Ph.D. in Health Services
Community Health Specialization

Specialized Knowledge Area Module V
Advanced Theory, Methods, and Practice in Community Health Services

Introduction

This KAM is designed to expand and illustrate your knowledge of health behavior change theory, community health program planning methods, and community health assessment practice. You will need to document an interdisciplinary approach to helping communities plan, promote, and sustain health enhancing practices and services.

Overall Learning Objectives

Upon completing this KAM, you will be able to demonstrate your understanding of the social and behavioral theoretical and conceptual foundations supporting health behavior change at the community and individual level (breadth). You will have a research based understanding of the community health program planning process used to deliver health service, education, or policy change needed to improve a specific community health practice (depth). You will also demonstrate your ability to analyze and recommend a community health intervention for your community by applying contemporary theory and research (application). Your work should also demonstrate sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which health behavior changes occur.

Breadth Component

Health Services in the Contemporary Content: Community Health

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing the breadth component of this KAM, you will be able to discuss the relevance of behavioral change theories to contemporary issues in health promotion. Theories of relevance as an example may include the health belief model, social modeling theory, theory of reasoned action, transtheoretical model, and diffusion theory. You will be able to explain the major concepts of selected theories including targets of change and explain the usefulness of theory to health promotion interventions. Breadth of knowledge will be demonstrated by writing a theory based scholarly paper.
Learning Resources

The learning resources provided in this knowledge area module are examples of the classic, contemporary, and cross cultural literature used to enhance your understanding of community health theory, concepts, issues, and applications. You are invited to create your own reading list in consultation with your faculty assessor. Select at as minimum five texts and at least one contemporary scholarly journal that will serve as the foundation of your reading program and the basis for your demonstration of competency in the Breadth component of this KAM.


Demonstration of Competence

Design and implement an individual project resulting in a scholarly paper that reflects the relationship of behavior change theory to a health promotion issue. The intent of the paper is to show the usefulness of theory in guiding the practice of the community health specialist. What guidance does theory provide in terms of analyzing a specific health behavior. How does theory help us to identify causes of health behaviors. Based on theory, how can the community health educator select an appropriate intervention.

Your paper should analyze a specific health problem using three different health behavior change theories. Your project should identify a specific target group and the health problem, i.e. adolescence and low birth weight infants. The project is designed in consultation with your assessor, equivalent to a five credit doctoral seminar, and demonstrates your knowledge of contemporary health behavior change theory applied to contemporary health issues. A suggested length for the paper is 25-30 pages.

Depth Component
Current Concepts and Methods in Health Services: Community Health-Health Promotion Program Planning

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing the depth component of this KAM, you will be able to demonstrate the relationship of theory to program design and implementation. You will be able to suggest appropriate health intervention strategies based on knowledge of research based data. You will be able to select and justify a program planning process appropriate for your community.

Learning Resources and Bibliographic Guidelines

Read a minimum of five books selected in consultation with your assessor. The theme of the readings should be on the health program planning process and issues associated with assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating community health education interventions. The resources listed in this section serve only as examples of reading you might find helpful.


**Demonstration of Competence**

Complete both assignments:

1. Compile an annotated bibliography of sources related to health program planning interventions related to a health issue of your choice. Health issues should be selected from the following: tobacco reduction, drugs and alcohol, sexual behavior, nutrition, exercise and fitness, stress, or other issues related to well being and a healthy lifestyle. The bibliography must include a summary and critical analysis for a minimum of fifteen sources and should be drawn primarily from current (past three years) research based articles in scholarly journals.

2. Write a scholarly paper requiring an in-depth examination of the relationship of theory to program planning processes and the design of a health intervention program. In your paper illustrate how theory data based evidence and the program planning process can promote community health.
Application Component
Integrative Professional Practice in Health Services: Community Health

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing the application component of this KAM, you will be able to select a theoretical orientation appropriate to the change target selected (breadth). You will then analyze the need for a health intervention using a data based approach (depth). And finally, you will design an intervention appropriate to your community (application). Your paper will reflect an integrated approach to theory and practice in a community health context.

