

Cover Story



Enhancing skills of collaboration and resilience among public health professionals

Yasaswi Niranjala Walpita

Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Correspondence: yasaswi@commed.cmb.ac.lk

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7608-4042>

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Cover Photo – The cover photo denotes the logo of the College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka 2023/24, depicting the theme “Public health through fostering collaboration and building resilience”

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In today's complex healthcare environment, the need for public health professionals to strengthen their skills in collaboration and resilience has never been more critical. With the rise of global health challenges, from pandemics to climate change, the ability to work effectively in teams and adapt to adversity is paramount (1). ‘Working for health and growth: investing in the health workforce’, the report published by the World Health Organization (WHO), highlights the need for scaling up transformative, high-quality education and lifelong learning so that all health workers have skills that match the health needs of populations and can work to their full potential (2). The report further illustrates that partnerships and collaborations as well as resilience are such skills that would pave the way to achieve sustainable development goals in local and global settings.



Collaboration: the backbone of public health

Public health is inherently multidisciplinary, requiring the input of multiple parties such as epidemiologists, policymakers, healthcare providers, and community leaders. Effective collaboration enables the pooling of expertise to design and implement health programs that are holistic and sustainable (3). Professionals must refine their ability to communicate across disciplines, foster partnerships and engage stakeholders at all levels. Regular training in teamwork, conflict resolution and cultural competence can significantly enhance collaborative efforts. Hence, the College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka (CCPSL) during its tenure

of 2023-24 has conducted multiple training workshops and skill building programmes to enhance such skills among present and future public health leaders.

Building resilience: thriving in uncertainty

Resilience allows public health professionals to navigate crises, recover from setbacks and continue to serve their communities under pressure. The fast-evolving nature of public health demands the capacity to cope with stress, adapt to new information, and maintain mental well-being (4). To cultivate resilience, public health institutions can offer support programs focusing on emotional intelligence, stress management and flexibility in problem-solving. A resilient workforce is better equipped to face the unforeseen challenges that arise in the field. The CCPSL extends its support in multiple ways to foster such skills among the public health professionals in Sri Lanka including the avenues for unleashing their artistic talents, mindfulness development and mentoring. By focusing on collaboration and resilience, public health professionals can enhance their effectiveness, leading to better health outcomes for the populations they serve. Investment in continuous learning and support structures will ensure that these essential skills are developed and maintained throughout their careers and CCPSL will always lead the pathway in this endeavour in Sri Lankan context.

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