

# Teaching Public Health Ethics in Canadian Universities:

## Are the Current Means Meeting the Needs of Future Public Health Professionals?

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*Public Health 2018, Montréal*  
*Session: May 29, 2018*  
*10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.*

# CONFLICT OF INTEREST & FUNDING

- The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare regarding the content of this presentation.
- This project was funded in part by grants to BWJ and VR from CIHR and SSHRC.
- LR was funded by the National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy (NCCHPP) for her work on the surveys, and by the IRSPUM and FRQSC for her doctoral research.
- JCBP is funded by postdoctoral fellowships from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Québec Health Research Fund (FRQS) and the Québec SPOR-SUPPORT Unit.
- Production of this presentation has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada through funding for the NCCHPP. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.



# ETHICS APPROVALS



- Health Research Ethics Board of the Université de Montréal (15-057-CERES-D, March 23, 2017 and November 8th, 2017)
- *Comité d'éthique de la recherche en Dépendances, Inégalités sociales et Santé publique (CER-DIS) of the Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal (DIS-1617-29, May 9, 2017 and May 1st, 2018)*

# A FEW QUESTIONS

- Does the next generation of public health (PH) professionals have the training to face the ethical challenges likely to arise in their practice?
- Are they receiving training in ethical problem solving to address issues that arise when implementing policies or interventions?
- How should PH ethics be taught? And what are the barriers to teaching PH ethics in Canadian universities?



# TWO MAIN OBJECTIVES

We conducted two surveys to better understand:

- The state of PH ethics education in Canadian university PH programs & schools (barriers, challenges, etc.). *Survey 1*
- The perspectives of Canadian PH professionals on the ethics resources they use and their needs for additional tools & training. *Survey 2*

# METHODS: 2 CANADA-WIDE SURVEYS

Details	Survey 1	Survey 2
<b>Email invitations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>publicly available addresses</li><li>+ mail lists (survey 2)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>401 directors and professors responsible for teaching PH ethics in 32 Canadian universities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>PH practitioners in Canada<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1829 PH professionals</li><li>195 medical officers of health</li></ul></li><li>Stakeholders at all levels: local, regional, provincial or federal, PHAC, non-profit organizations in PH</li></ul>
<b>Period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>May 16 to June 23, 2017</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>May 23 to June 14, 2017</li></ul>
<b>Length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Max 41 questions</li><li>~ 5 to 15 min</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Max 22 questions</li><li>~ 5min</li></ul>
<b>Software</b>	EVAL&GO ( <a href="http://www.evalandgo.fr">www.evalandgo.fr</a> )	VOXCO (NCCHPP)

