

Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Health: Genomics in Public Health

Public Health Issue

The integration of genomics into public health requires an educated and skilled workforce capable of interpreting and applying relevant genomic and family history information to research and practice settings and policy development.

Program Example

The Minnesota genomics program collaborated with the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health to organize three new courses and a roundtable session on public health genomics as part of the 6th annual Summer Public Health Institute from May 21 to June 8, 2007. Courses on "Genomics in Public Health," and "Application of Genomics to Public Health Part 1, and Part 2" provided an overview of basic human genetics and genomics, and a survey of the opportunities and challenges for using these disciplines in public health research and practice. The roundtable session focused on "Genes and the Environment: The Emerging Role of Genomics in Public Health." Muin Khoury, MD, PhD, director of the National Office of Public Health Genomics at the Centers for Disease Control presented on gene-environment interactions and the emerging role of genomics in public health during this session. More information about the Summer Public Health Institute is available at <http://cpheo.sph.umn.edu/cpheo/institute/home.html>, and more information about the roundtable session is available at: http://www.sph.umn.edu/cpheo/events/roundtable/Roundtable_060807.html.

Implications and Impact

The Public Health Institute courses were nationally advertised and over 300 participants attended from 28 states and five countries. Total enrollment for the genomics courses was 27, and included participants from Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota and Oregon. An additional 100 public health practitioners, health care providers, faculty, students, and other professionals attended the roundtable and there were over 325 "hits" recorded on the roundtable website. Participant evaluations of the courses and roundtable were overwhelmingly positive.