

# Clinical Public Health Integration in Medical School Curriculum: Transitioning Medical Student Training from Medical Problems to Health Solutions

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## Background

The current chronic disease burden, growing health disparities, and evolution of our healthcare system require that medical students be equipped with basic public health education to effectively manage patients, navigate the healthcare system, and advocate for health<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6</sup>. The Institute of Medicine and the AAMC emphasize the need for physicians to be trained in public health<sup>1,8</sup>. The inaugural year of the revised curriculum at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences (GW SMHS) represented a first step at the institution to integrate clinical public health into medical education. As part of this process, the Clinical Public Health (CLiPH) Working Group, a student formed curriculum advisory board, was created to give real time feedback and assess the Public Health & Health Policy theme curriculum in the first year at GW SMHS. The project objectives were:  
To review and evaluate the effectiveness of the public health theme curriculum in the first year of the revised curriculum, including first year medical students' perceptions and knowledge of the public health theme.  
To develop a proposal to maximize opportunities and achieve better integration of the public health theme into the curriculum.

## Project Description

Over the summer, the working group engaged with multiple stakeholders to forward the clinical public health agenda at GW SMHS. The project was fully designed and executed by students and resulted in a novel model of student driven curricular development in addition to clinical public health integration in medical education.

To conduct the curriculum assessment, the students developed a template in partnership with Dean Goldman of the Office of Medical Education and the group reviewed over fifty sessions, in the Public Health & Health Policy Theme, Clinical Skills and Reasoning Course (CSR), and intersession activities. Outside research was done to supplement resources to recommend and improve integration of the clinical public health material into the revised preclinical curriculum. Journal articles, textbooks, online videos, websites, student activities, and other resources were compiled. Recommended revisions and developments were sent to faculty stakeholders as resources for the revision process of the curriculum. The group compiled a larger final summary document as a compilation of the itemized deliverables presented in the Work Plan.

## Project Objectives and Work Plan

Below is a summary of the overarching projects goals, the specific deliverables and the current status of the larger project. Because this project had many moving parts and many contributors, this Work Plan served as a living document for project tracking and organization.

| Work Plan   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Goal  | Deliverables  | Status  |
| <b>1. Literature Review</b>   |   |   |
| Conduct a short literature review to synthesize current landscape in regard to public health in medical education   | 2 page literature summary   | Completed   |
| <b>2. Summary of Student &amp; Health Department Surveys</b>  |   |   |
| Analyze student and professional feedback and compile summary reports to direct work to enrich the clinical public health curriculum.<br>Data points for student feedback include:<br>1. Spring 2015 CME Survey: Clinical Public Health Questions<br>2. GW/OME Student Evaluations of the 2014 Winter & 2015 Spring Intersessions<br>3. MS4 Health Policy Capstone<br>4. Fairfax Health Department  | 2 page summary of student feedback from CME and OME surveys<br>1 page summary from Fairfax HD   | Completed   |
| <b>3. Review and Recommendation Summaries: Public Health Sessions</b>   |   |   |
| Complete a review and compile recommendations for each session within the public health and health policy curriculum theme:<br>1. Complete a 2-page review for each session that will be offered again in the 2015-2016 MS1 curriculum<br>2. Summarize successes and improvements for sessions no longer being offered.<br>3. Brainstorm list of recommendations for sessions scheduled for the future blocks in the Fall 2015 MS2 curriculum.<br>The student working group will work together to share input and utilize the literature review, student feedback summary and the expert and faculty recommendations to guide these synopses. | Compilation of PH session reviews submitted to the Public Health and Health Policy theme Director   | Completed   |
| <b>4. Review and Recommendation Summaries: CSR Sessions</b>   |   |   |
| Work within case based structure of disease and clinical courses to highlight public health concepts.<br>Partner with Social Justice group and CSR directors, Dr. Flory and Dr. Kakar, to integrate public health concepts into CSR sessions.<br>Complete a review and compile recommendations for each CSR session.<br>Complete a 2-page review for each session of the 2014-2015 MS curriculum.   | Compilation of CSR reviews submitted to the CSR directors.  | Completed   |
| <b>5. IRB for Class of 2019 Survey</b>  |   |   |
| Submit IRB addendum application for data collection of the incoming MD Class of 2019 evaluation of the clinical public health awareness and interest, and perceptions of the clinical public health curriculum for the 2015-2016 school year.<br>Create a framework to ensure continued student based assessment, engagement and implementation of new initiatives to enrich the clinical public health curriculum.   | IRB addendum<br>Survey drafts for study stages  | Completed, pending response   |
| <b>6. Faculty &amp; Expert Engagement</b>   |   |   |
| Engage in GW faculty and clinical public health and medical education experts in face-to-face meetings to gather feedback and valuable input.<br>Draft concept and implement the institution the position of a Clinical Public Health Liaison (CPHL) to the MS1/MS2 core curriculum blocks to assist the block directors in finding ways to best integrate clinical public health concepts.   | CPHL position description<br>Secure at least 2 CPHL's   | Completed (1 position secured at this time)                         |
| <b>7. Partner with the GWU School of Public Health</b>  |   |   |
| Develop the SMHS and School of Public Health relationship in order to create more opportunities to collaborate within the clinical public health curriculum.<br>Reach out to faculty and individuals with affiliations with the SPH for potential CPHL candidates.<br>Collaborate with the Public Health Student Association (PHSA).  | Recruit a SPH faculty member to serve as a CPHL.<br>Establish working relationship between the CLiPH Student Group and the SPHA.                                    | CPHL recruit not from the SPH.<br>Working relationship established. |
| <b>8. Marketing of GW's MD Program Clinical Public Health Curriculum</b>  |   |   |
| Map clinical public health curriculum at the macro level in order to effectively market and share the unique and innovative model for clinical public health implemented at the GWU SMHS.<br>Work with the Dean's Office to draft clinical public health content to be added to the GW SMHS MD program website.   | Summary of suggested website revisions.<br>Compilation of student profiles highlighting summer experiences in clinical public health.                               | Completed   |
| <b>9. Institutionalization of CLiPH Working Group</b>   |   |   |
| Develop a student interest group at the SMHS for expand interest in clinical public health.<br>Plan and organize a lecture series to provide students with information and resources in clinical public health.<br>Partner with the PHSA and invite their membership in the student organization.<br>Institutionalize the summer opportunity of the CLiPH Student Working Group to work with the Dean's Office to continue providing student driven curricular development.<br>Document accomplishments and brainstorm for next steps to establish continuity.  | Establish the Students for Clinical Public Health (SCiPH) as a student organization at the SMHS.<br>Host lecture series.<br>Compile products and hand off document. | Completed (first lecture scheduled September 24, 2015)              |

## Next Steps

Future work to revise the curriculum should include study of the evolution of students' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs surrounding clinical public health and the impact it has on their development as a physician. To better inform the development of the curriculum and how best to engage students with clinical public health, major stakeholders, such as health departments, community stakeholders, public health experts, and most importantly students should continue to be a part of the dialogue.

The group aims toward clinical public health integration across the four year medical degree curriculum and better collaboration with the GW Milken School of Public Health (SPH) to create an expanded scope of practice within public health for practicing physicians.

The CLiPH working group aspires to cultivate a "core social institution" that is of the community, chartered by the community in partnership<sup>3</sup>. The CLiPH vision for clinical public health includes:

- longitudinal community engagement and service
- expanded network of mentors actively conducting public health work
- interprofessional education and collaboration
- advocacy training and opportunities
- skills in epidemiology, biostatistics, and EBM
- appropriate evaluation measures for clinical public health skills
- social justice integration

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