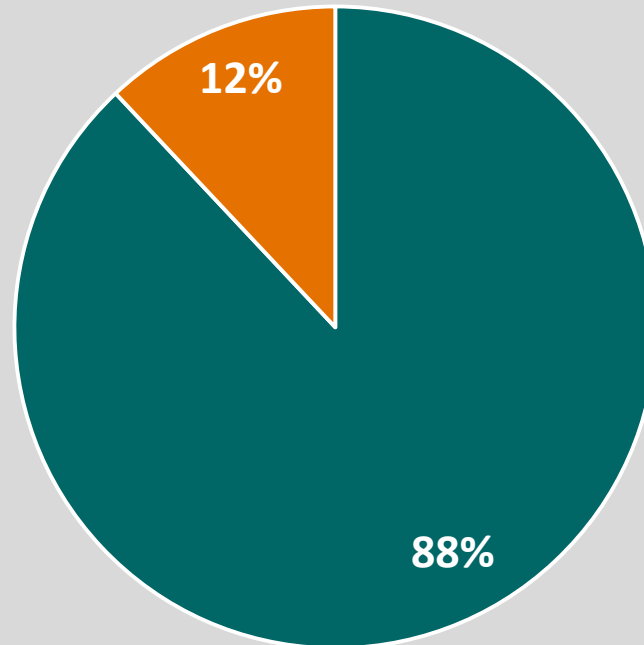
# RESULTS: PARTICIPANTS

Survey 1	Survey 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 49 participants<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 14 francophones</li><li>• 35 anglophones</li></ul></li><li>▪ All age groups (25 to over 65)</li><li>▪ Professors, directors, deans, researchers, students</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 401 participants<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 95 francophones</li><li>• 306 anglophones</li></ul></li><li>▪ Health professionals, managers, researchers, administrative support, communications, students</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 