

CHAPTER 2

I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS RELATED TO LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY WORKFORCE – 2004

The size of the local public health agency workforce decreased in each of the past three years. From 2001 to 2002, the total number decreased by ninety-seven. From 2002 to 2003, the number decreased again by thirty-six in spite of the fact that, during 2003, approximately 70 planners, epidemiology specialists, or public information officers were hired into these federally funded new positions intended to improve preparedness to respond to public health emergencies. From 2003 to 2004, total local public health workforce again decreased by 295 from 3217 to 2922. The most significant decline was in the “other” category of staff. There were smaller decreases in the number of registered nurses and in clerical support staff. The benefits provided for local public health employees remained stable, and there were increases in the average annual salary earned by several categories of staff including administrators. (See chart at the end of this chapter that shows the breakdown of types of local agency staff.)

TOTAL LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

Local public health agencies in Missouri employ 2922 individuals, 82% of whom work full-time. Moderate turnover in staff is verified by the fact that 13% of the current workforce was hired within the past year. (See Graphs 7.1 & 7.2 and Data Tables 7.1 & 7.2)

BENEFITS FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS

Full time workers in 94% of local public health agencies have health insurance; however, slightly fewer agencies (92%) contribute to payment of premiums. Forty-four percent (44%) of full time local public health workers have access to coverage for dental health services, but only 34% of agencies contribute to dental insurance cost. Ninety percent (90%) of full-time staff in local public health agencies has an available retirement program. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of full time public health workers receive paid sick and 99% have paid vacation leave. (See Graphs 7.3 & 7.4 and Data Tables 7.3 & 7.4)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the local agencies have staff that participates in continuing education. Computer-based training is utilized by staff in 90% of agencies and 94% of agencies' staff utilize satellite education programs. Fewer agencies (49%) have staff that utilizes college courses as a means of professional development, and even fewer (32%) of agencies reimburse their employees for college tuition. Forty-six percent (46%) of agencies pay for other kinds of continuing education for staff and 39% pay staff while on leave to attend educational training. (See Graphs 7.3 & 7.5 and Data Tables 7.3 & 7.5)

ADMINISTRATORS

Forty-five percent (45%) of local public health agency administrators are registered nurses, and an additional 4% are nurse practitioners. Fifty-five percent (55%) of administrators devote all of their time to administrative duties (down from 57% in 2003), and an additional 21% spend three-quarters or more of their time on administration. The range of educational levels of administrators is wide, from 18% with high school as their highest level of formal education to

24% with master's or doctorate degrees. Fifty-three percent (53%) of administrators have a bachelor's degree or above, and an additional 11% are working towards a bachelor's degree. Twenty-five percent (25%) of administrators have been working in their present job for 2 years or less, and nearly half (47%) of administrators have been the administrator for 5 years or less. The range of annual salary earned by administrators is wide, from less than \$30,000 (7% of administrators) to over \$75,000 (10% of administrators). The largest percentage of administrators (41%) reportedly earn from \$40,000 to \$54,999 annually. An additional 28% earn in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999. (See Graphs 7.6.3 thru 7.6.7 and Data Tables 7.6.1 thru 7.6.7)

NURSES

Nurses continue to represent the largest category of local agency staff (27% of the local public health agency workforce) with a total of 777. There are an additional 51 registered nurses that serve as administrator for their agency. Of the 777 with nursing as their primary focus, 86% are registered nurses and 14% are licensed practical nurses. Seventy-seven percent (77%) work full time. Twenty-nine percent (29%) have a bachelor's degree in nursing, 4% have a master's degree, and 4% are certified as community health nurses. Sixty-three nurses (9%) are working toward a higher degree. All RNs with a degree in nursing have completed a course in the principles of community health nursing as part of their curriculum. An additional 48 RNs have also completed such a course. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of all full and part time RNs are reportedly practicing population-based public health nursing. (See Graphs 7.7.1 thru 7.8.1 and Data Tables 7.7.1 thru 7.8.1.1)

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of agencies pay their full-time registered nurses an average annual salary of \$30,000 or more (up from 73% in 2003) and 22% pay between \$20,000 and \$29,999. (See Graph 7.7.7 and Data Table 7.7.7)

Fifty-two percent (52%) of agencies have licensed practical nurses (LPNs) on staff. LPNs make up 4% of the local public health workforce. Earnings by full-time LPNs are mainly (82%) in the range from \$20,000 to \$29,999. (See Graphs 7.8.1 & 7.8.2 and Data Tables 7.8.1 & 7.8.2)

