

Professional Development at NCSOPHE

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NC SOPHE

Abstract

A health educator share his views of chairing a professional development committee in Northern California Chapter, Society for Public Health Education.

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In October, 2002, I volunteered to chair Professional Development (PD) at the Northern California Society for Public Health Education (NCSOPHE). Several lines of experience converged to form the nidus from which the topic of Public Health Ethics emerged. It is my intention in this article to share the record of the development and implementation of a PD event to serve as instruction and as a template for future chairs of PD.

My interest in ethics goes back to my attendance at the University of California at San Francisco Pharmacy School, where I took three courses in Bioethics from Albert Jonsen, now at the University of Washington. There I learned the principalist approach to bioethics (non-maleficence, beneficence, autonomy, and justice).

In 2000, I joined the Good Samaritan Hospital Bioethics Committee and attended their meetings as a Community Member. In October of 2001, I joined the Medical Ethics Committee (MEC) at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC), first as a Community Member, then later as a representative of the pharmacy. I co-chaired the MEC from May 4, 2002 to April 21, 2003.

Also at this time I was attending San Jose State University (SJSU), first to get my Master's in Public Health (MPH), then later to get my BA in Psychology.

In 2001, I purchased *New Ethics for the Public's Health*, edited by Dan Beauchamp and Bonnie Steinbock. After volunteering to chair PD in the Fall of 2002, the idea of a PD event on Public Health Ethics crystallized.

I consulted with the Co-Presidents of NSCOPHE, and got the go ahead for the idea. Based on the book, I realized that three topics were Ethics of Genetics, Justice and Health Care, and Ethics of the Community Health Perspective on Public Health.

During the first go round of securing speakers, I asked the professor of my Social Psychology class at SJSU, who had been at the National Human Genome Research Institute, the past Co-Chair MD of the MEC, and a professor I had in the MPH program at SJSU. All declined.

Then I went to the second go round of securing speakers, having better luck. Sara Goldman, Genetic Diseases Program Specialist for the State of California, agreed to speak on Ethics of Presymptomatic Genetic Screening. Shirley Cook, Medical Social Worker at SCVMC and a member of the MEC, agreed to speak on Justice and Health Care. Dr. Lisa Moore, Assistant Professor in Health Education at San Francisco State University, agreed to talk on Ethics of the Community Health Perspective on Public Health.

Also at this time, I contacted a former classmate in the MPH program who worked at Kaiser Hospital in Santa Clara, to arrange the site as the venue. In this endeavor, I followed the arrangements made for a PD event held there in 2001 in which I participated.

Having secured the speakers and the venue, with the assistance of NCSOPHE Board member Christine Hagion Rezpeka, we marketed the Workshop. First, a flyer was sent to the Board for distribution at the Annual Conference for NCSOPHE. Later, a revised flyer was sent to the NCSOPHE mailing list and the MPH students at SJSU mailing list. The flyers were developed to be similar to the flyer for the 2001 PD event, "Alternative Health Therapies."

Simultaneously we arranged with the San Francisco Department of Public Health for continuing education credits for Certified Health Education Specialists and Social Workers/Marriage, Family, and Child Counselors.

Only four people responded to the flyers. However, we became locked into the date because of the venue and speaker arrangements. We held the event April 12, 2003. Ms. Goldman

did a PowerPoint presentation on basics of ethics and her topic. Ms. Cook presented overheads on her topic. Dr. Moore was unable to attend. Because of a heavy rain, we had only three registrants. However, the event went as well as possible, and the venue turned out to be excellent.

After the Workshop, the fees and sign-in sheets were sent to the Treasurer of NCSOPHE, for submission to the San Francisco Department of Public Health. A signed CHES certificate was sent, and gifts for the speakers and arranger of the venue were also sent. Reports to the Board, and to the San Francisco Department of Public Health wrapped up the project.

The two take home messages from this carefully crafted event are 1) Identify a topic with broad appeal at the outset; and 2) Reschedule the event if there are only minimal advance registrations.

The overall experience was excellent training for conference coordination. From the inception of the idea to the execution of the event, the different facets represented a valuable opportunity, particularly in learning the process of obtaining continuing education credit.

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