The WFPHA Working Group on Public Health Education was formed in 2010, with the specific purpose to

... provide global guidance and oversee the development and implementation of a Public Health Education Action Plan with a special focus on the African region.

The Working Group has evolved since its formation in 2010 as a working group formed to specifically think about public health education into two groups one to develop international public health competencies and the other, the Public Health Professionals’ Education and Training Working Group (PETWG) to consider a number of aspects of public health education and training. The objectives of the original group were to:

- Develop a strategy to globally harmonise essential public health functions and competencies based on practice needs (performance standards);
- Define and apply standards of quality for public health education and training (PEER Review, accreditation);
- Develop academic and institutional capacity (based on a needs and demand analysis).

The work on essential public health functions is in progress and closely linked work which has been conducted on to a set of public health competencies, which is nearing completion. The work into education and training could not logically begin until this first phase had been completed.

Membership of the core working group has been fairly stable since its inception. Members are from many parts of the world and represent the global Public Health education workforce.

In reading various background documents and reports from this and other organisations there are clearly a number of areas to be considered in continuing to develop the working group agenda, providing us with specific opportunities to gain a better understanding of public health teaching in an international context:

**Student-related issues**

- The various levels of education which need to be considered (health worker training, undergraduate and postgraduate certificates and degrees)
• The background training and experience of the students and graduates of these courses
  o In master and doctoral courses subject exemption criteria for prior learning and experience (therefore reducing teaching time opportunity)
• Where students choose to study public health, and why

**Subject-level issues**

• Core content; elective content
• Modes of delivery
• Modes of assessment and examination
• Opportunities for sharing content and assessment tasks

**Degree-level issues**

• Alignment with core competencies and functions
• Accreditation and peer review
• Workforce ‘wants’ vs workforce ‘needs’ (and the level of public health training inside the management structures of public health employers)
• Alignment with national and international health goals and targets
• Contribution to MDG/SDG agendas

**Progress since last report**

The *Global Framework for Strengthening Public Health Functions and Services* documents are currently in circulation for comment.

A survey of public health functions (through member PHAs) has been completed which, despite a fairly low response rate, is broadly representative of the international field of practice. The results of this work have been reported previously.

Chairmanship of the PETWG has been transferred from Ehud Miron to Priscilla Robinson.

**Work plan**

It is difficult to be specific about the precise work programme of the working group as the new chair has taken over only this week and as yet there has not been an opportunity for the group to meet formally.

However, bearing the above comments in mind, a project will be designed to provide data to enable us to understand the structure and content of public health courses across the world, and to gain an understanding of shortfalls in training from the perspective of employers of public health-trained staff.