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALISTS

Most agencies (86%) have environmental public health specialists on staff. This group represents the third largest category of local agency staff after nurses and clerical workers (12% of local public health workforce), with a total of 338. Eighty-six percent (86%) of environmental public health specialists work full time. Seventy-two percent (72%) of environmental specialists have a bachelor's degree, and 10% have post graduate degrees. More agencies (60%) pay environmental staff an average annual salary between \$30,000 and \$39,999; 29% pay in the range from \$20,000 to \$29,999. Sixty-eight (68) environmental health workers (20%) are reportedly state certified. Fourteen (14) environmental health workers (4%) reportedly have national registration. (See Graphs 7.9.1 thru 7.9.4 and Data Tables 7.9.1 thru 7.9.4.2)

NUTRITIONISTS

Eighty-one (81) local public health agencies employ 97 nutritionists (3% of local agency workforce). Fifty-one percent (51%) of staff in these positions work full time. Ninety-four

percent (94%) of nutritionists have a bachelor's degree or above. Forty-three percent (43%) of full-time nutritionists earn an average annual salary range in the range \$30,000 to \$39,999, 10% earn more than \$40,000 annually, and 48% earn in the range from \$20,000 to \$29,999. (See Graphs 7.10.1 thru 7.10.3 and Data Tables 7.10.1 thru 7.10.3)

DIETICIANS

Twenty-six (26) local public health agencies employ dieticians, 70% of which work full time. Ninety-one percent (91%) have a bachelor's degree or above, and 70% are registered dieticians. The majority (69%) of full-time dieticians earn an average annual salary in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999. (See Graphs 7.11.1 thru 7.11.3 and Data Tables 7.11.1 thru 7.11.4)

HEALTH EDUCATORS

Only (39%) of local public health agencies employ individuals as health educators. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the 79 health educators work full time. Sixty-two percent (62%) of health educators have a bachelor's degree, 26% have a master's degree or above, and 10 of the 79 (13%) are Certified Health Education Specialists. Over half (56%) of full-time health educators earn an average annual salary between \$20,000 and \$29,999, 26% earn between \$30,000 and \$39,999, and the remainder earn over \$40,000. (See Graphs 7.12.1 thru 7.12.4 and Data Tables 7.12.1 thru 7.12.4)

SOCIAL WORKERS

Twenty (20) local public health agencies employ social workers. Of the 38 employed, 71% work full-time. Nineteen social workers (50%) are licensed. Eighty-two percent (82%) have a bachelor's degree or above. More social workers (47%) earn an average annual salary in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999, 33% earn between \$20,000 and \$29,999, and the remainder (20%) earn over \$40,000. (See Graphs 7.13.1 thru 7.13.4 and Data Tables 7.13.1 thru 7.13.4)

SUPPORT STAFF

Clerical support staff makes up 24% of local agency workforce, the second largest category. The 689 individuals (down from 775 in 2003) are primarily full-time employees (88%) and are the lowest paid. Thirty-two percent (32%) of full-time clerical workers earn an average annual salary less than \$20,000; 66% earn in the range \$20,000 to \$29,999. The highest education completed by 87% of the clerical workforce is high school; 10% have an associate degree, and 3% have a bachelor's degree. (See Graphs 7.14.1 thru 7.14.3 and Data Tables 7.14.1 thru 7.14.3)

EPIDEMIOLOGY SPECIALISTS

Twenty-two (22) local public health agencies employ Epidemiology Specialists; all of them work full time. Forty percent (40%) have a bachelor's degree and 50% have a master's or doctorate degree. Forty-five percent (45%) earn an average annual salary in the range from \$30,000 to \$39,999 most of the rest earn over \$40,000. (See Graphs 7.15.2 thru 7.15.3 and Data Tables 7.15.1 thru 7.15.3)

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNERS

Thirty-two (32) agencies employ emergency response planners; 88% are employed full time. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of planners have a bachelor's degree and 29% have a master's

degree. Emergency response planners mainly (69%) earn average annual salaries in the range from \$40,000 to \$54,999; 28% earn in the \$30,000 to \$39,999 range. (See Graphs 7.16.1 thru 7.16.3 and Data Tables 7.16.1 thru 7.16.3)

PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS

Ten (10) local public health agencies have a total of 12 physicians on staff. Only 3 of the 12 physicians works full time. An additional 120 physicians are available as consultants for local public health agencies. Thirty-eight percent (38%) work as volunteers.

Only 4 dentists are paid employees of local public health agencies, 3 of which work full time. An additional 17 dentists provide services for local public health agencies primarily (65%) as volunteers (See Graph 7.17.1 & 7.17.2.3 and Data Tables 7.17.1 thru 7.17.2.3)

OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY STAFF

Nearly half (46%) of local agencies employ staff in positions other than those described above. Other staff makes up 23% of local public health agency workforce. Various categories of other staff include animal control officers, homemaker aides, janitorial staff and information technologists. (See Graph 7.18.1 and Data Tables 7.18.1 & 7.18.1.1)

**Total Local Public Health Agencies
Public Health Staff Percentages - 2005**

