



## **Nevada Public Health Mentorship Program (NvPHMP)**

### *Building the Next Generation of Public Health Professionals*

#### **Program Manual**

The Nevada Public Health Association (NPHA) in collaboration with the University of Nevada Las Vegas School of Community Health Sciences (SCHS) aims to build the next generation of public health professionals through the Nevada Public Health Mentorship Program (NvPHMP).

NvPHMP Mentoring Program matches experienced public health professionals with students and new public health professionals in a one-to-one relationship. It is intended to facilitate the mentoring process among public health professionals, recent graduates, and current students in Nevada for one year. The goals are

- to provide opportunities for mentors to enrich their contributions to public health and further develop as leaders;
- to establish clear pathways to careers in Public Health
- to enhance the professional development of the public health mentee; and
- to strengthen the public health workforce network in Nevada.

Mentoring relationships are intended to help students make the transition from an academic to professional environment, and to offer an opportunity for professional development, networking, and an exchange of ideas between experienced professionals and the next generation of public health leaders.

#### **Mentoring Relationship**

Mentoring is a process whereby an experienced public health professional (the mentor) guides another individual (the mentee) in the development and examination of their own ideas, learning, and professional development. This relationship has the opportunity of providing support, guidance, and knowledge to facilitate professional success.

#### **Benefits**

Mentoring relationships provide great opportunities and benefits for the mentor, and mentee. Mentoring has shown to have a positive effect on a person's career and those who have been mentored tend to reach their goals faster and are more satisfied with their work and careers. The Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals, a consensus set of skills that are identified as desirable for delivering essential public health services, calls for mentoring activities:

<sup>1</sup> Public Health Foundation. 2014. Core competencies for public health professionals. Washington, DC.

- 8A6. Tier 1: Participates in mentoring and peer review or coaching opportunities.
- 8B6. Tier 2: Establishes mentoring, peer advising, coaching or personal development opportunities for the public health workforce.
- 8C6. Tier 3: Promotes mentoring, peer advising, coaching or other personal development opportunities for the public health workforce, including him or herself.

#### Benefits to the Mentor

- Access to a greater professional support system or network and increases a mentor's own professional network.
- Exposure to emerging talent and future workforce pool.
- Increased attention to own professional development.
- Exposure to diverse thoughts, styles, personalities, and cultures.
- Increased knowledge of recruiting success factors.
- Increased feedback loop to NvPHMP regarding education and workforce development training needs.
- Leadership development in the Public Health Profession.

#### Benefits to the Mentee

- Access to a greater professional support system and increase a mentee's professional network.
- Develop new strategies in navigating professional career path.
- Identify gaps in knowledge and/or skill sets.
- Additional professional and leadership development.
- Gain exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences.
- Increase knowledge of career success factors.
- Stay informed about the latest trends and developments in the field.
- Complement or build upon internships.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of a Program Coordinator**

The NPHA will designate a Program Coordinator in the north and south to oversee the development and implementation of NvPHMP Mentorship Program. The Program Coordinator ensures program quality and performance related to recruiting, screening, matching, monitoring, and closing the relationships with the mentor and mentee.

#### **Tasks**

- Create and oversee implementation of an ongoing mentor recruitment plan, including development of annual recruitment activity plans, development and distribution of program marketing materials, presentations to targeted organizations, and ensuring a presence at key community events.
- Perform and oversee participant screening, training, matching, support and supervision, recognition, and closure activities.

- Oversee the development and management of relationships with schools and community-based organizations.
- Manage the planning and implementation of mentorship group events and recognition activities.
- Maintain and update the Mentorship Program manual as needed.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of a Mentor**

Public health professionals can serve as a mentor to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as, new professionals or those changing careers.

Graduate students can serve in a mentoring capacity to undergraduate students establishing a strong student community and pathway from undergrad to graduate programs.

Mentors should have been working in public health for at least five years. As a mentor, it is expected that you demonstrate professional coaching, career guidance, and moral support. Evaluative feedback (resumes, cover letters, goals, etc.) and other advice for your mentee is highly valued.

### **Tasks**

- Initiate contact with your mentee.
- Exchange additional contact information with your mentee (e.g., office phone, cell phone, e-mail).
- Arrange to meet (i.e., face-to-face, by telephone, or virtually) with your mentee a minimum of two contact hours per month.
- Review and provide feedback on mentee's resume.
- Assist in the development of and review your mentee's Professional Development Action Plan.
- Plan and discuss ways your experiences and resources might help their goals.
- Participate in on-going discussions with other participants in the program.
- Offer feedback on observed performances and progress in fulfilling goals of professional development.
- Encourage and demonstrate confidence in your mentee.
- Be liberal with constructive and evaluative feedback.
- Encourage independent behavior, but be willing to invest time in your mentee.
- Provide accessibility and exposure for your mentee within your own professional circle.
- Illustrate the methodology and importance of networking.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of a Mentee**

Mentees are those who are currently working in public health for under five years, have changed their career focus and/or studying public health or related field and seeking to advance their career. As a mentee, it is expected that you demonstrate an eagerness to learn, respect for the mentor's experience and knowledge, and flexibility and understanding of the mentor's commitments.

