



*The discipline of learning. The art of caring.*

## **Department of Health Sciences Education Careers in Community Health Education**

The Department of Health Science Education has offered a Master of Science in Health Science degree since 1986. In response to the critical need for public health professionals, we began preparing Community Health Educators in 2009. The MSHS degree program provides the graduate with the opportunity to enter the growing Public Health professional field of Community Health Education (CHE) that places strong emphasis on disease prevention, and the development of leadership skills. Below you will find some commonly asked questions about the Community Health Education profession.

### **What is Community Health Education (CHE)?**

Community Health Education is the art and science of affecting health and wellness behavior at the community level. Health education is a process that enables: (a) individuals, (b) families, (c) groups, (d) organizations and (e) communities, to play active roles in achieving and sustaining health. Effective Community Health Education is planned with input from representatives of priority populations, and is influenced by the nature of the health problem and the setting (E.g., school, community, workplace, or health care organization).

### **Where do Community Health Educators work?**

Community Health educators work in a variety of settings, including:

- Local and State Health Departments.
- Universities and Health Centers.
- Hospitals and Medical Centers.
- Corporate Wellness Programs.
- Federal Health Agencies, such as the Centers for Disease Control.
- Secondary Schools.
- Insurance Companies.
- Non-profit agencies with health related missions

### **What kind of student enrolls in the Community Health Education track?**

CHE students care about people and want to make a difference in their communities. They excel in creativity, teaching, mobilizing others, and establishing long-range plans to combat public health and medical issues. CHE students may have a strong desire to affect the health of a specific population, or engage in work that centers on a particular societal problem or concern. Areas include environmental health, health promotion, disease prevention, and special problems within specific populations.

### **What do Community Health Educators do?**

Community Health Educators are a vital component of the Public Health system.

Working in 7 key areas of responsibility, Community Health Educators;

- 1). assess needs of the community for health concerns;
- 2). plan health education strategies, interventions and programs;
- 3). implement the plan or program(s);
- 4). evaluate the effectiveness of the program(s);
- 5). administer strategies, interventions and programs;
- 6). serve as a health education resource, and;

7). communicate and advocate for health and health education.

Community Health Educators often publish health education materials, information papers, and create grant proposals. Many teach health in public and private schools. The majority of Community Health Educators plan health promotion interventions for specific communities and populations.

**What kind of education do Community Health Educators have?**

Community Health Educators must earn a bachelor's or master's degree in health education. Studies cover public health research, health education theory and practice, social policy, health issues in different populations, community diagnosis, planning, management and evaluation techniques.

**Employment data for Community Health Educators:**

In 2010, Community Health Educators held 63,400 jobs in the United States. The projected growth is much faster than average at 29% or higher, accounting for not less than 36,900 additional positions by 2020. The national salary range in 2011 was \$47,900 to \$85,500, with a mean of \$60,810. The top industries employing Community Health Educators in 2010 included health care, social assistance and government.

**How are Community Health Educators certified?**

The nationally recognized certification for health educators is the **CHES** designation. CHES stands for Certified Health Education Specialist. It is earned by examination and is maintained through ongoing continuing education. To learn more about the C.H.E.S. and MCHES certification, contact:

The National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc.  
1541 Alta Drive, Suite 303, Whitehall, PA 18052-5642  
Toll Free Number: 1-888-624-3248.or fax 1-800-813-0727  
<http://www.nchec.org/>