



**PAHO**



**VIRTUAL  
CAMPUS  
FOR PUBLIC  
HEALTH**

**GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF COUNTRY NODES OF  
THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

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## Introduction

This document establishes the basic guidelines for the organization and programming of activities of the country nodes of the Virtual Campus for Public Health (VCPH) of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

The country nodes are a form of organization that facilitates the management of training priorities through decentralization via PAHO representatives and national teams, which allows for a work dynamic in accordance with the processes for technical cooperation of each country.

## Background

An analysis of the role of country and subregional nodes and the progress of implementation of these nodes was done with the purpose of updating the governance model of the VCPH<sup>1</sup>. The analysis highlighted the following:

- The VCPH and its nodes are important for the advancement of universal and free access to knowledge, with quality standards and appropriate to the technological capacities of each country.
- The greatest achievements identified in the development of the nodes was in relation to the trainings provided and the production of open educational resources.
- The coordination of the VCPH at the regional level as well as the PAHO country offices play a significant role in the promotion and facilitation of the nodes.
- There is diversity with respect to its governance and management model, which forms adapts to the realities of the countries in which the nodes operate.
- The Health Systems and Services Advisors (HSS/HS/HR) have an important role as the main referents of the node.

Contributions to the governance model of the node also emerged:

- There is a need to have guidelines for its management, which are flexible enough to produce opportunities for technical cooperation at different junctures.
- The possibility exists for developing decentralized or subnational nodes and involving a greater number of actors (subnational authorities, scientific associations).
- The importance of promoting the leadership of the national health authority in the management of nodes.

Against this background, a series of guidelines were established for the organization of the country

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<sup>1</sup> During 2020, a regional consultation was held to update the situation of the country nodes regarding the maturity of their governance and the integration of the educational approach of the VCPH. The full report is available from the VCPH Regional Coordination.

nodes, which are enumerated below.

## Organizational Model for Country Nodes

### Integration & Leadership

The country node is led by the PAHO Representative and made up of the country's national health authority, subnational institutions, and a network of educational institutions that join its management within a national scope.

According to their degree of maturity and institutionalization, country nodes acquire different forms of organization, which include the existence of at least three components:

1. A steering group led by a PAHO advisor,
2. A technical secretariat and
3. A work plan.

The technical secretariat and the work plan should be renewed on a biannual basis.

### Objectives

The objectives of the country node are to:

1. Strengthen PAHO's technical cooperation at the national level, based on strategic alignment with the training actions developed at the VCPH node.
2. Establish a simplified mechanism for the development, monitoring and evaluation of the activities carried out.

### Functions

1. Preparation of the biannual work plan and schedule of national and subregional activities in accordance with the priorities for technical cooperation, approved by the PAHO Representative in the country.

2. Development of policy proposals, guidelines and instruments for the country or subregional node, within the framework of the guidelines established by the Regional Coordination Group of the VCPH.<sup>2</sup>
3. Establishment of the criteria for the inclusion of new institutions in the node or for the creation of subnational nodes and the management of defined projects.
4. Acceptance and registration of the new institutions and agreements of the node and annual communication to the Regional Coordination of the VCPH.
5. Monitoring of the work plan and verification of compliance with the agreements and commitments assumed by its members and the commissions or subnational nodes that may be formed.
6. Evaluation of proposals and projects submitted to the node by the participating institutions or by national and international entities dedicated to public health, according to quality standards and in line with the educational approach of the VCPH.
7. Contribution with specialized knowledge, techniques, experiences and educational resources in public health that respond to the priorities of human resources in the country and the subregion.
8. Registration of tutors and trained staff by the country node.
9. Dissemination of best practices and successful experiences, in conjunction with the Regional Coordination of the VCPH.
10. Activity report and annual self-assessment of the node.

### The role of the Country Representative in the management of the country node

The Representative will exercise leadership in the coordination of the node.

