

Competency profile ePlanet: Planetary Health competencies

Overarching learning goal:

“ePlanet equips future health professionals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to promote Planetary Health and deliver sustainable health care.”



Competency profile summary:

- 1. Interrelatedness & systems thinking**
Understanding the interaction between human health and the environment on the individual, local, and global level.
- 2. The Anthropocene and health**
Understanding of anthropogenic environmental changes and their impacts on health.
- 3. Sustainable healthcare**
Implementing mitigation and adaptation strategies for healthcare professionals and facilities to address climate change-related health risks.
- 4. Advocacy**
Recognizing the professional duty for environmental stewardship. Showing leadership and motivation to make a positive contribution.
- 5. Social justice & equity**
Striving for health practices that lead to increased equity and sustainability.
- 6. Worldview perspectives and self-reflection**
Exploring own thinking and actions in relation to sustainable development and seeking to understand those of others.
- 7. Envisioning and shaping a sustainable and healthy future**
Imaging beyond current practices and society and envisioning and shaping a sustainable and health future, also known as 'futuring'.

1. Interrelatedness / systems thinking

- Recognize how human health and the environment interact at the individual, local, and global level.
- Understand the reciprocal intermingled impact of societal, health and ecological issues:
 - o Familiar with the basics of systems thinking ways in which natural, social and economic systems function and how they may be interrelated.
 - o Be aware of the interdependent nature of relationships within the present generation and between generations, as well as those between rich and poor, and between humans and nature.
 - o Know that every human action has environmental, social, cultural and economic impacts;
- Approach a sustainability problem from all sides; to consider time, space and context in order to understand how elements interact within and between systems.

2. The Anthropocene and health

- Identify environmental drivers of ill health, including the health impacts of climate change.
- Specific topics:
 - o General Planetary Health.
 - o Food & Planetary Health;
 - o Climate-sensitive infectious diseases;
 - o Air pollution, heat and Planetary Health;
- Public health and its determinants: identify social and environmental determinants of health that make individuals and communities more vulnerable to climate-related health threats;

3. Sustainable healthcare (Prevention, healthy lifestyle, climate/environmental mitigation and adaptation)

- Identify how to prevent, mitigate and adapt to the harmful effects of global environmental changes, and explain health co-benefits of actions.
- Identify ways that healthcare professionals and facilities can reduce their impact on the environment
- Identify ways to prepare for and respond to environment-related health risks.
- Apply knowledge of climate/environment and health to clinical care of patients.
- Be aware that preventive action should be taken when certain actions or inaction may damage human health and all life forms (precautionary principle).
- Promote healthy lifestyles (SDG 12.8) – Health promotion and informing policy.
- Able to evaluate potential consequences of different decisions and actions in a planetary health context.

4. Advocacy

- Recognize the professional duty for environmental stewardship as part of the ethical principle of beneficence;
- Demonstrate clinical leadership, and advocacy competencies for environmental stewardship of the health system;

- Support pathways to sustainable healthcare (SDG 13.3) – Sustainability literacy; Ecological & ethical allocation & use of resources; Sustainable quality improvement; Communication with colleagues & patients.
- Feel motivated to make a positive contribution (to other people and their social and natural environment locally and globally).

5. Social justice / equity

- Is committed to respecting the interests of current and future generations.
- Being aware of how the ecological crisis disproportionately affects certain populations: including Indigenous groups, communities of color, gender differences, the elderly and the young, rural communities, people living with long-term conditions and disabilities and with low incomes.
- Can apply equity and justice for current and future generations as criteria for environmental preservation and the use of (natural) resources.
- Commit to practices which simultaneously addresses equity and sustainability in health.
- Apply climate and health knowledge to improve decisions about public health services, and adapt and improve population health: identify measures that provide health security and foster climate resilience at the individual, local or global scales.

6. Worldview / perspectives and self-reflection

- Reflect on personal values in relation to sustainable development and how they affect professional actions.
- Identify and explain how values vary among people and over time, while critically evaluating how they align with sustainability values.
- Clarify your own and others' worldview through dialogue, and recognize that alternative frameworks exist.
- Know that to identify fair and inclusive actions, it is necessary to look at sustainability problems from different stakeholder perspectives.

7. Envisioning and shaping a sustainable and healthy future

- Being able to imagine beyond current practice/society;
- Understand the connection between sustainable futures and the way we think, live and work.
- Able to envision alternative sustainable futures by imagining and developing alternative scenarios and identifying the steps needed to achieve a preferred sustainable future.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and capabilities needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems.
- Willing to challenge assumptions underlying unsustainable practice.