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## DBCHES, CUP & CHES Exam: What's the Connection?

Beverly S. Mahoney

*Liberty University*, [bmahoney@liberty.edu](mailto:bmahoney@liberty.edu)

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## DBCHEs, CUP & CHES Exam: What's the Connection?

### Written By:

Beverly Saxton Mahoney, RN, MS, PhD, CHES - DBCHEs Coordinator

The Division Board for Certification of Health Education Specialists (DBCHEs) spent a productive 2006-2007 primarily focusing on adaptations that were needed to keep the CHES exam in line with the updated document, *A Competency-Based Framework for Health Educators - 2006*.

Changes outlined in the framework were a result of the Competency Update Project (CUP), a 6-year study to assess what health educators do in practice. To have the CHES exam coincide with changes to the Areas of Responsibility, Competencies and Sub-competencies as outlined by CUP, DBCHEs completed a comprehensive review of these areas. Then they reviewed the matrix, or blueprint of the exam, to assure alignment of the exam with the framework.

In July of 2006, DBCHEs met at the NCHEC office in Whitehall, PA for an "item" writing workshop. An item is a question for the exam that undergoes a rigorous approval process to be deemed acceptable. During the item writing workshop, 99 new test items that address the revised Competencies and Sub-competencies were constructed and added into the test-item bank. In addition, all existing items that were still pertinent were updated and retained, while those that were no longer appropriate were discarded. References for each item were also rechecked and updated.

All new CHES exam items were evaluated by a Professional Examination Service (PES) psychometrician and an editor to verify that they conform to accepted principles of test construction, grammar and style. Drawing from the item bank, two new test forms were developed, which will first be implemented in October of 2007. The items selected for the exam were reviewed by PES and DBCHEs in two separate processes. A final review of all items, as well as a meeting to establish the "pass point" for the exam occurred during July of 2007.

The Competency Update Project (CUP) contributed greatly to the health education profession, illuminating what health educators actually do in practice. Following this rigorous review and detailed process, DBCHEs directors and NCHEC have everything in place and are looking forward to the first CHES exam based on the updated framework.

## Getting Creative with Continuing Education

### Written By:

Michael Stauffer, MA, CHES - DBPD Coordinator

Continuing Education Contact Hours (CECH) can be earned through participation in experiences that assist in the development or enhancement of our knowledge and skills. These experiences must directly relate to the Seven Areas of Responsibility adopted by the profession.

One of the most flexible ways of earning CECH are through "creative endeavors." These pursuits are defined as creative and scholarly activities, outside of daily job responsibilities, which involve the development of original materials for use by professionals or the lay public, and/or authorship resulting in the publication of articles, books, chapters, monographs or reports relating to one or more of the Areas of Responsibility. Other examples include editing a book or other written piece, designing a training module/course or developing a product practical to the field of health education.

For more information on these and other activities, visit the "Continuing Education" link on the homepage of our web site.

## On the Cutting Edge of Success

### Written By:

Brenda Marshall, RN, MS, PhD, CHES  
DBCHEs - Director



**Cassandra Harris, MS, CHES**, has been a health educator at MD Anderson Cancer Center, University of Texas, for the past 13 years. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Community Health at Purdue University and her Masters of Science at Illinois State University. Harris enjoys participating in CHES accredited events, because they are informative and keep her up-to-date on cutting-edge programs and projects throughout the field.

Attending CHES-sponsored events has had a significant impact on her career, allowing her to establish her expertise and define the role of health education in health promotion and disease prevention. The CHES programs she has attended have increased her professional ability to plan, implement and evaluate health programs for schools on a local level, as well as review programs used at the state level.

When Harris was elected president of her local SOPHE chapter she credited her CHES certification and the recognized expertise that is associated with it. Harris appreciates the rewards of being a Certified Health Education Specialist and uses every opportunity to promote the CHES certification to others. She believes that an individual's competency and the ability to stay on the cutting edge of the profession can be achieved through attendance at continuing education events, engagement in research and implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based programs.

# The CHES Bulletin



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1541 Alta Drive, Suite 303  
Whitehall, PA 18052

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*(left to right) Front: Bev Mahoney, Dixie Dennis, Kelly Wilson, Linda Lysoby. Back: Rick Schulze, Mathew Adeyanju, Mal Goldsmith, Michael Stauffer, Carol Cox, Eric Buhi, Sean Kaufman.*

**The Board of Commissioners (BOC)** met for its annual face-to-face meeting April 27-29, 2007 at the NCHEC office in Allentown, PA. The BOC governs all activities carried out by NCHEC.

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