

# Principles of Public Health Exam 1 (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

**Remember:** successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## **1. Start with a Diagnostic Review**

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## **2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions**

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## **3. Learn from the Explanations**

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## **4. Track Your Progress**

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## **5. Simulate the Real Exam**

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## **6. Repeat and Review**

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## Questions

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- 1. Which set of activities is listed as part of corporate involvement in community health?**
  - A. Global health outreach programs**
  - B. Public health policy lobbying**
  - C. Safety, counseling, education, and physical fitness centers**
  - D. Building hospitals**
  
- 2. Incidence vs. prevalence - which statement is correct?**
  - A. Incidence rate captures new cases over time, while prevalence rate captures all existing cases at a point or period**
  - B. Incidence rate captures all existing cases, while prevalence rate captures only new cases**
  - C. Both rates capture only new cases**
  - D. Both rates capture only existing cases**
  
- 3. Which of the following is one of the five sciences of public health?**
  - A. Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Environmental Health, Health and Policy Management**
  - B. Epidemiology, Microbiology, Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology**
  - C. Public Health, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy**
  - D. Genetics, Ecology, Microbiology, Immunology, Virology**
  
- 4. Which term describes the study of distribution of health-related states or events in populations?**
  - A. Etiology**
  - B. Epidemiology**
  - C. Pathogenicity**
  - D. Intervention**

- 5. How is incidence rate defined?**
- A. The number of new cases in a population during a period, divided by the population at risk**
  - B. The number of new health-related events or cases in a population exposed to risk during a specific period of time, divided by the total population**
  - C. The total number of cases in the population during the period divided by the population at risk**
  - D. The rate of recovery in the population over time**
- 6. Healthy People 2020 objectives include reducing health disparities. Which option reflects this?**
- A. Increase quality of lifespan**
  - B. Reduce health disparities**
  - C. Ensure universal free healthcare**
  - D. Eliminate all infectious diseases**
- 7. In the classification of disease and health problems, which criterion distinguishes acute from chronic conditions?**
- A. Acute or chronic (<3 months, >3 months)**
  - B. Infectivity**
  - C. Communicable or noncommunicable**
  - D. Rates/Proportion**
- 8. Natality refers to what?**
- A. Birth**
  - B. Death**
  - C. Disease**
  - D. Injury**
- 9. Operating Agencies of DHHS (examples) which set lists an example?**
- A. NIH, FDA, SAMHSA, CMS**
  - B. CDC, NIH, NHS, CMS**
  - C. NIH, FDA, SAMHSA, CMS**
  - D. NIH, EPA, USDA, CMS**

- 10. What term describes actions society takes collectively to ensure the conditions in which people can be healthy?**
- A. Actions society takes collectively to ensure the conditions in which people can be healthy; the most inclusive term**
  - B. The medical care provided to individuals**
  - C. The study of diseases in populations**
  - D. The science of preventing illness**

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## Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. C
10. A

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## **Explanations**

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**1. Which set of activities is listed as part of corporate involvement in community health?**

- A. Global health outreach programs**
- B. Public health policy lobbying**
- C. Safety, counseling, education, and physical fitness centers**
- D. Building hospitals**

Corporate involvement in community health often centers on providing on-site resources that support employee and community well-being, such as safety programs, counseling, health education, and fitness facilities. These components represent direct, accessible ways a company can promote health within its own environment and among workers and their families. Safety programs reduce injuries, counseling supports mental health, health education builds knowledge for healthy choices, and fitness centers encourage physical activity and preventive care. Together, they form a practical package of workplace wellness that ties health promotion to everyday life at work and in the surrounding community. By contrast, global health outreach programs are typically led by governments or NGOs and focus on international or broad public health initiatives beyond the workplace. Public health policy lobbying centers on influencing laws and regulations rather than providing direct health services. Building hospitals is a large-scale infrastructure project usually driven by government, philanthropy, or health systems rather than standard corporate wellness activities.

**2. Incidence vs. prevalence - which statement is correct?**

- A. Incidence rate captures new cases over time, while prevalence rate captures all existing cases at a point or period**
- B. Incidence rate captures all existing cases, while prevalence rate captures only new cases**
- C. Both rates capture only new cases**
- D. Both rates capture only existing cases**

Understanding the difference between incidence and prevalence starts with what each measure counts. Incidence looks at new cases that appear in a population during a defined time period, giving a sense of the rate at which people are developing the condition. Prevalence, on the other hand, counts all existing cases—both new and pre-existing—at a specific point in time (point prevalence) or over a defined period (period prevalence). So the correct statement is that incidence measures new cases over time, while prevalence measures all existing cases at a point or over a period. The other descriptions mix up what each rate counts—for example, incidence is not about all existing cases, and prevalence is not limited to only new cases.

**3. Which of the following is one of the five sciences of public health?**

**A. Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Environmental Health, Health and Policy Management**

**B. Epidemiology, Microbiology, Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology**

**C. Public Health, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy**

**D. Genetics, Ecology, Microbiology, Immunology, Virology**

The question tests which disciplines are recognized as the five core sciences of public health. Public health relies on these lenses to study population health, measure outcomes, and design effective interventions. The five core sciences are epidemiology (how disease occurs and spreads in groups), biostatistics (the methods for analyzing health data and drawing valid conclusions), social and behavioral sciences (how behavior and social factors influence health), environmental health (how the environment affects health and safety), and health policy and management (how health systems are organized, financed, and led to improve health outcomes). This combination provides both the tools to measure health and the contexts in which health is produced and managed, making it the best fit. Other options mix in biomedical sciences like microbiology, immunology, pathology, and pharmacology, which are essential to medicine and laboratory research but not the five core public health sciences as a framework. Another choice lists professional fields or non-discipline groupings rather than the specific public health science domains. A final set includes broader life sciences rather than the established public health disciplines.

