



One World for Public Health Education

A well-trained and well-managed workforce is crucial for good-quality health services in all countries.¹ However, public health workforce development is commonly neglected, particularly in developing countries, and rare resources are disproportionately invested in professionals providing direct medical services rather than in preventative health measures and community or nationwide public health programs. The Global Health Workforce Alliance sums it up this way, “Public health services are essential to health outcomes; financing public health is often neglected in consideration of individual health equity concerns.”²

The globalization of public health education reached a new milestone when three of the world’s most influential organizations of schools of public health [Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER), Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) in North America, and Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health (APACPH)], represented by the authors, convened the *First Global Summit of Schools of Public Health*. During the summit, held on the 25th anniversary of the founding of APACPH and during the 41st APACPH Conference in December 2009,³ leaders of the three organizations signed a declaration to promote education and research in global health.^{4,5} In these three associations are included more than 200 schools of public health around the world with over 10,000 professional graduates annually, filling the critical global need for public health professionals.⁶

The groups will begin to draw a road map to create a global coalition of schools of public health to share and contribute to public health education and research for all citizens in the world. The Declaration emphasizes that “global health is public health” and encourages global health research, teaching, capacity building, evidence-based policy-making, partnerships among all public health academic institutions, and increased resources to be set aside for global health.

In this era of global health challenges including new emerging infectious diseases, climate change, impacts

of financial downturns and a shortage of public health professionals, this new coalition will support the World Health Organization in its leadership with a “One World” approach, and empower each public health association and public health professional to provide better services to communities locally and globally. Reorganized core curricula and new or expanding centers/departments dedicated to global health education and research are expected to be established in many of the associations’ schools, providing a shared platform for exchange for students and faculty, and core course programs. We expect to observe new generations of public health professionals who—incubated in a globalized, technologically advanced multidisciplinary education environment, and imbued with a global vision and expectations—are empowered to effectively tackle the emerging challenges in geopolitics and public health.

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