1. The Representative shall appoint an adviser responsible for coordinating the activities of the node.
2. It will make the necessary agreements for the registration of institutions and the

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<sup>2</sup> The Regional Coordination Group of the VCPH constitutes a managerial space to support the governance of the Campus. With an interprogrammatic approach, its task is to define priorities for the VCP, accompany its strategic development, and align actions aimed at training health human resources with the Organization's technical cooperation strategies.

management of the node.

3. Once a year, the VCPH Regional Coordination Group will be informed of the list of institutions that make up the node.
4. On a biannual basis, the Representative will approve the work plan and submit it to the Regional Coordination of the VCPH.
5. It will approve the courses that will be included in the country node, prior to the application for the opening of the classroom, and will certify them once they are concluded.

## Basic Work Requirements of Country and Subregional Nodes

The node is expected to organize and document its work according to the following minimum guidelines:

1. National coordination meeting with all participating institutions of the VCPH node. It is expected that at least two activities will be carried out annually (face-to-face or virtual) to accomplish the following tasks:
  - a. Discussion and approval of the biannual work plan
  - b. Definition of responsibilities of member institutions
  - c. Acceptance of new partners
  - d. Election or renewal of the mandate of the node secretariat
  - e. Evaluation and monitoring of ongoing activities
  - f. Incorporation of extraordinary activities.

The corresponding form is presented in Annex 1. Once completed, the form must be sent to the VCPH Regional Coordination.

2. To complete the biannual work plan for approval by the PAHO Representative in the country and subsequent submission to the Regional Coordination of the VCPH. The corresponding form is presented in Annex 2. Once the work plan has been submitted and the training activities have been designed, the representative responsible for the course

must complete the VCPH classroom opening application form.<sup>3</sup>

6. Monitoring and evaluation of the activities carried out each year and sending them to the Regional Coordination of the VCPH. As a model for the exercise, a form is attached in Annex 3.
7. Register of Member Institutions. The node steering group will establish the period in which new applications from institutions can be submitted.

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<sup>3</sup> The application form is available at: <https://www.campusvirtualsp.org/?q=es/solicitudes-de-curso-mis-solicitudes>.



## Annex 1. Minutes of the Coordination Meeting for Country Nodes

Country:

Date:

<b>Minutes of the Country Node Meeting (VCPH/PAHO)</b>	
1. Institutions/Participants	
2. Type of session (virtual or face-to-face)	
3. Consideration of the integration application of new institutions	
4. Main topics of analysis that will be the subject of the node's intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Initiatives</li> <li>• Initiatives by national authorities</li> <li>• Common, recurring or prioritized themes by the Node Institutions</li> </ul>	
5. Analysis of the draft The proposed bi-annual work plan	
6. Consideration of extraordinary proposals (outside the Approved work)	
7. Annual Evaluation	
8. Review or ratification of the mechanism for designating the node secretariat and agreeing on the terms of reference of work	

9. Designation of the node secretariat for the period agreed by the participants	
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## Annex 2. Bi-annual work plan for Country Nodes

Country:

**Date:**

<b>Biannual Country Node Work Plan (VCPH/PAHO)</b>		
<b>Period:</b>		
Main themes or areas of intervention	a.	<b>Remarks</b>
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	
Brief description of the topics to be addressed	a.	
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	
Type of activity proposed	a.	
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	
Responsible Institution	a.	
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	
Participating Institutions	a.	
	b.	

	c.	
	d.	
Target population of activities	a.	
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	
Financing	a.	
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	
Execution period	a.	
	b.	
	c.	
	d.	

## Annex 3. Annual monitoring and evaluation of the activities carried out by the country node

**Country:**

**Date:**

Monitoring and Evaluation of Country Node Activities (VCPH/PAHO)					
Name & Type of the activity	Institution responsible and Participants	Period of execution	Number of Participants	Main achievements Reached	Remarks about development and compliance

This matrix will be carried out on an annual basis. At the end of the biennium of the work plan, it will include the achievements during the full period of implementation of the plan. In the interim, a progress report will be made.