

COMMUNITY EYE HEALTH (FOR STRENGTHENED PUBLIC EYE HEALTH SERVICES)

Course overview

Globally, there is a high burden of avoidable vision loss. Lower- and middle-income countries (LMICs) struggle to overcome the challenges of low resource availability and poorly performing eye health care services. Community eye health is the application of health promotion and disease prevention, together with the development of curative services, at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level of health care, to help address these challenges. Community eye health extends the traditional clinical eye services applied to individual patients to a consideration of the eye health of whole populations or “communities”, and how these can be assessed and provided for.

What is the course purpose?

The course purpose is to provide the participants with the knowledge and skills in community eye health to apply in the design and delivery of implementation strategies for achieving success in eye care programmes. These involve specific skills not usually included in conventional clinical eye care training.

Who can participate?

The Community Eye Health (CEH) course for Strengthened Public Health Services (SPHS) is intended for people working in prevention of blindness programmes in low and middle-income countries (LMICs). The course is targeted for clinicians, educators, researchers or programme / project managers, coordinators, and administrators responsible for delivery of public eye health care services in LMICs.

How is the course structured?

The SPHS-CEH course is delivered in blended contact and / or online mode over 12 sessions. The contact sessions are held in Cape Town, South Africa.

A pre-activity may be required to prepare the participants for the training. The online version of the course will be accessible through download of course media, which participants can work through in the time between the sessions. Participants will study basic epidemiology of visual impairment before studying the various community eye health strategies of planning and management of eye care services on a district level.

A group assignment to develop a district eye care plan will give opportunity to consolidate the learnings.

Course outline

Pre-activity	Eye care service profiling, e.g., part of RAECs.
	Aspects covered
Session 1-2	1. Basic epidemiology of visual impairment 2. IAPB Vision Atlas & RAAB repository vision loss data update
Session 3-4	3. Global & local strategies to reduce the burden of vision loss
Session 5-6	4. Disease-specific vision loss control strategies (Cataract, refractive error, childhood blindness, etc.)
Session 7-8	5. Strategies for county, district, provincial and national eye care services
Session 9-12	6. District eye care planning, Research, Information & Contemporary advances in community eye health

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Which teaching methods are used?

Faculty engage with participants through didactic lectures to cover the basic principles of the topics, supported by additional learning resources. The concepts are elaborated with examples, exercises, interactive discussions, quizzes, and further readings, before participants are required to complete individual and group assignments to apply the learnings.

What is the principal output of the training?

The principal outputs of the training include a district-level situational analysis and eye care programme matrix, with budget, the key components of an eye care plan, completed through groupwork. This can be modified for participants' real-life eye care plans, especially if they have responsibility to plan and manage real-life eye care programmes.

When is the course offered?

The course is offered in contact mode over 12 weekly sessions (Friday or Wednesday) starting in February every year. An online, asynchronous version is also available.

Which assessment methods?

Participants will undergo formative assessments, using online quizzes, short individual and group exercises and assignments. Assignment and the course test marks count towards the summative assessment of the course. An aggregate mark of 50% constitutes successful completion of the course.

Who offers the course?

The course is offered by the Community Eye Health Institute (CEHI) in the Division of Ophthalmology, Faculty of Health Sciences, at the University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa. The course faculty possess expertise in community eye health, project management, public health, advocacy, health promotion, health professional education and health programme leadership and management.

What type of certification?

Qualifying participants will receive a **Certificate of completion**, from UCT-CEHI. **Continuous Professional Development** (CPD) points are available for fee-paying participants, if required.

What are the costs involved?

1. The course fee is ZAR5000.
2. Organisations enrolling more than 5 participants get 10% discount
3. UCT and WCDoH staff get 25% discount, i.e., ZAR3750.
4. All currently registered postgraduate students, and graduate alumni from UCT, UWC, CPUT, and US are entitled to a 50% discount i.e., ZAR2500.
5. Current incumbents of the UCT-CEHI Volunteer Internship Programme are entitled to a 100% fee waiver.
6. Foreign currency payments should return the relevant ZAR amounts.
7. **Candidates taking the course as part of an academic programme will pay the relevant course fee.**

How can I apply?

Click here to apply: [SPHS Application form](#). Following acceptance, successful applicants should enrol into the course here: [UCT Learning Store CEHI](#). Select the **Community Eye Health** course and follow the prompts to complete your application. For enquiries, email cehi@uct.ac.za. The due date for applications is 31 January.