20 universities</li><li>▪ Various departments (PH, Bioethics, Medicine, Health management, Humanities)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ All levels of government and various health-related organizations</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 7 provinces</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ All provinces &amp; territories</li></ul>

# RESULTS: SURVEY 1

*Are there gaps or areas for improvement with the current ethics training in your PH programs?*

*(N=25)*



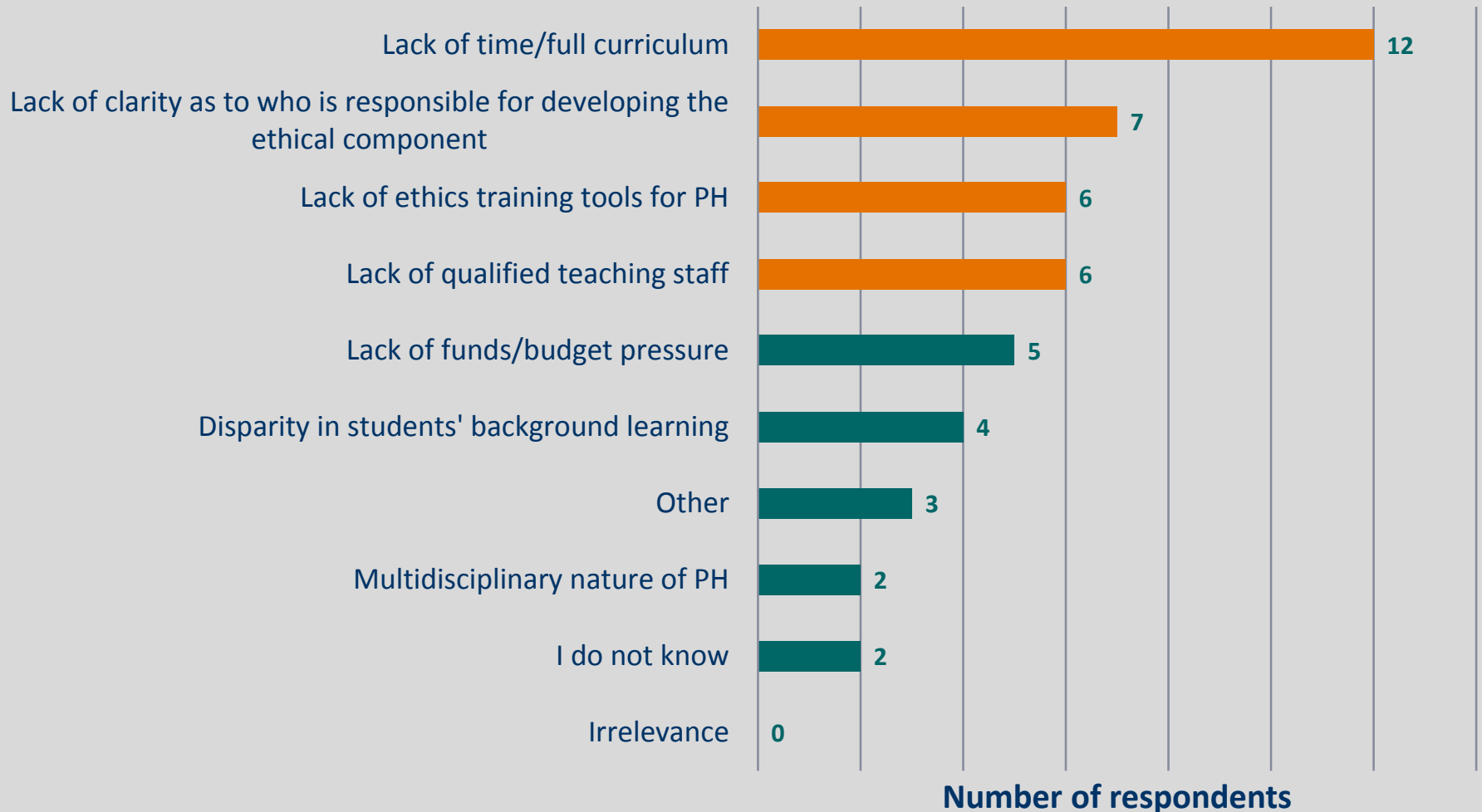
*88% of respondents believed there are areas for improvement*

