

What Is a Public Health Nurse?

KEEPING COMMUNITIES HEALTHY, ONE PERSON AT A TIME

PRESENTED BY: MISSOURI PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION'S
SECTION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

Meet the Public Health Nurse (PHN)

- ▶ Public Health Nurses are NOT your average nurses.
- ▶ They work in communities, not just clinics.
- ▶ They treat populations, not just patients.
- ▶ 🕵️ Part detective
- ▶ 🧠 Part educator
- ▶ ❤️ Always a health hero










Where You'll Find PHNs

- ▶ 🏫 Schools
- ▶ 🏠 Homes
- ▶ 🏥 Health Departments
- ▶ 🏢 Community Centers
- ▶ 🏕️ Homeless Shelters
- ▶ ✈️ Emergency Response Units
- ▶ If there's a need, PHNs are there!



What They Actually Do

- ▶  Teach people how to stay healthy
- ▶  Give vaccines to protect the community
- ▶  Track outbreaks (like COVID or flu)
- ▶  Visit new moms and babies at home
- ▶  Promote healthy eating & active living
- ▶  Connect people with resources
- ▶  Advocate for equity and access

- ▶ Think “healthcare + social justice = PHN”

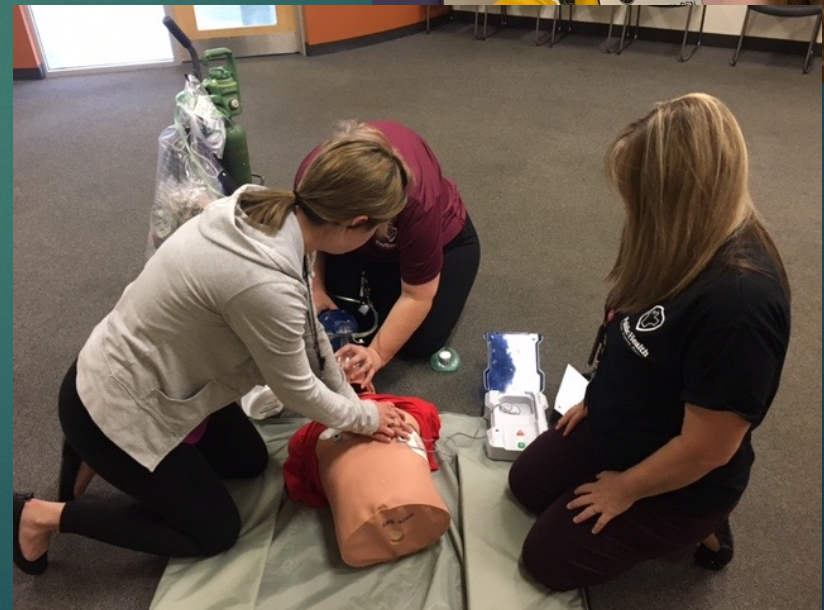
A Day in the Life of a PHN

- ▶ 8:00 AM — Staff meeting
- ▶ 9:00 AM — Home visit with a new mom
- ▶ 11:00 AM — Immunization clinic
- ▶ 1:00 PM — Talk at a high school
- ▶ 3:00 PM — Follow-up on a TB contact
- ▶ 5:00 PM — Return messages from clients
- ▶ No two days are the same... and that's the fun of it!



Superpowers of a PHN

- ▶ 🧩 Problem Solver
- ▶ 📢 Community Advocate
- ▶ 🧭 Resource Navigator
- ▶ 🎓 Health Educator
- ▶ 🛡️ Prevention Pro
- ▶ 🩺 Clinical Expert
- ▶ ❤️ Compassion in Action



Why It Matters

- ▶ “Public Health Nurses help prevent illness before it starts.”
- ▶ They save lives.
- ▶ They build trust.
- ▶ They protect the health of everyone, especially the most vulnerable.



Why It's Actually Cool

- ▶ Top reasons PHNs love their job:
- ▶ - You work independently
- ▶ - You get to know your community
- ▶ - You solve real-world problems
- ▶ - You make a long-term impact
- ▶ - You don't just treat illness—you prevent it!
- ▶ - Every day feels meaningful



Could YOU Be a PHN?

- ▶ ☒ You like helping people
 - ▶ ☒ You care about equity
 - ▶ ☒ You enjoy variety
 - ▶ ☒ You believe prevention is powerful
 - ▶ ☒ You want a job that matters
-
- ▶ If you checked a few... this might be your calling!



Thank You!

- ▶ Thanks for learning about Public Health Nursing!
- ▶ Questions? Let's talk.
- ▶ SPHN@mopha.org
- ▶ <https://www.missouristate.edu/OPHI/SPHN/default.htm>