## Tasks

- Initiate contact with your mentor.
  - Exchange additional contact information with your mentee (i.e., office phone, cell phone, e-mail).
  - Arrange to meet (i.e., face-to-face, by telephone, or virtually) with your mentee a minimum of two contact hours per month.
  - Discuss your needs and expectations with your mentor.
  - Prepare and send an updated resume to be reviewed by your mentor.
  - Share your Professional Development Action Plan and discuss some of these goals with your mentor.
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- Participate in on-going discussions with other participants in the program.

## Rules for Participation

**Mentors:** Must be an active member of NPHA in good standing.  
Public Health professionals must be currently working in the public health or related field for five years or more.  
Public Health students must be admitted into a graduate program.  
Must be willing to commit to the mentorship program for one year.  
Must complete a mentor application.  
Must be 18 years of age to apply.

**Mentees:** Must be an active member of NPHA in good standing.  
Must be currently working in the public health field for five years or less and/or be studying public health or related field and seeking to advance their career.  
If a student, must be a full-time or part-time student in good standing.  
Must be willing to commit to the mentorship program for one year.  
Must complete a mentee application.  
Must be at least 18 years of age.

## Matching

Mentors and mentees will be matched based on the following criteria:

- Common interests within the field.
- Common goals and approaches to the mentoring program.
- Geographic proximity.
- Complementary personalities - based on Myers Briggs leadership style.
- Other criteria as specifically requested by the mentors/mentees.

The Program Coordinator will contact each participant bimonthly to evaluate the match relationship and activities. The representative will confirm regular communication between the mentor and mentee and activities appropriate to the NvPHMP, as well as evaluate the need for

additional NvPHMP–provided trainings. Additional information will be obtained regarding:

- Mentoring activities
- Goals
- Mentorship development
- Opportunities to improve support

### **Recognition Activities**

It is the policy of NvPHMP Mentorship Program that outstanding mentors and mentees be recognized for their work within the Program. It is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator to plan and implement the following activities:

- Annual recognition event including a mentor and mentee of the year and other outstanding service or performance acknowledgements.
- Feature a mentor and/or mentee in the newsletters each quarter
- Award system for length of service.

Program partners will provide support as required.

### **Recruitment Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program that there be ongoing recruitment activities for new mentors. As such, an annual Recruitment Plan will be developed and include goals, strategies, an annual timeline, and budgetary implications. This plan may be modified as determined by the Program Coordinator within NvPHMP.

The Program Coordinator assumes lead responsibility for the recruitment of new mentors.

### **Inquiry and Communication Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program that all inquiries regarding participation in the mentoring program be directed to the Program Coordinator and responded to within four (4) business days in order to provide courteous and respectful customer service and public relation interactions.

NvPHMP respects and cultivates an environment of open communication that encourages all participants to share constructive feedback and information in an effort to improve program services. Such feedback should be directed to the Program Coordinator.

### **Screening Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program that each mentor and mentee applicant completes a screening procedure.

Applicants must complete a written application. Interviews will also be conducted by the Program Coordinator. Applicants will also attend the mentorship orientation provided by

NvPHMP.

### **Orientation Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program that all mentors and mentees attend the Mentorship Program Orientation prior to commencing any mentoring-related activities. The agenda must cover basic program guidelines, safety issues, including mandatory reporting and sexual harassment, and communication/relationship building skills.

The Program Coordinator will oversee the development and implementation of the Mentorship Program Orientation. Evaluation forms will be collected for quality improvement.

### **Confidentiality Policy and Record-Keeping**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program that each step in the mentorship application process be documented by creating a case file for each potential mentor and mentee.

Records of past applicants and participants will be maintained and kept confidential for a period of at least three years after the close of their participation in the program or if not accepted in the program, after the date of application. After three years, records will be shredded and discarded with the approval of the Program Coordinator.

NvPHMP is committed to protecting the confidentiality of participants and families. Participant information including names, written-records, pictures, etc., is strictly confidential for use by NvPHMP or our professional staff. Participant information is considered the property of the agency not the agency staff, and is subsequently not available for review by mentors or mentees. Any confidential information about participants shall be held in confidence with the exception of the limitations included below.