Learning Resources and Bibliographic Guidelines

In consultation with your faculty assessor select at least five literature sources that be used in your application project. Design an intervention and relate your readings to the health issue that chosen. A very useful adjunct to your reading resources is a subscription to Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. This weekly document is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in an electronic format free of charge. To receive a free copy send an e-mail message to listserv@listserv.cdc.gov. The body of your message should include the statement “SUBscribe mmwr.toc”. You may also obtain a subscription through the webpage at www.cdc.gov.


**Web sites**

http://weber.u.washington.edu/~cheadle/cli/projects.html

http://www.cdc.gov

http://www2.cdc.gov/mmwr/mmwr_wk.html


http://www2.cdc.gov/nccdphp/brfs (behavioral risk factor surveillance system)
Demonstration of Competence

Complete one of the following:

1. Conduct a health needs assessment of your workplace, neighborhood, or a grade in your local school. Identify the health status of your community using the criteria established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Identify health status improvement objectives. Using a theoretical model discuss, the factors that facilitate as well as hinder health promotion efforts.

2. Identify an undeserved population in your community. Using sound theories of behavior change and program development, select a target for change and develop a program plan to reduce the incidence of disease due to the target. For example you might propose interventions to reduce smoking among teenagers by greater enforcement of laws preventing sales to minors. Your program might include educational, media, as well as community organization strategies.

3. Conduct a community health capacity inventory of available health promotion opportunities in your community. Determine the unmet needs of your community based on services that are currently available. How would you increase use of community services among those who are undeserved and/or unaware of services available? Using a community development perspective, how would you close the gap between health needs and services available?

4. Submit a previously completed major work, which demonstrates your mastery of the application of theory and program planning to community health issues. Submit a 7-10 page critical analysis of your work showing how your new acquired knowledge would strengthen your past accomplishment.

Note: The ideas listed above are intended as guides and should be used to enhance, not limit your choices. We encourage you to develop your own approach.
Appendix A
Criteria for Assessment

Assessment of your competence in this particular knowledge area will encompass three different modes—breadth, depth, and application—based upon demonstrated competence in a specific area in community health. You will be evaluated on the quality of your demonstration of the critical issues (breadth), your presentation of the research supporting the critical issues (depth), and the usefulness of this knowledge to your profession (application). Individual wants and needs, and the expectations of your faculty assessor, will determine the specific nature of your readings and assignments. While we have suggested general assignments for each section of the KAM, we encourage developing a unique approach. In all cases, the project chosen must be the equivalent of a final project in a five-credit doctoral seminar (four credits for the application component).

In addition, written work should be structured in a format acceptable to refereed journals. Although not required, consider developing your application project with a publication or presentation in mind. As your project will reflect a sufficiently high degree of originality, rigor, and quality anyway, a publication or presentation will greatly enhance your professional stature and credibility.

Walden requires documentation of your competence. Think about how you might provide this documentation. In all cases, you will support your work with adequate citations from the scholarly literature. If some of your work needs to be kept confidential, please be sure to clearly communicate this to your assessor. Assessors may require some form of independent evaluation of your work. In many instances, persons who provide an audience for your presentations may supply this evaluation, by colleagues, or clients.
Appendix B
Selected Journals in Community Health

American Journal of Health Promotion
American Journal of Public Health
Applied Preventive Psychology
Current Issues in Public Health
Family and Community Health
Health Affairs
Health and Hygiene
Health Education
Health Education Quarterly
Health Education and Behavior
Health Education Research
Health Psychology
Hispanic Journal of Behavior Sciences
International Journal of Health Education
Journal of Aging and Health
Journal of Behavioral Medicine
Journal of Community Health Nursing
Journal of the American Medical Association
Journal of Cancer Education
Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Undeserved
Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community
Journal of Research on Adolescence
Journal of School Health
Journal of School Nursing
Journal of Studies in Alcohol
Journal of Youth and Adolescence
Milbank Quarterly
Medical Care
Medical Care Research and Review
New England Journal of Medicine
Public Health Reports
Qualitative Health Research

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