

## Department of Epidemiology and Community Health

The Department of Epidemiology and Community Health strives to improve health and emphasizes community service. In addition to the MPH Degree, the Department offers a doctoral (PhD) program in Epidemiology designed to train students to become competent, self-directed research scientists. Faculty research interests include maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS, cancer, environmental health, nutrition, reproductive health and violence prevention.

We are located in the heart of Richmond on the VCU Medical Center Campus, a few blocks from the state capitol and Richmond's City Hall, and only two hours' drive from the nation's capital.



Department of Epidemiology and  
Community Health  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
P.O. Box 980212  
Richmond, VA 23298-0212  
Phone: 804.828.9785  
Fax: 804.828.9773  
E-mail: [epi@vcu.edu](mailto:epi@vcu.edu)  
[www.epidemiology.vcu.edu](http://www.epidemiology.vcu.edu)

Department Chair  
Tilahun Adera, PhD, MPH, MA

Interim MPH Program Director  
R. Leonard Vance, PhD, JD, CIH

MPH Program Coordinator  
Karen Bryant

Executive Assistant  
Rhonda Stanfield

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### Mission Statement

The mission of the MPH program at Virginia Commonwealth University is to promote health and well-being through commitment to public health education, excellence in research, and dedication to community service.



Department of  
**EPIDEMIOLOGY &  
COMMUNITY HEALTH**  
**VCU**

### Why Choose Public Health?

The Master of Public Health (MPH) degree is a professional degree that prepares students for careers in public health, a multidisciplinary field dedicated to maintaining and improving the health of populations—in communities, regions, and around the world. Examples of public health careers include health department epidemiologist, community health program director, health policy analyst, and academic researcher. Public health professionals may be involved in activities such as developing bioterrorism response plans, conducting programs to reduce childhood obesity, leading initiatives to prevent cardiovascular disease, ensuring clean water supplies for communities, or lobbying for legislation to improve access to health care for underserved populations.

### Master of Public Health Degree

Fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health, the MPH Program at Virginia Commonwealth University was the first of its kind in the state. The program is based in the Department of Epidemiology and Community Health (formerly Preventive Medicine and Community Health) and is ranked among the top 20 community health programs in the nation by US News and World Report.

VCU celebrates  
National Public Health Week



### Specialty Tracks

The MPH Program currently offers four specialty tracks. In addition, students may design a customized curriculum focusing on a specific area of interest not included in the available tracks.

- **Generalist Track:** gives students a broad overview of public health issues and training in epidemiologic and biostatistical methods commonly used by public health professionals.
- **Epidemiology Track:** designed to train students who want to specialize in research methods and analysis and interpretation of public health data.
- **Addiction Studies Track:** designed to provide students with a knowledge base in the behavioral aspects of addiction, familiarity with prevention and treatment methods from a population perspective, and an understanding of how health policy affects the public health problem of addiction.

The MPH degree requires a minimum of 45 credit hours, which can be completed in 4 full semesters. Practicing physicians or persons holding a doctoral degree may be eligible for a waiver of 9 credits. An internship exposes students to real-life problems encountered by public health professionals, and a scholarly research project integrates students' skills and knowledge from their coursework.

### Dual Degrees

The Department currently offers an MD/MPH degree, an MPH/PharmD degree, and an MPH/MS in Nursing. A dual degree with Social Work (MPH/MSW) is being developed.

- **MD/MPH Program:** offers medical students who wish to pursue a public health career the opportunity to emerge from medical school trained in both clinical and preventive, population-oriented medicine. This is a five-year program where students receive both degrees upon graduation from medical school.
- **MPH/MS in Nursing Program:** tailored to meet the needs of students who want to earn a public health degree in conjunction with a community health nursing degree. This dual degree program requires 64 credits of study in the two programs over two years.
- **MPH/PharmD Program:** this five-year program offers students the opportunity to achieve a doctorate in pharmacy while also learning about research and population health. Students spend the fourth year pursuing the MPH degree, then transition back to Pharmacy for internships. A field study requirement is satisfied by PharmD internships during the fifth year of the program.
- **MSW/MPH Program:** this three-year program, in collaboration with the School of Social Work, prepares graduates to work with individuals, families, groups, communities and/or organizations; advocate for social, health care and economic justice in a diverse and multicultural society; and promote physical and mental health across the life course.