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Updating the IUHPE Core Competencies for Health Promotion: A scoping review and consultation with members

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### Background

The CompHP Competencies Framework (Dempsey, Battel-Kirk, & Barry, 2011) aimed to delineate the specific body of skills, knowledge, and expertise distinctive to health promotion to unify and strengthen health promotion workforce capacity. In 2016 the competencies were renamed as the 'IUHPE Core Competencies' as part of a rebranding exercise associated with the expansion of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) Accreditation System to the global level.

When the IUHPE Competencies were first published it was acknowledged that, while they had been ratified by a wide-ranging consultation, they would need to be periodically reviewed and updated as experience with them accumulated and the field of health promotion evolved. As it is had been twelve years since their initial publication and in response to calls from the health promotion community, it was decided to update the Competencies to ensure their relevance to, and currency in, the changing socio-political and practice contexts within which they are implemented.

### Aims and Objectives

The aim of the research was to review and update the IUHPE Core Competencies for Health Promotion. More specific objectives included:

- I. To identify key gaps, omissions, and outdated elements of the IUHPE Core Competencies in the context of contemporary and future competency requirements of health promotion practitioners
- II. To update the Competencies using a consultation process with the health promotion community
- III. To ensure that changes to the Competencies are reflected in updates to the IUHPE Professional Standards and Accreditation System documents
- IV. To disseminate the updated Competencies

## Design and Methods

The updating process drew on the documentary analysis-based competency revision process adopted by Allen and Palermo (2022), and involved the following stages:

*I. Identification of relevant documents for analysis:* A literature search of electronic database Ovid Medline, Google scholar, and a review of key websites was carried out in 2023 to retrieve relevant studies, position statements and documents pertaining to the updating of health promotion competencies. Studies/documents were grouped according to the area they were predominantly relevant to, and data were extracted using charts in Microsoft Excel.

*II. Engaged with the documents and perform the analysis:* Data were extracted from included documents retrieved in Stage 1 above and used to draft a set of revised competency statements.

*III. Drafted revised Competencies:* based on the findings from the literature review.

*IV. Engaged stakeholder in consultation on proposed updating:* The updated Revised Draft of the Core Competencies Framework Version 1, with proposed changes highlighted, was forwarded to the IUHPE Executive for review in September 2023. Following this, it was agreed that an online questionnaire would be used to consult with the health promotion community, as represented by practitioners and members registered and engaged with the IUHPE Accreditation System. The online survey was piloted, refined, and distributed in Spring 2024. The questionnaire sought to elicit respondents' views concerning each specific proposed change highlighted in the Draft Framework. Findings were used to refine Draft 1 and produce Draft 2.

*V. Agreed final updates:* Following the review of Draft 2 of the revised framework by the IUHPE Accreditation Committee, final updates were made to produce a revised IUHPE Core Competencies Framework.

*VI. Disseminated updated Competencies:* Following approval of the revised IUHPE Core Competencies Framework by the Accreditation System Management Committee, all associated Professional Standards and supporting documentation, including the website, will be updated to reflect the updated competencies, which will be used as the basis for accreditation and registration in 2025. The updated Framework will be disseminated on the IUHPE website and by email to key stakeholders.

## Findings/results

*Scoping review:* Some 36 documents were retrieved for data analysis and included peer-reviewed journal articles, position statements and declarations by relevant bodies (e.g., IUHPE, WHO, EU and UN and other agencies), and existing competency frameworks that have been implemented globally. Various themes emerged, and studies were grouped according to the main focus of the documents. Study groupings included: sustainability, planetary health, health and digital literacy, gender, emergency preparedness/communicable disease, cultural competency, structural inequity, chronic disease, and global health. Based on the scoping review findings and consultation between researchers, a revised set of competency statements was drafted.

*Stakeholder consultation:* There were 41 online surveys completed from Accredited Course Leads (n=19) and from Practitioners registered on the Accreditation System (n=22). Overall, the response to the proposed changes was positive, with 70-80% of respondents in

agreement. There were some suggestions made regarding specific wording and phrasings. Based on a review of the survey respondents' comments and consultation between the report's authors, the Draft 1 Updated IUHPE Core Competencies for Health Promotion Framework document was revised to produce Draft 2. Given the level of consensus, the Draft 2 version of the Framework was forwarded to the IUHPE Executive Board and Accreditation Committee for their review. Final refinements were made based on feedback from the Accreditation Committee to produce a revised IUHPE Core Competencies Framework.

**Dissemination:** [Conference presentation, reports for the HSE, and journal publications](#)

**Reports:**

Battel-Kirk, B., Dempsey, C., Harte, P., & Barry, M.M. (2024). *Updating the IUHPE Core Competencies for Health Promotion: A scoping review and consultation with members*. A report prepared for the IUHPE. Health Promotion Research Centre, University of Galway.

**Patient Public Involvement:**

IUHPE members who were engaged with Accreditation System were consulted regarding the revision process and key changes to be made to the competency statements.

**Knowledge Translation:**

A report on the revision process and updates was submitted to the IUHPE Executive Board in September 2024 and the new Core Competencies for Health Promotion Framework will be operationalised in 2025.