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# Public Health Summer Academy

Evidence-based Public Health Training

3 Year Evaluation (2012, 2013, 2014)

Report for John J. Dreyzehner, MD, Tennessee Department of Health Commissioner

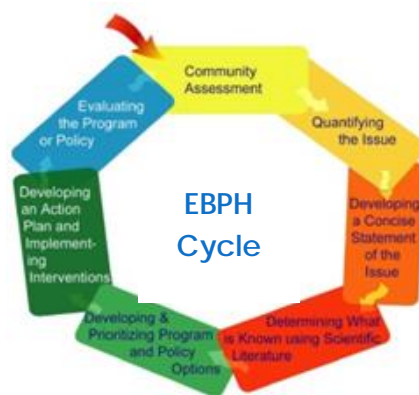
## Executive Summary

Twenty-two East Tennessee Regional Health Office (ETR) employees representing eight counties and the Regional Office (RO) participated in the third annual Public Health Summer Academy (PHSA) July 14-18, 2014. The PHSA involved 20 hours of educational sessions (Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to noon each day) in basic public health

knowledge and skills with an **Evidence-Based Public Health**

**framework (EBPH)**. Since 2012, 56 employees representing the

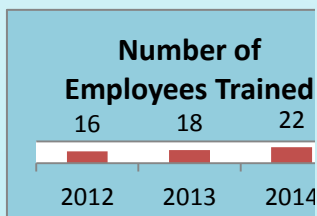
RO and 12 of the 15 ETR counties have participated in this well-regarded training. To date, participants most commonly report having enrolled to increase knowledge and skills, and some report that they are considering further education.



Credit: Ross Brownson

### Improvements in 2014

- Increased enrollment



- Added instructor from ETR to increase practice perspective
- Expanded to include 3 Lab employees
- Devoted entire last day to applied, hands-on evidence-based public health activity with laptops

The PHSA was collaboratively planned by employees from ETR and the University of Tennessee (UT) Department of Public Health (DPH), and funded by East Tennessee State University's Public Health Training Center. The UT Department Head, a former ETR Regional Director, taught the introductory and final session on EBPH, as well as facilitated discussions at the beginning and end of each day highlighting the relevance of each day's topic to ETR. Three UT DPH faculty and one ETR employee taught the remaining sessions.



Dr. Paul Erwin leading a PHSA 2014 session

2012



2013



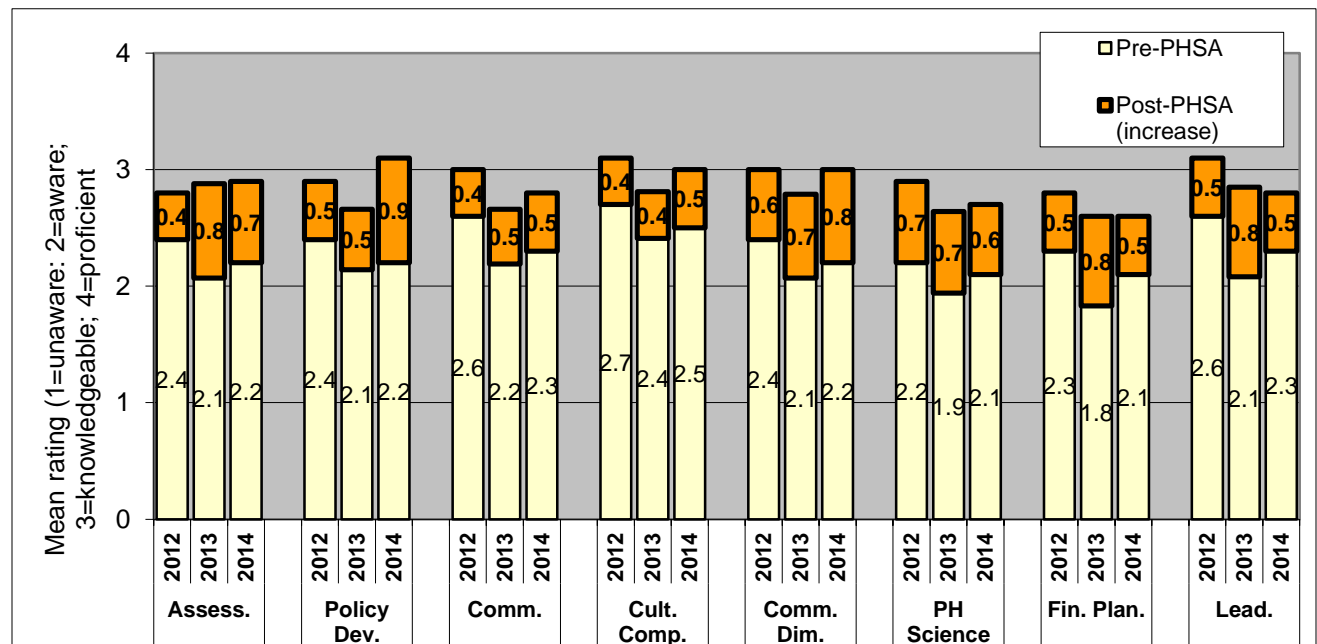
2014



**Evaluation.** Feedback has been highly positive each year (e.g., 100% would recommend PHSA to colleagues). Participants completed a pre & post competency self-assessment, daily session evaluations, and wrote a short reflection paper one month after the course's completion on how PHSA will improve their job performance.

**Pre & Post Competency Self-Assessments** showed the average rating for all competency areas increased in 2012 (by 0.4-0.7 points), 2013 (by 0.4-0.8 points), and 2014 (by 0.5-0.9 points), indicating that every class moved from "aware" toward "knowledgeable" following their participation. (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Average Rating for Pre and Post Competency Areas, 2012, 2013, and 2014**



**Favorite Aspects.** Participants have liked the diversity of instructors and participants, which enhanced the learning experience as they gained an understanding of each other's roles and perspectives. In 2014, the most popular aspect was Friday's activity with the Health Information Tennessee (HIT) website.

**Improved Jobs.** According to reflection papers, the most common ways participants in all three years intended to apply what was learned to their job included: designing Primary Prevention Initiatives, completing SMART objectives, carrying out effective program evaluation, improving community engagement, and identifying and interpreting health data.

**Future Directions.** The UT DPH intends to offer PHSA again in 2015. Options for funding are being actively explored since Public Health Training Center funding is no longer available.