Ontario Veterinary College’s long history of public health work

- 1930’s Dr. Andrew McNabb (OVC 1920) Director of Lab Services for Ontario Department of Health
- 1997-2013: Dr. Brian Evans: Chief Veterinary Officer and Chief Food Safety Officer for Canada
- Research on TB, brucellosis, salmonellosis, West Nile, antimicrobial resistance and E. coli.
- Helped solve the 2000 Walkerton Water disaster (E coli 0157H7) that affected ½ the town of 5,000

Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses

- 2006 CPHAZ: interdisciplinary research, education, and knowledge dissemination at the human-animal-environment interface and collaboration with external partners
- World leaders in Ecosystem approaches to health (Drs. Waltner-Toews, O. Nielsen, B. Hunter)
- Since 1987, 70% of graduates from Population Medicine work in public health
  - Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), local or provincial Public Health (PH units) or in research

MPH 35 Core competencies from PHAC

- SARS (2003) prompted the request for MPH programs
- Public Health Agency of Canada: Attitudes and Values
  1. Public Health Sciences
  2. Assessment and Analysis
  3. Policy and Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation
  4. Partnerships, Collaboration, and Advocacy
  5. Diversity and Inclusiveness
  6. Communication and Leadership
Strengths of the OVC MPH program

- Focus on human-animal-environment interface (environmental public health)
- Expertise in epidemiology / analytic epi, infectious diseases, zoonotic, foodborne and waterborne diseases
- Connections with public health agencies
- Build cohorts of students taught in person (not DE)
- Practicum placement (12 – 16 weeks)

Dr Andy Papadopoulos, BASc, MBA, PhD
- 8 years as a public health inspector + 4 in admin
- 4 years director of school of Occupational & PH

MPH program development to date

- 2007: designed program with 9 required + 3 elective courses + a practicum placement
- 2008: 8 students enrolled
- 2009: increased to 15 students
- 2010: increased to 20 students (kept at 20)
- 10 graduates have been veterinarians
- 2013: 258 applications for 20 places

Evaluation of MPH program

Purpose:
- Are we meeting the Core Competencies?
- Are students employable in the PH sector?
- How can we improve the program?

Methods:
Outcome assessment of 35 competencies through curriculum mapping exercise
Plus a survey of graduates

Curriculum Mapping as Evaluation

- Based on course outlines, class assignments, and lecture material
- Coverage of competencies ranked on 5-point scale:
  1-no coverage, 2- minimal coverage,
  3- moderate coverage, 4-substantial coverage,
  5-core component of the course

RESULTS: All 35 competencies met a 3+ average
  Except: program evaluation & emergency management
MPH Graduate Survey

- Survey distributed to 60 graduates of the MPH
- Proficiency in core competencies (5 point scale from 1 - needs improvement, 2 - satisfactory, 3 - good, 4 - very good, 5 - outstanding)
- Experience in specific courses (core, elective, practicum) and overall U of Guelph experience
- Employment

35 grads completed survey – response rate of 58%

Graduate Survey

Results - Employment statistics

- 60% employed in the public health sector
  - Of these, 71% employed within 3 months of graduation
- 40% not employed in the public health sector
  - 4 of 5 not able to find work graduated the same month as the survey
  - 4 graduates were pursuing further education (MD, DVM, dentistry, PhD)

Graduate Survey

Results – Proficiency in Core competencies

- Core competency average scores 2.8 to 4.6,
  - Majority (30/35) competencies between 3.5 and 4.5
  - Lowest (2.8) – emergency management
  - Highest (4.6) – recognize the determinants of health as they influence specific groups

Graduate Survey

Results - Elective and Practicum Experience

- 4.5 - Value of the practicum (58% ranked it 5)
- 3.9 - Value of elective courses (48% ranked it 4)
  - Preference for public health-related elective courses
- 4.3 - Overall experience at OVC (60% ranked it 5)
- 4.5 - Professors – attentive, approachable, excellent public health experience shared in class
Graduate Survey: Improvements

- Qualitative research skills
  - New course in Systematic review and Meta-analysis
- Software: Intro to Epi and Stats now using SPSS
- Enhance access to Public Health units/professionals
  - Business planning exercise based on local PH units added to PH Administration course
- Environmental PH added a unit on emergencies
- Developing core course on Program Evaluation
- Considering elective in Research Methods

Overall Conclusion

- OVC broad definition of PH, including animal-human-environment interface, stakeholders, and partners seen as positive
- Maintained a niche - unique across Canada
  - Successful recruitment - very high application rate
- Met most Core Competencies
- Program Evaluation: Satisfied, employed graduates - competencies driving changes in curriculum
- Future Aim: increase integration with DVM, MSc students

Thank You for your attention

Any Questions?
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