

Nordic Collaboration to Improve the Practice of Public Health Nutrition

Robertson, Aileen¹, Runa Midtvåge, Hanne Gillett, Department of Global Nutrition and Health and WHO Collaborating Centre, Institute for Rehabilitation and Nutrition, Metropolitan University College, Denmark; Torheim, Liv Elin, Sabrina Ionata De Oliveira Granheim, Ingrid Barikmo, Faculty of Health, Nutrition and Management, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway; Birgisdottir, Bryndis Eva, Unit for Nutrition Research, Landspítali University Hospital and Department of Food Science and Nutrition, University of Iceland; Yngve Agneta, School of Hospitality, Culinary Arts and Meal Science, Örebro University, Sweden

Key words: Public Health; Nutrition; Health Promotion, Noncommunicable diseases

The overall aim of new Nordic network for education and skills training in Public Health Nutrition is to reduce the burden of diet-related diseases in Nordic Regions. In order to achieve this Public Health Nutrition (PHN) expertise will be further developed to train highly qualified professionals who are competent to address food and nutrition related challenges in the Nordic Regions. Expertise will focus on how to incorporate health into all relevant sectors including agriculture and environment. The competencies and best practices shared and disseminated will enable Nordic PHN expertise to gain an international reputation in health promotion be recognised globally.

More specifically this new network aims to: strengthen formal institutional links; increase collaboration by facilitating exchange of lecturers, students, innovative educational resources and teaching methods; and support consolidation of public health nutrition as an accredited profession throughout the Nordic Region.

The members of this new network initially include staff from universities and university colleges from four Nordic countries (Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) but one of the aims is to approach institutions in Finland, Greenland, Arctic and Baltic Regions where there is an interest in improving practice in public health nutrition.

The objective for first phase (June 2014-October 2015) is to create a closer relationship through face-to-face meetings for key employees involved in building up the network. Specific objectives include to (1) map all existing education and skills training in public health nutrition offered in the Nordic/Arctic/Baltic Regions; (2) map existing relevant e-learning programmes and facilities for education and skills training in public health nutrition; (3) develop a workplan for future activities and expansion of the network and (4) disseminate information about the network's creation via presentations/seminars at conferences; social media; and establish website via institutions' homepages.

In the longer term the work plan will include: development of a Nordic core curriculum for accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competencies required by public health nutritionists; development of a range of e-learning modules for education and skills training in public health nutrition; and the development of an internationally renowned Nordic Master Degree in Public Health Nutrition.

¹ airo@phmetropol.dk