

Train the Trainer Brief 2016

Increasing the Cultural Competence among Public Health Professionals Working with Persons with Disabilities

In April of 2016, the UF DHP presented a “train the trainer” style seminar to the University of Florida Masters of Public Health first-year student body as part of a program-run seminar series. The DHP seminar, titled “Increasing Cultural Competence Among Public Health Professionals Working with Persons with Disabilities,” had the following objectives:

- Define cultural competence
- Expand knowledge of disparities faced by disabled populations
- Define person-first language
- Identify ways to improve communication between providers and healthcare consumers
- List at least three new resources for persons with disabilities
- Discuss the need for disability-centric training modules in healthcare education
- Assess strengths and weaknesses in personal communication style
- Analyze a room for adherence to accessible code requirements
- Demonstrate increased cultural competence when working with persons with disabilities

Among attendees who completed the pre- and post- evaluation forms (n=40), 94% identified as “students,” 5% held MDs, and 3% held PhDs. Over one third of attendees reported having more than one year of professional experience in a healthcare setting, and English was the predominant primary language spoken (98%). 58% of attendees reported having past experience with persons with disabilities (PWD), but only 20% reported ever having received prior training related to PWD.

The pre- and post- evaluation had two parts. The first part, titled “PWD in the Community,” assessed perceptions and beliefs about PWD. Answers were ranked on a likert scale (5=strongly agree; 1=Strongly Disagree) and related to questions such as “PWD can be financially secure,” “PWD can be good parents,” “PWD have the ability to make their own life decisions,” etc. Prior to the training seminar, the average response score was 3.898. Following the training, the average response score for this section was 4.222, an 8% increase. The second part of the evaluation was a fact-based assessment, true/false, with questions such as, “Service dogs are only used for people with physical disabilities,” “One third of Floridians age 65+ have a disability,” etc. The average score prior to the training was 5.919 (out of 9, equal to a 66% accuracy), and following the training was 7.615 (85% correct). This score change represents a 29% increase in correct answers given.

Ultimately, the evaluation shows that the training had a positive increase on both perception and factual knowledge among attendees, related to information about persons with disabilities.