



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS
Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

Structured Interview Guide Planning Tool

Purpose and Use

The NACDD Structured Interview Guide Planning Tool enables you to choose interview questions which will guide your assessment of the proficiency of a job candidate across a range of skills and knowledge identified as specific to leading and managing chronic disease programs. This document is based on the NACDD Competencies for Chronic Disease Practice, which is available at www.chronicdisease.org. It is not expected that every individual hired to work in chronic disease programs will be proficient in each competency; rather, the competencies paint a picture of the “ideal” toward which individuals will strive as they grow in experience and excellence in their practice. It is also important to note that domains within the competencies may have different levels of relevance to different positions. For instance, a program manager will have day-to-day responsibilities in the domain “Manage Programs and Resources”; however, if s/he does not supervise staff, the domain “Manage People” will have less relevance to daily job performance.

Directions:

To develop a competency-based interview guide:

- From the competency domains listed on the following pages, choose those that have a direct relationship to the position for which you will be interviewing applicants.
- Review the questions listed for that domain, based on the following criteria:
 - Does this question elicit information related to this specific position?
 - Is this question asked at an appropriate level for this position, or is it too advanced? Too basic?
 - Do I know what answers I need to hear from the applicant?
- Based on your review, make any necessary modifications to personalize the questions to the position, to your interview style and to the experience level needed for the position.
- Ask each candidate the final set of questions to allow a careful comparison of knowledge, skills, and communication abilities in your final selection process.

Competency for Chronic Disease Practice Domains

Build Support: *Chronic disease practitioners establish strong working relationships with stakeholders, including other programs, government agencies and nongovernmental lay and professional groups to build support for chronic disease prevention and control.*

- Tell me about a recent experience in building partnerships with a variety of stakeholders for a program or project. What strategies did you use to build the partnerships?
- Have you had an opportunity to integrate a chronic disease program or project with another state health related program? If so, please describe the process you used. If not, can you outline some of the benefits and challenges of integration?
- What experience(s) have you had in educating and informing policy makers about chronic disease programs?
- Please describe your experience in writing articles/reports for professional and/or lay audiences. Do you have any writing samples you can share with me?
- Have you had the opportunity to speak on chronic disease issues in a group setting? Lead a group discussion? If so, please give examples.
- Define “health literacy” and identify steps that need to be taken to address varying levels of health literacy.

Design and Evaluate Programs: *Chronic disease practitioners develop and implement evidence-based interventions and conduct evaluation to ensure on-going feedback and program effectiveness.*

- Tell me about a program you have designed, including intervention activities. What steps did you take to design the program? How have you evaluated this program?
- Describe a time you needed to address cultural issues in program design.
- How have you used program evaluation findings in a recent program? Describe the evaluation methods used.
- Tell me how you use data in your present or past jobs in public health to prioritize program activities.

Influence Policies and Systems Change: *Chronic disease practitioners implement strategies to change the health-related policies of private organizations or governmental entities capable of affecting the health of targeted populations.*

- In your opinion, what impact do current public policies/laws/regulations have on chronic disease prevention and control? NOTE to interviewer: If you address a policy specific to the program area the applicant will be working in, this question will be a stronger indicator for the position.
- When you are reviewing a proposed policy, what aspects need to be considered?
- What is your understanding of the term “systems thinking” or “systems approach”? Give an example.
- Tell me about your role in a recent systems change and the approach you applied. What worked well and what would you do differently?

Lead Strategically: Chronic disease practitioners articulate health needs and strategic vision, serve as a catalyst for change and demonstrate program accomplishments to ensure continued funding and support within their scope of practice.

- Tell me about a time you worked to integrate the activities and projects of different chronic disease programs. How did you do it? What worked well, and what would you do differently?
- Describe a time you have managed to share resources among programs or partners.
- What characteristics do you feel are important to being a successful leader; how do these differ from the characteristics of a successful manager?
- Tell me about a time you have been the leader of a program, project, or group. What successes did you have in this role? What challenges?
- Describe a situation in which you were responsible for making a fairly significant change in a program, staff or work environment that impacted a group of employees or colleagues. What steps did you take to help make the transition to the new situation successful? If it was not successful, what would you do differently the next time?
- Have you ever been part of chronic disease program (or other) strategic planning process? What was the outcome of that process?
- You have been asked by the public health director to cut your budget by 25%. What factors need to be considered and what steps would you take to prepare your recommendations?

Manage People: Chronic disease practitioners oversee and support the optimal performance and growth of program staff as well as themselves.

- What techniques do you use to manage your time and responsibilities?
- Tell me about a time you had to recruit a staff member for a new position. How did you do that? What was your outcome?
- Describe a staff management problem you have experienced, and how you handled it. Would you do anything differently if the same situation arose in the future?
- Describe a situation in which you managed staff with greater subject matter expertise than you. How did you support their work? How did you redirect them when that was needed?
- Tell me about an experience you have had in building an interdisciplinary team. What was your process? What was your outcome? What team/management qualities do you think are essential for employee retention?
- What are some steps you could take to recruit employees from diverse racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, gender, or other varying backgrounds? Why is this important?
- You have a contractor (or employee) who is not performing according to their contract (employee) work plan. What steps do you take to improve their performance?

Manage Programs and Resources: *Chronic disease practitioners ensure the consistent administrative, financial, and staff support necessary to sustain successful implementation of planned activities and build opportunities.*

- Tell me about a chronic disease program you have developed and managed. How large was the budget? Did you have any budgetary problems, and, if so, how did you address them?
- Have you ever managed more than one program at a time? What were your successes? What were your challenges?
- Describe for me your experience with managing cooperative agreements with CDC or with other partners. How did you balance the federal funding versus state funding requirements?
- Have you had opportunities in your career to seek private funding for public agency projects? Describe your process for me. Were the proposals funded?
- Can you give me two examples of how you have monitored chronic disease program(s) performance? Have you ever adjusted program direction or priorities? If so, what processes were used?
- You need to develop a new chronic disease program. Describe the components that are needed to develop the work plan and the process you would use to do so. [Note to interviewer: you will want them to describe setting program goals and objectives, identifying activities, assigning tasks, setting deadlines, identifying deliverables or performance indicators, program evaluation, etc.]
- Describe a chronic disease program with which you worked and/or managed that had performance indicators. How were they developed and monitored? What steps were taken if the targets or benchmarks were not met?

Use Public Health Science: *Chronic disease practitioners gather, analyze, interpret and disseminate data and research findings to define needs, identify priorities, and measure change.*

- How do you keep updated on chronic disease issues?
- Tell me about a population-specific program you have developed.
- Have you ever had to take a program that was developed to reach one population (e.g., African-Americans) and adapt it for use with another population (e.g., Latinos)? If so, describe the program and the steps you took to adapt the program. If not, think of an example of how this might happen and what steps you would take to make the adaptation.
- Describe the important considerations in developing programs addressing health disparities.
- Define “social determinants of health” and provide some examples. Give an example of a program that has addressed a social determinant of health in combination with individual or population-based health behavior change.
- Give an example of an evidence-based program currently implemented for chronic disease prevention, and describe the evidence base.
- Name five factors that relate to the development and management of chronic disease.
- What evidence-based approaches to chronic disease prevention and control have you utilized in your work experience?