#### *Limits of Confidentiality:*

- Information that is gathered from program participants, written or otherwise shared about themselves in applying to and or participating in the program may be shared with other individuals or organizations directly involved in this Mentorship Program.
- Participant identifying information including names, photographs, videos etc. may be utilized in NvPHMP publication materials. The participant may opt out by notifying the Program Coordinator in writing.
- Confidential information will be made available to law enforcement officials or the courts with a valid and enforceable subpoena. The Program Coordinator shall be notified immediately upon any such legal request for information.
- Should a staff member receive information that a volunteer has violated the program participation agreement by committing a crime, using illegal substances, inappropriately abusing alcohol or other controlled substances, or other program policies, the participant's participation in the program will be terminated and legal authorities be notified as appropriate.
- Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the agency. Such information is considered privileged information,

and its confidentiality is protected by law.

- Members of NvPHMP Board of Directors have access to participant applications only upon authorization by a formal motion of the board. The motion shall identify the person(s) to be authorized to review such records, the specific purpose for such review, and the period of time during which access shall be granted. Such members of the board granted access shall be required to comply with the agency policies on confidentiality and may use the information only for purposes stated by the approved action of the Board of Directors.

### **Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Firearms Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program to prohibit the possession, distribution, or use of any illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, weapons, or other dangerous materials while engaged in the mentoring relationship is prohibited. Any suspected violations should be reported to the Program Coordinator. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification being given to legal authorities that may result in arrest or legal action, and may be punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

### **Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program to maintain a friendly and healthy working environment. While a relaxed, familiar atmosphere is conducive to sharing of ideas and suggestions, participants should be conscious of not engaging in behavior that may be perceived as offensive to any other participant's personal views on gender, ethnicity, religion, or other aspect of personal identification. Violation of this policy against harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including exclusion from this program.

Sexual harassment has been identified as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's participation in this program, (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for participation decisions affecting such individual, or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

When individuals involved in a consensual romantic or sexual relationship are in positions of unequal power, such as mentor and mentee, there is the potential for a conflict of interest, favoritism, and exploitation. These relationships may be less voluntary than the person with greater power perceives, or circumstances may change and conduct that was once welcome may become unwelcome. The fact that a relationship was initially consensual does not insulate the person with greater power from a claim of sexual harassment.

The difference in institutional power and the inherent risk of coercion and exploitation are so great that no mentor and mentee shall enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a mentee. Violation of this policy against harassment will result in disciplinary action up to and including exclusion from this program.

## **Grievance Policy**

NvPHMP understands that in working relationships problems may arise. The first step is for the mentor or mentee with a question or problem to approach the program coordinator and explain the situation. If it is a relationship problem, the program coordinator will then try to support this person, and may choose to contact the individual's counterpart to see if it can be easily resolved.

If the problem cannot be easily resolved, the program coordinator and the participants have the option of implementing a No-Fault Termination.

If a mentor or mentee fails to meet the requirements as stipulated by the NvPHMP Mentorship Program policies, a warning, and/or disciplinary action, including suspension or termination from the Program may occur. Other unacceptable behavior that may result from a disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Unwelcomed physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual.
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material.
- Violation of any local, state, or federal law.

## **No-Fault Termination Policy**

NvPHMP understands that there are potentially many reasons why a mentoring relationship may not work out. We want to make it clear that NvPHMP will not try to place blame or fault on any individual requesting termination, or on any individual who was a party to a match that was terminated.

The procedure for terminating the match before the one year commitment is concluded is as follows:

1. The concerned mentor or mentee contacts the Program Coordinator with an issue that is causing them to consider early termination of the match.
2. If a remedy seems possible, the Program Coordinator will discuss the situation with both parties and try to help them resolve the issue.
3. If the issue appears to be extremely difficult, the Program Coordinator will discuss the issue with the Academic Relations Committee. If possible, a plan of action will be devised whereby they will attempt to resolve the problem.
4. If necessary, the Program Coordinator will deem the match terminated, and s/he will do so without placing fault on any individual.
5. All appropriate parties will be notified in writing that the match has been terminated and if appropriate, the mentor or mentee will be reassigned.

## **Closure Policy**

It is the policy of the NvPHMP Mentorship Program that all mentors and mentees must participate in closure procedures. Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship

regardless of the circumstances of the match ending or whether they intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration. While no party is expected to continue the relationship beyond the formal end of a match, matches may continue in the program beyond the specified program period (one year).

Closure can occur for many reasons including, but not limited to:

- The contracted match duration has ended.
- One or both participants do not want to continue the match due to grievances.
- There are changes in life circumstances of either the mentor or mentee.
- An individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation.

It is left to the discretion of the Program Coordinator whether an individual will be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation performance and current goals and needs of the program.

Future contact will be at the mutual and informal agreement of the mentor and mentee. If future contact is agreed upon, NvPHMP will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended.

An exit interview will be conducted with the mentor and mentee individually to measure the program fidelity, processes, and outcomes.

*We would like to thank the Arizona Public Health Association for sharing their program materials.*