
Preface

This issue of the *JPHD* provides documentation of a large number of recent activities devoted to dental public health education. The educational preparation of the public health work force for the 21st century requires consideration and understanding of a broad, complex, and ever-changing array of issues. Many of these important issues—such as the environment in which graduates will practice; the knowledge, skills, and competencies that they will need; and the potential demand for their services—are considered in this issue of the *JPHD*.

The papers by Wotman et al. and Shulman et al. report the results of three major projects funded by the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration. These papers assemble critical reviews of the status of specialty training in dental public health, the need for training, and recommendations of three expert panels to address the challenges faced by dental public health education.

Papers by Duffy et al. and Watson

and Niessen provided background information for the deliberations of the expert panels. The contribution by Kaste et al. helps round out the examination of dental public health education by focusing on resources for the predoctoral curriculum rather than specialty training.

Three other reports provide evidence of a vibrant AAPHD and ABDPH. Dr. John Greene chaired the AAPHD Select Committee that reviewed the implications of the IOM Study of Dental Education for public health. The AAPHD policy statement on the IOM study and the summary of the IOM report itself are reprinted for easy reference. Dr. Jane Weintraub led the effort that resulted in a list of competency statements and performance indicators for the dental public health specialty. These competencies provide a new way for us to think about what our graduates should be able to do upon completion of their programs. They already have shaped the education standards for specialty programs in dental public health. The AAPHD Code of Ethics, developed by the

Atchison-Mecklenburg Committee and approved as interim policy by the association at its 60th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, is timely because of the attention given in the dental public health competencies to ethical practices in oral health programs.

Some of these activities were stimulated by the health care reform debates of the early 1990s and all were completed during the rapid changes taking place in the delivery of personal and public health services. As a set, these papers provide a review of the issues involved in education of the dental public health work force in this changing environment and identify an agenda for strengthening the dental public health education enterprise.

Financial support for this issue of the *JPHD* was provided by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Because of its support not only for the costs of this publication, but for many of the activities reported herein, I suspect that this issue of the *JPHD* will become commonly known as "the HRSA issue."—RGR