

# Public Health Practice in Kansas

Cheyenne Brunkow<sup>1</sup>, Megan Eppler, MPH<sup>1</sup>, Kayla Brock, MPH<sup>1</sup>, and Ellyn R. Mulcahy, PhD, MPH<sup>1,2</sup>  
*Master of Public Health Program<sup>1</sup>; Department of Diagnostic Medicine and Pathobiology<sup>2</sup>*  
*College of Veterinary Medicine, Kansas State University*



## Introduction

Public health efforts are mostly recognized on a national scale; however, local public health practitioners can give an insight into their contributions to public health. Now more than ever, interdisciplinary work is imperative to serve the public adequately. One Health brings together the goal of understanding the connection between people, animals, and the environment (1). Public health practitioners across Kansas were interviewed and asked about their perceptions of One Health, contributions to their community, and perceived barriers to public health.

## Methods

25 Kansas public health practitioners were interviewed about their contributions to public health and the communities they serve. Practitioners were asked about their most significant perceived barriers to public health and if their communication methods were based on strategies for diverse audiences. The interview answers were transcribed and were analyzed using NVivo; ten emerging themes were identified.

This study was approved by K-State IRB, # 10187.

## Results

Theme	Findings	Frequency <sup>a</sup> cited	Number of Participants <sup>b</sup>
Funding	Programs are in need of funding to educate the public	52	17
Education	The public is not always aware of the status of their health or what health practitioners do	46	15
Accessibility/Affordability	Patients are not always able to access healthcare that is affordable	28	15

Table 1. Emerging Themes from Public Health Practitioners.

<sup>a</sup>Frequency was measured as how many separate times this theme was identified;

<sup>b</sup>Number of participants from whom the emergent theme was identified.

## Discussion

Of the 25 participants, professions included veterinarians, paramedics, environmental health and sanitation, military, health department administration, policymaking, and other health practitioners. The most significant perceived barriers to public health in Kansas were funding, education, accessibility, and affordability. Participants were asked if they perceived a problem with communicating public health issues; 20 said yes, three said no, and two were unsure. Other themes included poverty, access to transportation, mental health, elderly, nutrition, politics, and minorities.

**Conclusion:** Public health practitioners identified themes that are related to health care, not just public health.

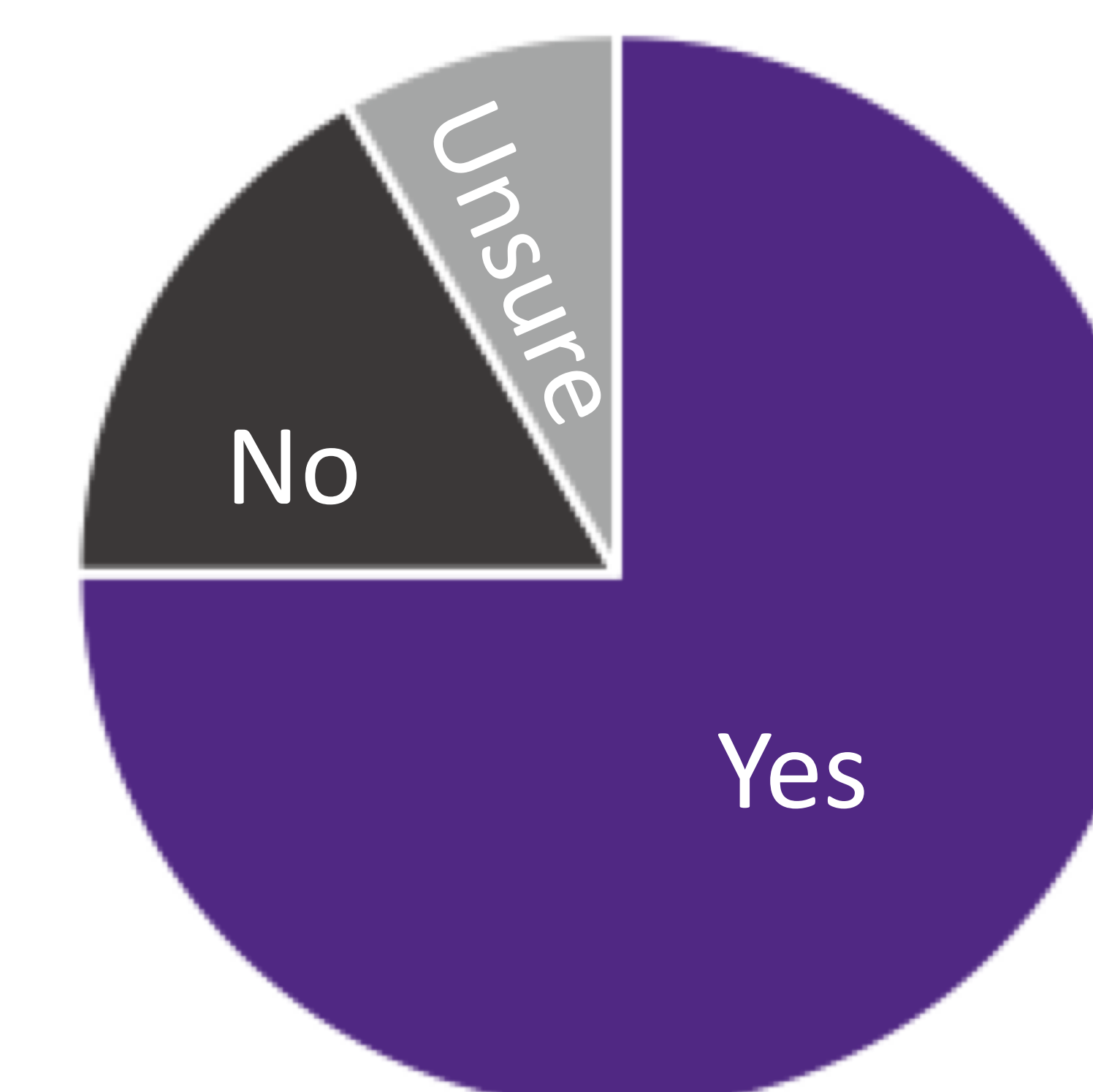


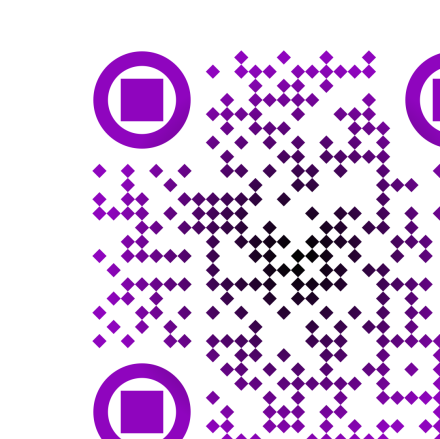
Figure 1. Self- Identification as a One Health Practitioner.

## References

1. One Health Basics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/onehealth/basics/index.html>. Published November 5, 2018. Accessed September 16, 2021.

## Contact

Cheyenne Brunkow, [brunkowchey@ksu.edu](mailto:brunkowchey@ksu.edu)



[www.k-state.edu/mphealth](http://www.k-state.edu/mphealth)

#ksumph