

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 10 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 strategies to reduce the burden of vision loss (Vision 2020, Universal eye health, 2030 InSight, etc.)
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&10	6. District eye care planning 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 10 weekly sessions (Friday or Wednesday) from 21 February 2025. An online, asynchronous version is also available.

Which assessment methods?

Formative assessments will take place during the contact period with plenary and online quizzes, short individual and group exercises and a take-home assignment. Participants' homework is reviewed and with feedback, returned as formative and summative assessments. 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 project management, public health, advocacy, health promotion, health professional education and health programme management and leadership.

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 Pre-activity phase of the course is free.
2. To complete the full contact course, a total fee of \$500 is payable. A 20% reduction of fees is applicable if more than 2 applicants enrol from the same (fee-paying) organisation.
3. No course fee is charged for the online version of the course.
4. **Candidates taking this as part of an academic programme will pay the relevant course fee of CHM6022F.**
5. Costs of travel to and from Cape Town, accommodation and meals may apply.

The training venue is situated at UCT-CEHI, H53, Old Main Building, Groote Schuur Hospital, Main Road, OBSERVATORY in Cape Town, South Africa.

How can I apply?

Click on this link to access the SPHS training site: [SPHS Application Form 2025](#). Navigate to the "Submit an application form" tab after having determined which course(s) you want to apply for. Final information about course selection: 31 January.