The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and the de Beaumont Foundation convened an advisory group of thirty-one national public health leadership groups to collectively assess the priorities, needs, and characteristics of the governmental public health workforce. This is the first time that national public health leaders were convened from all levels and functions of the governmental public health workforce to address future cross-cutting training needs. This advisory group is part of a multi-year project to focus future workforce development efforts on workforce development data and staff development activities that reflect the priority needs of the public health worker of the future. The first phase of the project was to convene the advisory group to establish priority knowledge, skills and attitudes for the public health worker of the future. The second phase of the project is to conduct a national Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS) to identify current and future capabilities of the public health workforce that meet priority needs.

In the first phase of the project, the advisory group identified leading strategic challenges and opportunities that the current and future public health workforce must address. The advisory group members participated in semi-structured interviews, the development of brief background summaries of priority workforce needs, and a consensus building meeting. Through the consensus-building process, the advisory group identified priority training needs, challenges, and attributes needed in a future public health worker. The information gained from this meeting will inform the second phase of the project, the national survey of public health workers. The project will strive to enhance coordination among ASTHO - and its affiliates and peer networks - and key national partners to foster a stronger learning culture within health departments and stimulate more research on workforce development.

The second phase of the project will be an individual-level survey of governmental public health workers that is tentatively scheduled for implementation in September 2014. Other activities that are currently being planned are: the development of a workforce development consortium/advisory group; a de Beaumont-sponsored training curriculum, and a plenary session at the 2013 APHA General Meeting in Boston, MA featuring the advisory group contributions.

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