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Groundwork

Identifying Physician Public Health Competencies to Address Healthcare Needs in Underserved, Border, and Outer Island Areas of Indonesia: A Rapid Assessment

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Abstract

Phenomenon: Most medical schools in Indonesia have developed innovations to integrate public health content into the curricula. However, ensuring that all schools meet appropriate standards regarding the quality of subjects, content relevancy, and course delivery takes time and effort. **Approach:** This study employed a rapid assessment procedure to identify the current knowledge and competencies required to practice medicine effectively in underserved, border, and outer island areas of Indonesia. Ninety-three participants from six remote districts were involved in 12 focus group discussions. Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis using the social determinants of health as a guiding framework. **Findings:** Under decentralized health system governance, the local socio-geographical context is critical to understanding the current public health landscape. Medical education with respect to public health must emphasize physicians' ability to advocate and encourage the coordination of healthcare services in responding to disasters, as well as community-based surveillance and other relevant data for synergistic disease control. As part of a healthcare facility management team, prospective doctors should be able to apply systems thinking and provide critical input to improve service delivery at local health facilities. Also, recognizing underlying factors is essential to realizing effective interprofessional collaboration practices and aligning them with leadership skills. **Insights:** This study outlines recommendations for medical schools and relevant colleges in formulating compulsory block or integrated public health curricula. It also provides a public health learning topic that may aid medical schools in training their students to be competent for practice in underserved, border, and outer island areas. Medical schools should offer initiatives for students to acquire the necessary public health competencies merited by the population's health needs.

Keywords: [Socio-geographic](#) [health disparities](#) [public health competence](#) [rural doctor](#) [Indonesia](#)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL: [SDG 3: Good health and well-being](#)

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