■ Yes   ■ No



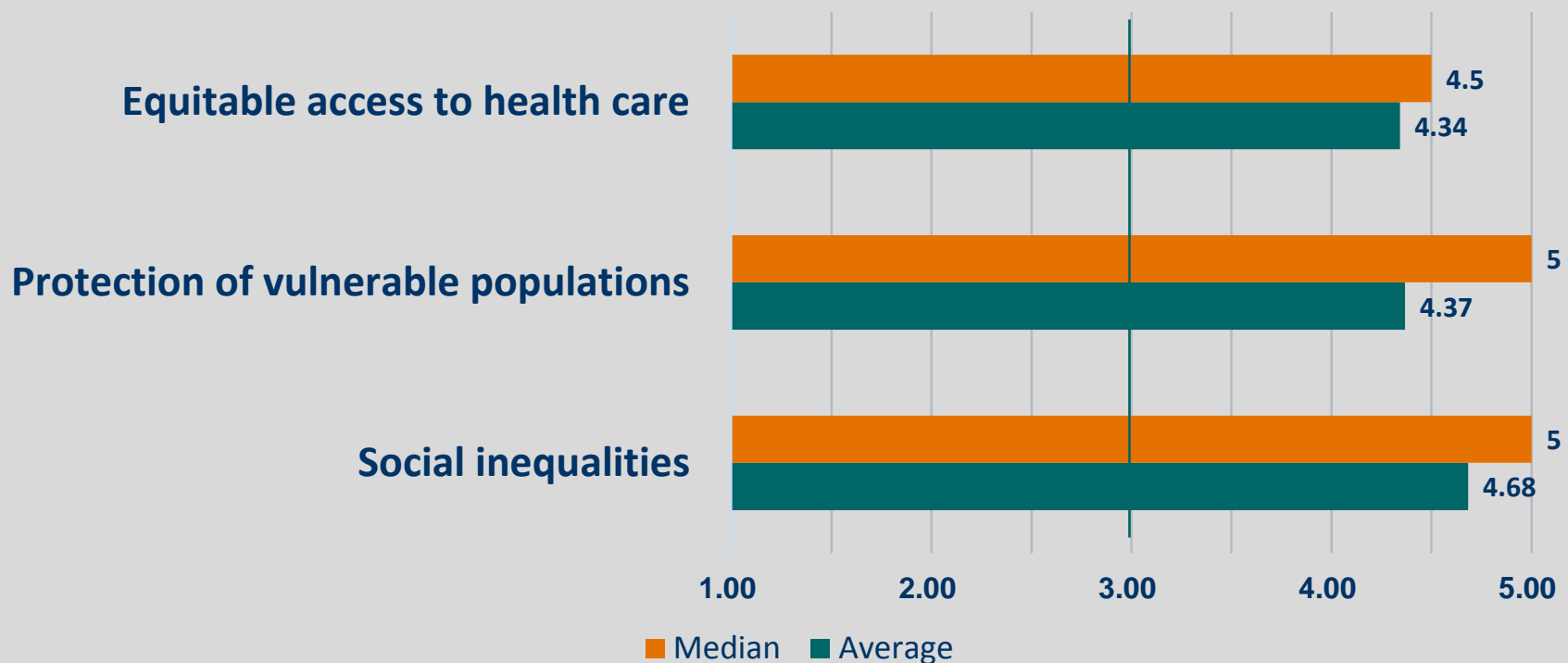
# RESULTS: SURVEY 1

*What are the three main barriers to teaching ethics in your PH programs (N=22)*



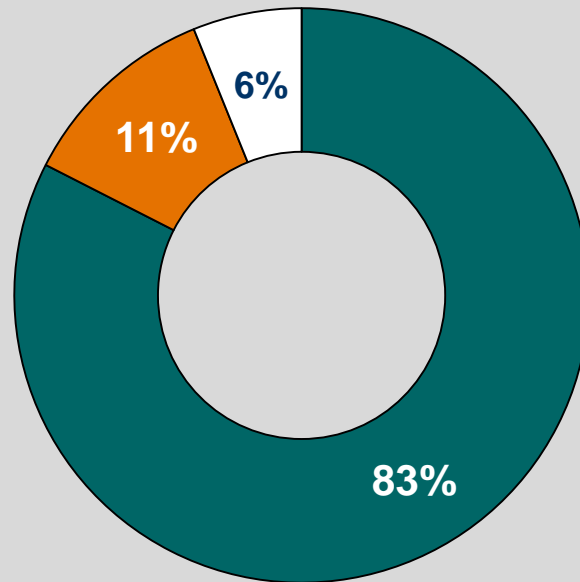
# RESULTS: SURVEY 1

*What are the major challenges that will confront today's public health students in their future practice?  
(1-Not at all important to 5-Essential) (N=38)*



