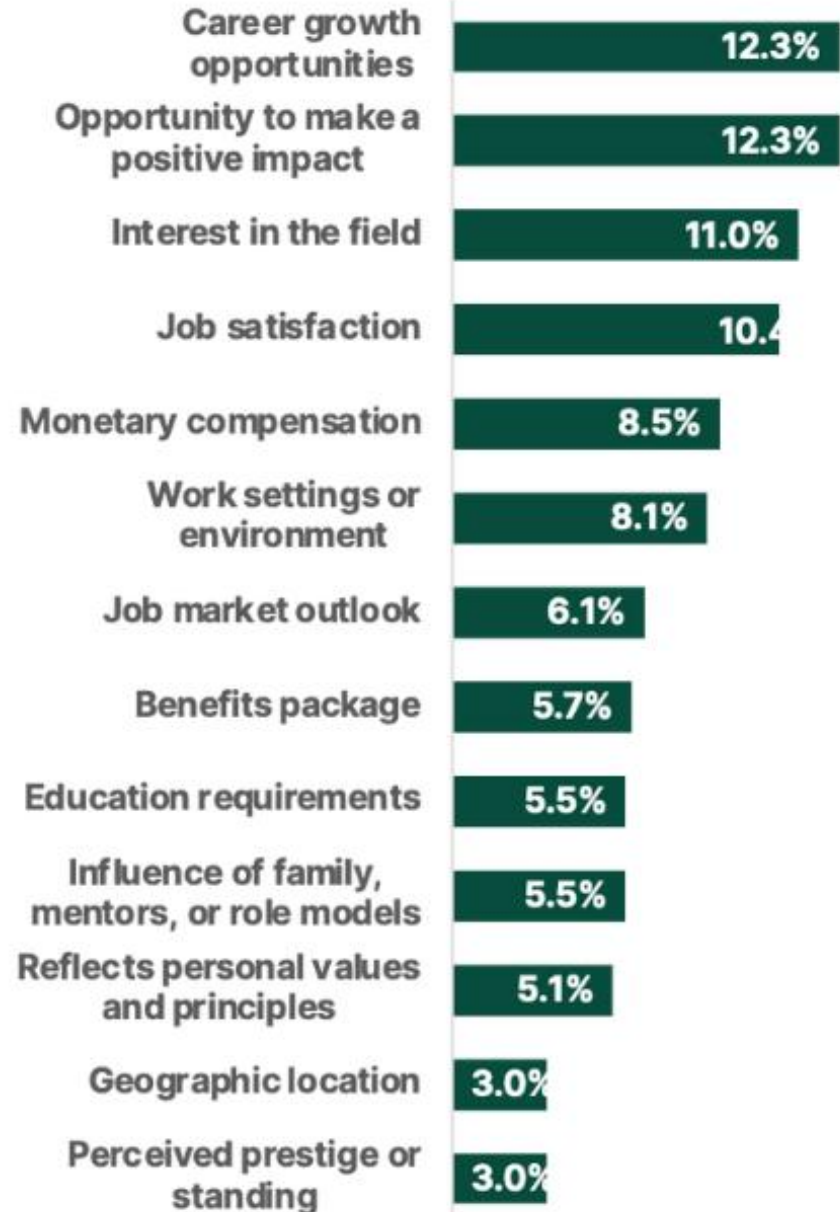


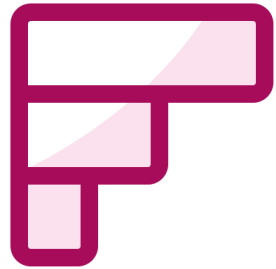
What are the first three words or phrases that come to mind when OTHERS think of "public health"?



**What are the top three
career considerations for
future workers?**

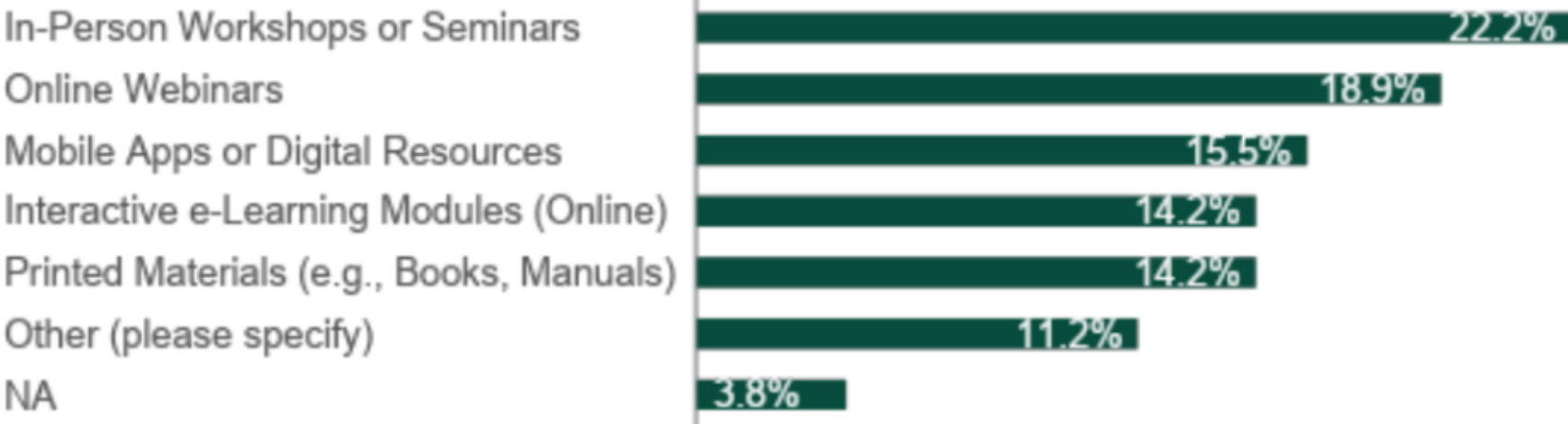
**Top 3 career considerations
(N = 472, multiple selections allowed)**





