



NCHEC

National Commission
for Health Education Credentialing

Credentialing Excellence in Health Education



Certified Health Education Specialists: Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become increasingly evident to the public just how critical the role of our nation's health education specialists has become. Now, more than ever, Certified and Master-certified Health Education Specialists (CHES®/MCHES®) are being called upon to demonstrate unique competencies and pivotal skillsets within a changing realm in the wake of this global public health crisis.

CHES® and MCHES® serve as essential personnel in the continual fight against COVID-19. They have assumed critical roles in the identification, control, and assurance of the needs of individuals and communities throughout the response to this public health emergency. They advocate immensely for

public protection measures, especially for those high-risk populations, and support many other critical health education and health behavior measures to address the demands of the global pandemic.

CHES® and MCHES® operate in many different career sectors and job roles across the country. Duties and needs in each setting have changed in response to the pandemic, and health education specialists have adapted and applied knowledge and skills to provide required services for the communities they serve. The following CHES® and MCHES® represent an overview of the unique responsibilities and tasks that our specialists have undertaken in response to COVID-19.



Shawn T. Moore, LMT, MMP, RYT-200, CHES®
Integrative Health Practitioner, The Well, LLC

Visit [nchec.org/news](https://www.nchec.org/news) to read the full profiles of these CHES® and MCHES®.

JOB ROLE: Shawn owns and operates a wellness studio where she delivers comprehensive wellness plans with a holistic approach. Through the use of health education specialist competencies, Shawn empowers clients to make healthy life choices.

COVID IMPACT: "COVID-19 has presented a unique opportunity for certified health education specialists. Now, more than ever, people are aware of the need for preventative health and wellness. From the individual perspective to emergency health preparedness, health education specialists are gaining public trust and are fueling community efforts for positive change. Being integrative in practice allows me to assist our clients during this time of medical uncertainty, while still helping them to achieve wellness goals."

Frank Becerra, MPH, MCHES®

Supervising Health Education Specialist, County of San Bernardino

JOB ROLE: Frank works to coordinate training, campaigns and projects in Health Education and Promotion in the Department of Public Health, which includes the oversight and delivery of youth development programs, scheduling, and budgets.

COVID IMPACT: "I am now one of the leads in San Bernardino County's Joint Information Center for the COVID-19 Response. We field more than 500 calls per shift. We are currently staffed with ten call-takers. We have 2-3 health educators per shift serving in the GWPA (Gathering, Writing, Production, & Analysis) unit, an Incident Command System (ICS) function of the Joint Information Center. All employees in the Department of Public Health are considered Disaster Service Workers, and now it is 'all hands on deck.' Our Department's health education specialists had previously received ICS training and have regular training for disaster response."



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NCHEC is dedicated to maintaining the highest level of competency in the health education and promotion workforce.



Natalie Lopez, MPH, CHES®

Infection Preventionist, Kaiser Permanente Panorama City Medical Center

JOB ROLE: Natalie coordinates the daily review of lab cultures to ensure proper isolation of patients cared for by clinicians. With each unique patient situation, she works to investigate and problem solve to create recommendations to improve both patient and employee safety.

COVID IMPACT: *"Many of our departments requested walk-throughs of their operations to review patient workflows and what type of personal protective equipment (PPE) is necessary for the different types of procedures moving forward. I have frequently felt that infection prevention is much needed outside of healthcare settings, and I think this pandemic has shed light on that. In health-care, we truly need infection prevention to be part of the entire administrative suite."*

Michael Hodges MHS, HO, REHS, CHES®

Grant Administrator, CDC COVID-19 Crisis Response Funding for Local Health Departments

JOB ROLE: Earlier this year, Michael worked to develop Infection Control and Prevention protocols and providing Health Education services for the City of New York COVID-19 Hotel Program, working closely with the CDC, Doctors Without Borders (MSF), and NYC Health + Hospitals. He is currently administering NJ's grant from the CDC for local health department COVID-19 preparedness and response.

COVID IMPACT: *"With New York City Emergency Management, many things revolved around Infection Control. However, Mayor de Blasio was also very concerned about ensuring that the work that we did maintained a high level of health equity. COVID-19 has revealed, or rather highlighted gaps in this area. This created a bit of a shift in the work that we do – we were moving at the speed of COVID-19, constantly responding to arising need."*



Dawn Snyder, MPH, CHES®

Site Manager, Independent Medical Group (IMG), Florida

JOB ROLE: Dawn works as a Site Manager at two locations in Southern Florida for Independent Medical Group (IMG), an organization specializing in providing healthcare services to those in need, and to stop the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C in underserved communities.

COVID IMPACT: *"Earlier this year, I was called to action by CAN Community Health, a non-profit organization tasked with organizing a COVID-19 drive-through testing facility in the Hardrock Stadium by the Governor of Florida. It was an amazing experience for our team, where we were able to utilize best practices in emergency response and testing, employ a whole new skill set, and simply be a part of something never before accomplished. I love that I never know what each day will bring."*

Dr. Naa-Solo Tettey, EdD, MPH, MBA, MCHES®, CPH

Associate Professor of Public Health, Columbia University

JOB ROLE: Dr. Tettey is an Associate Professor of Public Health at William Paterson University and the creator and director of the HeartSmarts cardiovascular health education research program at New York Presbyterian Hospital. HeartSmarts aims to improve cardiovascular health disparities.

COVID IMPACT: *"In the spring of 2020, I launched the HeartSmarts Virtual Healthy Heart Challenge to research the sustainability of community health education programs during a pandemic and also help participants focus on their health while adhering to COVID-19 restrictions. This program was especially important for the Black and Latinx communities which have seen higher COVID-19 infection and death rates due to underlying health conditions."*



Standard of Professional Excellence

Certified and Master Certified Health Education Specialists have:

- Met required academic preparation guidelines
- Successfully passed a competency-based examination
- Satisfied the continuing education requirement necessary to maintain the national credential



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