# RESULTS: SURVEY 2

*Would you be interested in resources & training in PHE? [269 En; 84 Fr]*

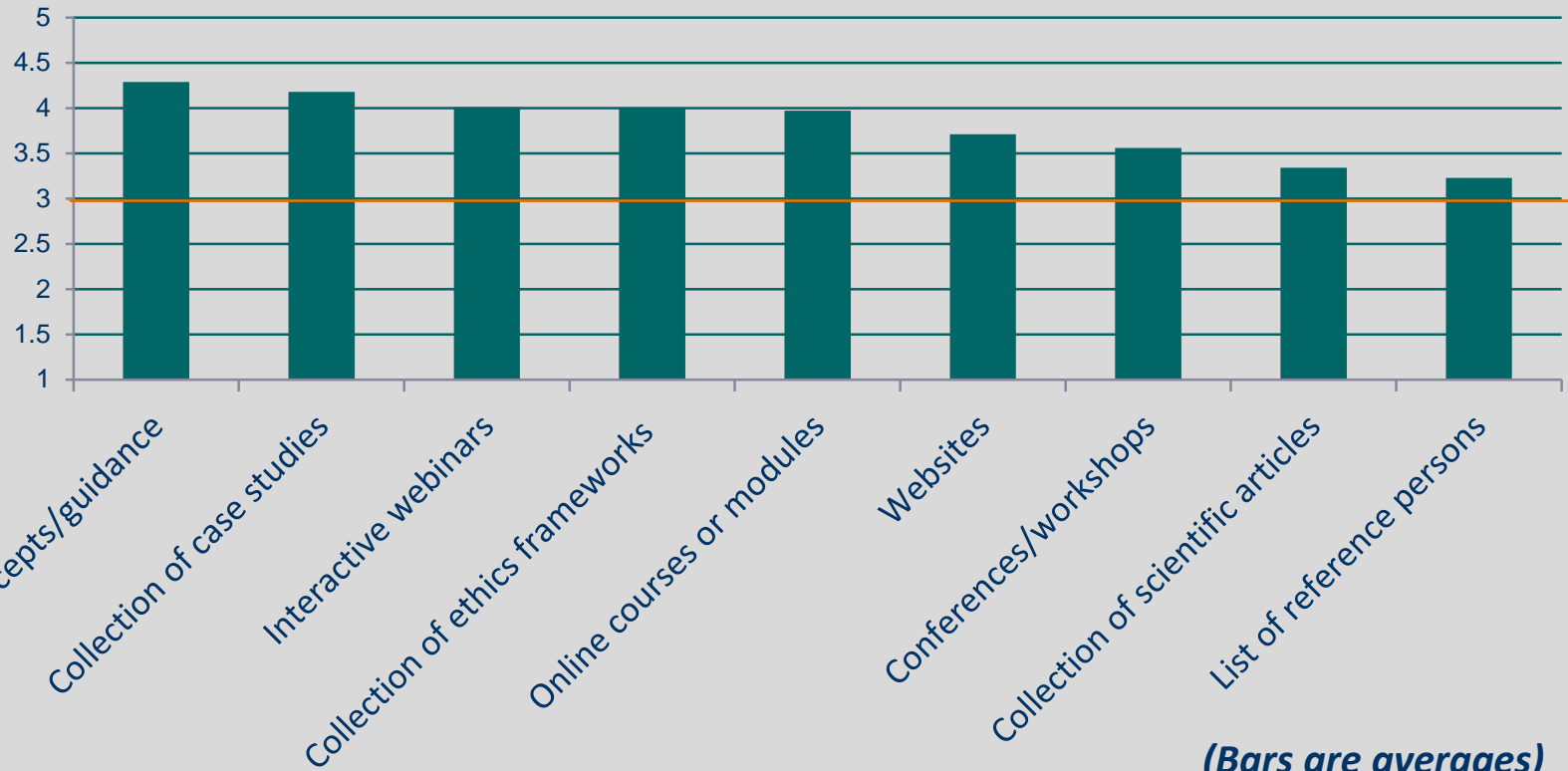


*More than 80% of respondents are interested in resources & training in PHE*

■ Yes (283)   ■ No (39)   ■ I do not know (21)

# RESULTS: SURVEY 2

What types of resources or training in PHE would you be most interested in? (1=No interest; 5=Very interested)  
[212 En; 71 Fr]

