WHAT IS PUBLIC HEALTH?

When we think about health, we often immediately look at health as a physical and/or mental state at an individual level; however, the field of public health encompasses much more than that. Public health practitioners strive to promote and protect the health of individuals, families and communities across a broad range of domains including physical health, environmental health, social health, economic health and intellectual health. The goal of public health is to prevent illness, injury and other threats to health by addressing the root causes of health and well-being. For example, rather than treating a fall-related injury, public health practitioners will ask — how can we create safer environments to reduce the risk of falls? The practice of public health today includes everything from policy development, health advocacy, epidemiology and research design, program development, health education, prevention, and much, much more. From this perspective, the field of public health offers a multitude of opportunities for individuals across a diverse array of interests.

WHY PURSUE AN MPH?

The field of public health touches upon many different aspects of our lives, including where we live, learn, work and play. As a result, the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree offers an opportunity to gain the skills, knowledge and experience needed to make a meaningful impact across a broad range of settings and discipline areas. As either a stand-alone degree or in conjunction with another degree (MD, MPH; JD, MPH; etc…), the MPH degree provides individuals with an understanding of key concepts related to health policy, biostatistics, epidemiology, urban health, global health, health assessment and program evaluation that can be applied a diverse array of outcome areas. As a result, the MPH can also be a powerful complement to degrees in social work, business, medicine, law, pharmacy, health informatics, or other clinical fields. Importantly, the MPH degree gives individuals the tools necessary to tackle large-scale public health issues such as infectious disease epidemics, chronic diseases, violence, health disparities, and social justice.

Harnessing the Versatility and Potential of a Master of Public Health (MPH) Degree

northeastern.edu/mph  l  617.373.2000  l  mph@northeastern.edu
HOW DOES NORTHEASTERN PREPARE STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH?

The Northeastern University Master of Public Health program provides students with a strong practical and experiential foundation upon which to build their public health careers. The NEU MPH program is a CEPH-accredited program that covers all of the essential areas of public health while also focusing on the practice of public health within an urban setting. In addition to coursework, which can be completed either online or on-campus, all NEU MPH students also participate in both practicum and Capstone projects that provide them with real-world public health experience, while also enabling them to build their own professional network. The experiential component of our public health program offers students a unique opportunity to not only further explore their own areas of public health interest, but also gain the valuable experience needed to achieve their professional goals. Through our collaboration with other programs and schools across the university, the NEU MPH program also offers an interdisciplinary approach to public health and helps to prepare students to practice public health within a rapidly evolving public health and healthcare landscape.

WHERE IS THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH HEADING?

The current state of public health presents both great challenges and great opportunities and, as we look down the road, the skills and experience of public health practitioners will become increasingly more important. Changing demographics, particularly the growth of the senior population, will require public health approaches that focus on healthy aging and chronic disease prevention and management. At the same time, we will need a continued focus on key issues including violence prevention, addressing health disparities, promoting social justice and ensuring that there is a focus on health in all places and policies. Our ability to deliver high quality public health programs is strengthened by the availability of new technology, including telemedicine and connected health, and the focus on leveraging big data to understand the determinants that drive all facets of health. Importantly, the practice of public health is becoming more grounded in multi-sector collaboration, which offers public health practitioners exciting opportunities to partner with non-traditional sectors (housing, business, transportation, and community development) to develop innovative approaches to solve deeply entrenched public health problems. In short, the future of public health has never been more exciting!