**4. Which term describes the study of distribution of health-related states or events in populations?**

**A. Etiology**

**B. Epidemiology**

**C. Pathogenicity**

**D. Intervention**

The main idea is how health-related states or events are distributed across populations—who is affected, where, and when. This field, epidemiology, looks at patterns of illness and health outcomes to understand the burden on communities and to identify groups at higher risk, so interventions can be targeted effectively. It uses measurements like incidence, prevalence, and mortality to describe these patterns over time and in different places or subgroups, then investigates factors that help explain why those patterns occur. This differs from etiologies, which focus on the causes of diseases; pathogenicity, which concerns how capable a pathogen is of causing disease; and interventions, which are the actions taken to prevent or treat disease rather than studying its distribution.

## 5. How is incidence rate defined?

- A. The number of new cases in a population during a period, divided by the population at risk
- B. The number of new health-related events or cases in a population exposed to risk during a specific period of time, divided by the total population**
- C. The total number of cases in the population during the period divided by the population at risk
- D. The rate of recovery in the population over time

Incidence rate measures how quickly new cases appear in a population that is at risk over a defined period. The best choice captures counting those new health-related events or cases that occur among people exposed to risk during a specific time, and then relating that count to the population at risk during that period. This highlights the time-bound nature of new occurrences and excludes people who are not at risk (or who already have the condition). It's different from prevalence, which counts all existing cases at a point in time, and from recovery rate, which looks at how quickly people recover rather than how many new cases arise.

## 6. Healthy People 2020 objectives include reducing health disparities. Which option reflects this?

- A. Increase quality of lifespan
- B. Reduce health disparities**
- C. Ensure universal free healthcare
- D. Eliminate all infectious diseases

Healthy People 2020 centers on health equity and closing gaps in health outcomes among different groups. Reducing health disparities directly captures that focus, aiming to ensure all communities have the same opportunity to be healthy by addressing the factors that lead to worse health in some populations. While increasing lifespan and overall health are important, HP2020 explicitly targets narrowing differences between groups rather than just raising averages. Universal free healthcare and eradicating all infectious diseases are not the stated HP2020 objectives. So, reducing health disparities best reflects the goal.

7. In the classification of disease and health problems, which criterion distinguishes acute from chronic conditions?

- A. Acute or chronic (<3 months, >3 months)**
- B. Infectivity**
- C. Communicable or noncommunicable**
- D. Rates/Proportion**

The distinguishing factor is how long the illness lasts. Acute conditions are short-lived with a rapid onset and resolution, typically lasting less than three months. Chronic conditions persist for three months or longer, often continuing for years. This duration threshold is the standard way to separate the two in public health and clinical practice. Examples help solidify the idea: a flu infection is acute, resolving within days to a few weeks, while diabetes is a chronic condition that requires ongoing management over many years. Other concepts, like whether a disease is infectious or how common it is in a population, do not determine whether it's acute or chronic; infectivity and prevalence are about transmission and frequency, not duration.

8. Natality refers to what?

- A. Birth**
- B. Death**
- C. Disease**
- D. Injury**

Natality is the rate at which births occur in a population—the addition of new individuals through birth over a specified period. This makes it a measure of births, not of death, disease, or injury. For example, if 100 births happen in a town of 10,000 in a year, the crude birth rate is 10 per 1,000 people per year. Natality helps public health professionals understand population growth, plan maternal and child health services, and monitor demographic trends. It differs from fertility, which refers to the potential or average number of children that could be born, whereas natality reflects actual births that occurred.

**9. Operating Agencies of DHHS (examples) which set lists an example?**

- A. NIH, FDA, SAMHSA, CMS**
- B. CDC, NIH, NHS, CMS**
- C. NIH, FDA, SAMHSA, CMS**
- D. NIH, EPA, USDA, CMS**

DHHS carries out its health missions through operating agencies that handle research, regulation, behavioral health, and health program delivery. The four agencies listed here exemplify that range: the National Institutes of Health funds and conducts biomedical research to advance health; the Food and Drug Administration regulates the safety and effectiveness of foods, medicines, vaccines, and medical devices; the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration focuses on preventing and treating substance use disorders and mental health issues; and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services administers key health coverage programs like Medicare and Medicaid. Together, they show how DHHS covers discovery, safety, behavioral health, and access to care. Other options include agencies outside DHHS (such as those in different departments or national services outside the U.S.), or include entities not aligning with the typical DHHS operating-agency set. While there are other DHHS components like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the combination above is a clear, representative example of core operating agencies within DHHS.

**10. What term describes actions society takes collectively to ensure the conditions in which people can be healthy?**

- A. Actions society takes collectively to ensure the conditions in which people can be healthy; the most inclusive term**
- B. The medical care provided to individuals**
- C. The study of diseases in populations**
- D. The science of preventing illness**

Public health is about the organized, collective actions of society to create the conditions that enable health for populations. It encompasses policies, programs, and environmental changes—clean water and sanitation, vaccination campaigns, air and food safety, housing standards, access to care, and efforts to address social determinants like poverty and education. This broad, population-focused approach contrasts with individual medical care, which centers on treating people one by one; epidemiology, which studies how diseases spread in groups but doesn't by itself implement actions; and prevention science, which focuses on methods to stop illness but isn't the umbrella term for all collective actions. Because it captures the wide range of society-level efforts aimed at creating healthy conditions for everyone, public health is the most inclusive term.

## Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://principlesofpublichealth1.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**

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