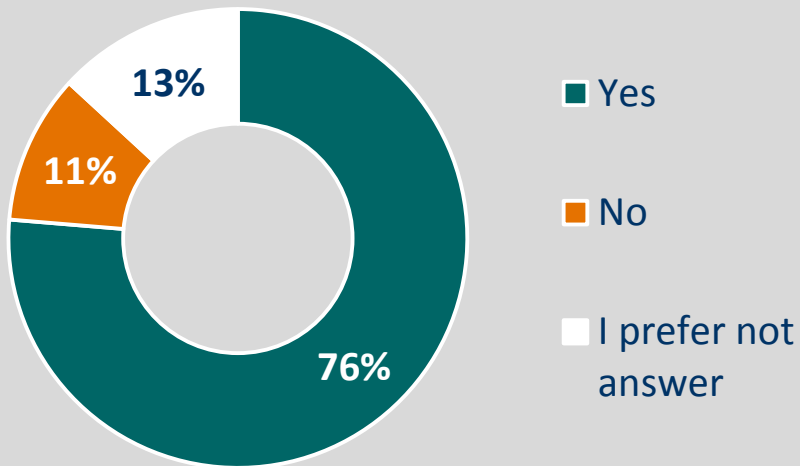


*(Bars are averages)*

# RESULTS

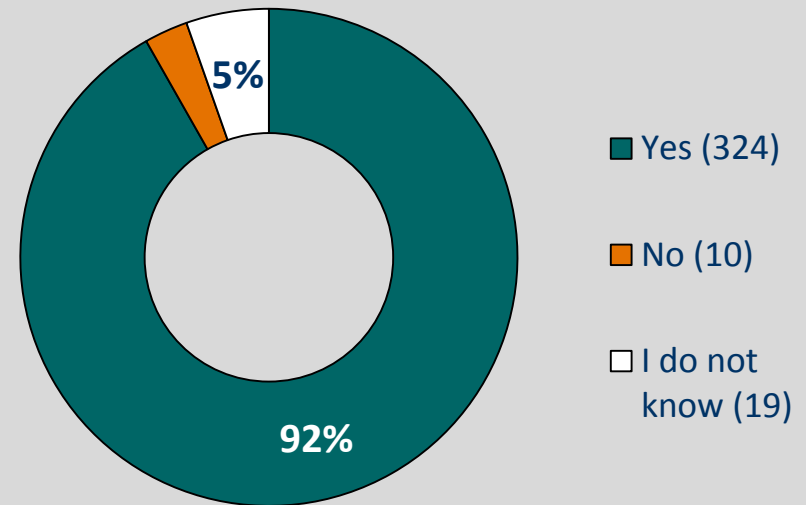
## Survey 1

*Do you believe that a basic curriculum (with a minimum number of hours & content) in PHE would be desirable within PH schools in Canada (N=38)*



## Survey 2

*Do you believe that the postsecondary training of PH practitioners should include a minimum number of hours & basic material in PHE? [269 En; 84 Fr]*



# DISCUSSION

- This is the first Canadian study to integrate perspectives on *current ethics education* in PH schools/programs, and *PH professionals' ethics resources and needs*.
- Both educators and professionals believe that a basic curriculum in PHE (minimum number of hours and content) would be desirable for students (future professionals) and professionals in action.
- **Barriers:** Lack of time/full curriculum, who is responsible for, lack of ethics training tools for PH.
- **Needs:** Accessible tools like short documents, case studies, webinars and frameworks.

*Most important challenges: Equitable access to health care, protection of vulnerable populations and social inequalities.*

# CONCLUSION

- This work has contributed to understanding the state of PH ethics education in Canadian universities, and laid the groundwork for a better understanding of PH ethics practices and needs among PH professionals.
- Results will guide future work to develop training tools adapted to the needs of PH students, current and future PH professionals.
- Further results will be presented during the symposium this afternoon.

# REFERENCES

- Preliminary reports are available on the NCCHPP website:
  - Survey 1  
[http://www.ncchpp.ca/127/Publications.ccnpps?id\\_article=1774](http://www.ncchpp.ca/127/Publications.ccnpps?id_article=1774) (En)  
[http://www.ccnpps.ca/120/Publications.ccnpps?id\\_article=1773](http://www.ccnpps.ca/120/Publications.ccnpps?id_article=1773) (Fr)
  - Survey 2  
[http://www.ncchpp.ca/127/Publications.ccnpps?id\\_article=1776](http://www.ncchpp.ca/127/Publications.ccnpps?id_article=1776) (En)  
[http://www.ccnpps.ca/120/Publications.ccnpps?id\\_article=1775](http://www.ccnpps.ca/120/Publications.ccnpps?id_article=1775) (Fr)
  
- Doudenkova, V., Bélisle-Pipon, J.-C., Ringuette, L., Ravitsky, V., & Williams-Jones, B. (2017). Ethics education in public health: Where are we now and where are we going? *International Journal of Ethics Education*, 2017. Open access.  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40889-017-0038-y>
  
- Summary (4 pp.) version of Ethics education in public health: Where are we now and where are we going?  
[http://www.ncchpp.ca/127/publications.ccnpps?id\\_article=1772](http://www.ncchpp.ca/127/publications.ccnpps?id_article=1772) (En)  
[http://www.ccnpps.ca/120/publications.ccnpps?id\\_article=1771](http://www.ccnpps.ca/120/publications.ccnpps?id_article=1771) (Fr)