How do students want to learn about public health careers?

Preferred Career Learning Modalities,



Survey Sample Overview

1,498 initial responses collected via Qualtrics

472 valid, authentic responses after data cleaning

Age range: 14–45 (mean: 21.7 years)

72% identified as current students

Broad geographic distribution across Central California counties

Gift cards raffled for survey completion

Career Consideration Findings

Only 10%
'definitely'
considering a
public health
career

57% of those
familiar with
the field were
open to
considering it

Knowing
someone in the
field correlated
with greater
interest

Top motivators:
career growth,
positive impact,
interest in the
field

Familiarity with Public Health

44% of respondents were not familiar or only slightly familiar with public health

Only 36% knew someone in the field

36% correctly identified the presence of only one LHD per county

Misconceptions were common around services and structure of LHDs

Misconceptions and Knowledge Gaps

- Many associated clinical roles (e.g., physician, pharmacist) with LHDs
- Core roles like fiscal manager and admin staff were underrecognized
- Participants showed strong interest in day-to-day job details, pay, and application process

Curriculum Design Insights

Preferred formats: in-person workshops, webinars, digital resources

Students and others desire content related to:

- Job types and application guidance
- Day-to-day responsibilities
- Salary info and required skills
- Real-life career stories
- Networking opportunities

Curriculum Objectives

Objectives

Introduce the field of Public Health

Provide information on job opportunities available @ LHDs

Provide an overview of LHD programs

Highlight purpose and impact of Local Health Departments (LHDs)

Inform students on applying and onboarding process as well as how to get involved (internship/volunteer opportunities, networking, etc.)

Features of the Curriculum

Modular,
flexible design

Embedded
video
components

Actionable
guidance on
gaining
experience

Designed for
classroom and
community use

Curriculum Content Overview

Welcome

- An introduction to the course, the field of Public Health, and Local Health Departments (LHDs)

A Day in the Life

- video showcasing a Day in the Life @ an LHD

Emerging Opportunities

- highlights emerging opportunities in the field, namely work around PSE and Climate Change

Job Opportunities and Roles

- highlights two lesser known jobs @ LHDs (Epi and PHNs)

The Core of the Core – Programs

- covers several different programs/services @ LHDs, jobs within them, and salaries/benefits information for those roles

LHD Administration

- highlights leadership roles @ LHDs as well as their organizational structure

Applying and Onboarding

- shows how to find jobs @ LHDs in Central California

Engaging Subject Matter Experts

Media Team

5 SMEs, from 4 LHJs, and one consulting group

Review Team

5 SMEs from 2 universities and three LHJs

Each subject matter expert received:

- Scopes of Work that detailed the goals of each team, the approximate hours required, and tasks to be completed.
- Stipends

Full participation made SMEs eligible for a stipend, which some declined and some accepted.



Curriculum Sample: Emerging Issues

Climate Change ▲†

An Emerging Need

The climate might just be changing! (lots of research shows it is). As the world is simultaneously learning about and dealing with the effects of this change, Public Health must be ready to address issues that stem from a shifting climate.



The Effects of Climate Change in our Region

California is no stranger to wildfires, but these don't just occur in the northern and southern regions of the state. Central California is heavily impacted by wildfires. Some of our CCPHC counties have seen large fires in recent years, including Tuolumne, Fresno, and Kings. As you'll see later in this curriculum, these Counties **MUST** keep emergency evacuation plans in the event of wildfires.

Imagine (you have to close your eyes on this one): You're living in the hills in a relatively remote area, and you start smelling smoke. Before you know it, you see the flames emerging from a wildfire in the distance.

- What do you do?
- Where do you go?
- How do you protect your home and essential belongings?

These are answers that often come from Public Health. Several Local Health Departments have prepared emergency preparedness plans in coordination with other County Agencies for situations like wildfires.

