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**Opportunities for Rural Organizations to Become Host Sites for the Public Health Associates Program**

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# Featured Speaker



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CDC's Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support



## Opportunities for Rural Organizations to Become Host Sites for the Public Health Associates Program

March 17, 2020

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Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support (CSTLTS)  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

## Session Objectives

- **Upon completion of this session, participants should be able to**
    - Describe the mission of CDC’s Public Health Associate Program
    - List at least two of the goals of PHAP
    - Describe the CO-STARR Model
    - List at least one example of each CO-STARR model characteristic
    - Identify the phases of the PHAP host site application process
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## What Is PHAP?

- **Two-year, paid, competency-based training program for early-career public health professionals**
    - Associates are federal government employees while in PHAP
  - **CDC partnership with host sites**
    - State, tribal, local, and territorial health departments and nongovernmental organizations
  - **Two-year training assignment in one (1) subject area**
  - **PHAP is NOT**
    - An internship
    - Administrative staffing support
    - A program that provides host sites with CDC subject matter experts
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## PHAP Mission

The mission of the Public Health Associate Program is to train and provide experiential learning to early-career professionals who contribute to the public health workforce.



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## PHAP Competency Domains

- 1.0: Analytic and assessment skills
- 2.0: Public health science skills
- 3.0: Program planning, management, and improvement
- 4.0: Public health policy and law skills
- 5.0: Professionalism skills
- 6.0: Communication skills
- 7.0: Diversity and inclusion skills
- 8.0: Community dimensions of public health skills
- 9.0: Financial planning and management skills

[https://www.cdc.gov/phap/pdf/PHAP\\_competencies.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/phap/pdf/PHAP_competencies.pdf)

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## “Three-Legged Stool” Concept of PHAP Goals

### 1. Provide value-added service to the host site through the associate

- Traditional public health programs
- Accreditation
- Local emergency response efforts



### 2. Provide associates with experience in health programs and service delivery

### 3. Ensure that the associate attains the PHAP competencies

## Candidate and Host Site Applications, 2012 - 2019



## CO-STARR Model: Characteristics of a Quality PHAP Host Site Training Experience

Competency-based work plan

Opportunities for skill-building

Supervisor involvement

Training, education, and development are ongoing

Aligns with the program goals and strategy

Realistic for an early-career public health professional

Robust public health learning experience



### “C” Competency-Based Work Plan

- **Work plan should provide opportunities for associate to meet PHAP competencies**
  - **“See, Do, Teach” approach**
  - **Skills and performance; not just observation**
  - **Public health experience tied to program goals—**
    - Disease intervention specialist
    - Community education
    - Collaboration efforts
    - Health department accreditation
    - Water sampling
    - Health promotion
    - Community needs assessment
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## “O” Opportunities to Build Skills

- Associate’s work should be progressive to build skills over the two (2)-year program
  - Activities should build upon each other
  - Provide additional experiences to reinforce acquired skills, for example—
    - Implement a survey → assist in data analyses
    - Interview contacts → assist supervisor in managing local disease control efforts
    - Conduct Directly Observed Therapy → assist tuberculosis manager to identify barriers to care
    - Help conduct immunization assessments → interact directly with health care providers
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## “S” Supervisor Involvement

- **Proximity**
    - Direct oversight of associate’s day-to-day work activities;
    - Close to the work the associate will be doing
  - **Time commitment**
    - About 10 percent of time (~4 hours per week)
  - **Capacity**
    - Staffing infrastructure of host site can support an associate
  - **Experience**
    - Host site supervisor’s skills, supervisory experience (e.g., supervising early-career staff, fellows, interns, students) mentoring, and interest in supervising associate
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## “T” Training, Education, and Development Are Ongoing

- **Develop a training plan for the two-year assignment—**
  - Host site orientation
    - Local regulations, policies, and procedures (e.g., security, use of IT, professional attire, ethics, sexual harassment)
  - Technical training
    - Provide specific knowledge and skills needed to complete work activities
  - Public health and professional education
    - Collaboration among public health program areas
    - Provide broader training of public health concepts, methods, and issues to foster professional growth



## “T” Training, Education, and Development... (continued)

- **Progressive training and creative opportunities to build knowledge, skill, and ability**
  - **Include a variety of training methods, including—**
    - Instructor-led
    - Web-based/online learning
    - One-on-one
    - Self-paced study
    - Independent study
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## “A” Work activities Align with Host Site Goals

- Associate’s work should support host site’s effort to meet program goals
  - *Ask: How can an associate’s work activities supplement the host site’s efforts to meet its goals and objectives?*
  - Focus on work activities that provide public health experience
  - Examples include conducting the following:
    - Disease investigation
    - Disease-specific surveillance
    - Community needs assessment
    - Health promotion inventory
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## “R” Realistic

- Work plan should be realistic and appropriate for an early-career public health professional
  - Work activities should be progressive, with specific measurable deliverables and clear timelines
  - Associates are NOT:
    - Supervisors
    - Spokespersons for CDC or their host site
    - CDC subject matter experts
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## “R” Robust Public Health Experience

- **Develop work activities to provide broad public health experience**
  - **Examples:**
    - Survey implementation
    - Track/interview STD contacts
    - Provide TB Directly Observed Therapy
    - Develop communications tools
    - Support partnership and collaboration efforts
    - Support host site policy development, accreditation, systems improvement
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## “R” Robust Public Health Experience (continued)

- **More examples:**
    - Conduct immunization record audits (e.g., school, daycare, or healthcare-provider-based)
    - Assist with developing and staging preparedness and response exercises for key community-based partners
    - Conduct restaurant inspections
    - Develop and deliver public health education to community
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## Annual PHAP Host Site Application Process

- **By April**
    - Develop your associate's training experience based on the CO-STARR model
    - Complete PHAP application to host an associate
  - **May – June**
    - Host sites notified of the results of their application
  - **July – August**
    - Matching of accepted PHAP candidates to PHAP host sites
  - **Early October**
    - New associates report to host sites
  - **November**
    - In-person orientation at CDC headquarters in Atlanta
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## Key Takeaways

- **Develop a PHAP training experience early**
  - **Respond to application questions when application system opens**
  - **Demonstrate an increased level of skill building over the two-year assignment**
  - **Include specific work activities with timelines, milestones, and deliverables**
  - **Identify a strong primary and back-up host site supervisor**
  - **Include strategies to communicate with CDC PHAP supervisor throughout two-year assignment**
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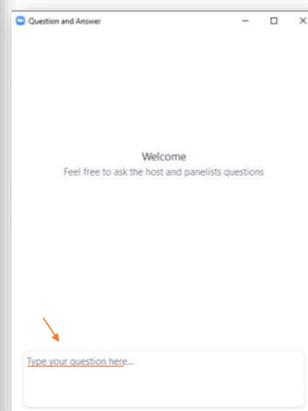
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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



## Questions?



# Thank you!

- Contact us at [ruralhealthinfo.org](http://ruralhealthinfo.org) with any questions
- Please complete webinar survey
- Recording and transcript will be available on RHIhub website