

Conference Workshop Abstract

Public Health for Young Adults Day: Recruiting the next generation

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Background: Public Health for Young Adults Day (PHYA Day) is a one-day program designed to educate high school-age students about the principles and values of the five core areas of public health. The goal of PHYA Day is to foster interest and ultimately increase recruitment into the field of public health. This goal is essential due to the impact of the economic recession of 2008. It was estimated that the local public health workforce decreased from 191,000 to 168,000 across the nation between 2008 and 2013. In spite of 2008's recession, a well-trained, competent public health workforce remains an imperative component of effective public health service delivery. The researchers believe that PHYA Day encourages young people to explore the idea of a public health-focused career by increasing their knowledge of the field as a whole.

Methods: A pre- and post-test survey was used to evaluate this program, determine if participants gained an interest in joining the public health workforce, and measure the learning outcomes of those participants. After gaining proper Institutional Review Board approval the evaluation was completed in April 2015.

Results: When the averages of the post-test were compared to those of the pre-test the results showed that there was a significant gain in knowledge among participants.

Conclusions: Based off of their findings the researchers were able to conclude that PHYA Day is effective in educating high school age students about the options that the public health field have to offer and therefore may increase the number of young adults choosing public health as a career.

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