Curriculum Sample: Education and Salary

Education and Bacon - Epis [▲]

Education and Requirements

So how do you become an Epidemiologist? The typical path for an Epi is to attain a Bachelor's (BA) in Public Health, followed up by a Master's in Public Health (MPH), with a concentration in Epidemiology. Although an MPH is not required, most employers ask for Epis to have an MPH. No formal license or certification is required.

The Bacon

At our LHDs, salaries for Epidemiologists typically range from **\$82,000 - \$120,000** or more. This is based on:

- Years of experience
- Potential for negotiation
- Whether or not you are in a supervisory position
- The County in which you are applying

The number of epidemiologists employed by an LHD vary widely across LHDs, and typically depends on the size of an LHD and the resources at their disposal. Some LHDs have several Senior Epidemiologists with supporting Epis, and some smaller LHDs may have just one or no epidemiologists on staff.



Curriculum Sample: Finding a Job

Finding Jobs @ LHDs ^{AT}

So you wanna work at a Local Health Department? Once it's time to apply, here's what you gotta do. We'll provide as much context as we can, but if all else fails, this might need to be you:



Where to Look

LHDs are run through County Governments, so all the information you need related to those jobs is on a government website. You're going to be absolutely shocked to hear that the name of this website is governmentjobs.com. LHDs will often post job openings on their Facebook and LinkedIn pages as well.

We'll go over details on using governmentjobs.com in this section. This is what you see on the main page, feel free to open it and look around:



Find Purpose in the Public Sector



Pilot Phase Overview (Fall 2024)

Formal testing of the curriculum

Engagement with pilot participants

- UC Merced
 - Seventeen (17) 1st/2nd-year students
- CSU Stanislaus
 - Four (4) 4th-year students

Synthesized insights to refine content

Pilot Feedback: Key Findings

What did we ask about?

- Demographics
- Was content difficult to understand?
- Was content engaging?
- Was content aesthetically pleasing?
- [content specific questions]
- Short Answer-most valuable content, and any additional comments

What did we learn?

- Content ratings (out of 10)
 - Difficulty: 2.2
 - Engaging: 7.5
 - Aesthetics: 7.5
- Interest in Shadowing:
 - Epi & PH Nursing: 89%
 - LHD Programs: 85%
 - Executive/Senior Management: 68%

According to participants: *Most Valuable Pieces of Content*

The slide about how broad Public Health is dealt with it in a way that didn't make it seem overwhelming.

I found the '**Day in the Life**' video and visualization practice to be extremely valuable. It's not often that visual and kinesthetic learners get material that is beneficial.

I like the visuals and examples with "You're..." **to let students put themselves in the shoes of people in public health departments.** Makes it easier to feel what they feel.

A valuable piece was **knowing what epidemiologists do and how much they make.** I think pay and work transparency is so important, so to know that after schooling, it's possible to find a good-paying job puts me personally at ease.

I had no idea there was Public Health Microbiologists and the career field really interested me.

I think learning about PH Officers because **I didn't know that was a thing.**

Additional Feedback (Optional)

- “The organizational structure is a HUGE plus. I love that! It was such a nice surprise and incredibly helpful to see how everything is put together and visually very appealing.”
- “I liked all the links that you could go to throughout the readings. I think **if I wanted to know more about something, I would have all the tools to find out.**”
- “More informal videos would be helpful.”
- “**Breaking down the eligibility and requirements you need for each career** talked about in this section can really help many students. Especially those who don't get many opportunities.”
- “I really **appreciated the scope of careers that are covered.** I feel most students hear about entry level positions but the introduction of these more senior positions because it gives students something to look forward to.”

Implementation & Partnerships



Current deployment efforts

Administering in Intro to Public Health & career-focused courses for Fall Semester 2025

- Intro courses (approx. 300 students @ UC Merced)
- Senior Course at CSU Stanislaus (approx. 24 students)
- Internship Course @ CSU Fresno



Partner institutions

UC Merced

CSU Stanislaus

CSU Fresno

Recommendations for Others considering similar curriculum

Use Data	Use data to guide workforce education
Collaborate	Collaborate across sectors for content design
Understand	Understand priorities of the educational institutions you partner with → keep them engaged throughout the process
Adapt	Adapt content to local needs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief and simple• Bridge learning with informality → students aren't looking for another textbook
Invest	Invest in early outreach to build workforce awareness

Next Steps

Spread the word!

- **Goal** - reach colleges and high schools in all twelve (12) Central California Counties
- **Strategy**: target Junior Colleges with dual enrollment

Continuous evaluation and refinement

- Feedback forms built into the curriculum will be reviewed each quarter to flag any immediate issues
- Meetings with implementers to identify ways to continue to make the curriculum accessible and relevant
- Formal (IRB approved) Pilot with a cohort of CSU Stanislaus students is in the works

Support scalable public health education efforts

- Co-develop strategies to engage curriculum participants in additional learning and exposure opportunities

Thank You

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Stay in touch! →



Acknowledgments:

California Department of Public Health

Blue Shield of CA Foundation

CCPHC Staff (Japjeet Singh Uppal)

Academic and LHJ partners

Student Pilot Users

Questions/Reflections?