

Cap4HP: Collaborative Capacity Building for Health Promotion and Prevention Professionals in Switzerland

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Abstract

Health promotion and prevention professionals play a crucial role in addressing current health challenges. In Switzerland, however, their professional practice remains constrained by limited resources, weak political commitment, fragmented educational pathways, and the absence of clear role conceptualizations. To reinforce health promotion and prevention professional practice in Switzerland, this inter-university initiative aimed to foster a common understanding of systematic and strategic capacity building for health promotion and prevention professionals, based on the international CompHP Core Competency Framework for Health Promotion. This objective was pursued through three key approaches: A) Initiating a collaborative process among educational institutions and decision makers in health promotion in Switzerland. B) Developing a shared understanding of professional competencies and roles of health promotion professionals. C) Disseminating a common product to raise visibility and recognition of health promotion professionals.

The project combined qualitative interviews of higher education institutions and decision-makers, followed by two participatory workshops. This process enabled the co-creation of a fact sheet, published via Promotion Santé Suisse, which presents the adapted Swiss CompHP framework, outlines its relevance for education, training, and practice, and formulates recommendations for implementation and dissemination.

Findings show that CompHP provides a suitable foundation for defining professional competencies in Switzerland but requires contextual adaptation and attention to a fragmented educational and policy landscape. A need for implementation guidelines, differentiated applications across educational levels, and stronger involvement of practice actors was identified. The participatory process strengthened mutual understanding, initiated a national network, and laid the groundwork for future collaborations and capacity-building initiatives.

The results underscore the importance of collaborative leadership, targeted dissemination, and supportive tools to professionalize health promotion and prevention in Switzerland. Long-term perspectives include the establishment of a professional association and potential national accreditation mechanisms to enhance visibility, quality assurance, and policy recognition of health promotion and prevention professionals.