Information Seeking Behaviors of Public Health Practitioners

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Introduction

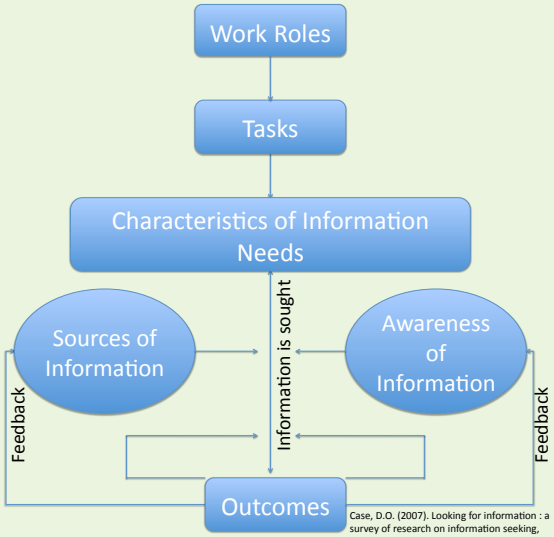
Although significant inroads have been made in regard to the information needs of public health practitioners, little evidence exists regarding their information seeking behaviors. Our goal with this study is to examine the information seeking behaviors of public health practitioners in a practice based research network.

Methods

Electronic surveys will be distributed using Survey Monkey to both directors and full time equivalents (FTEs) at health departments affiliated with the Kentucky Public Health Research Network (KPHReN.) An exclusionary question is included to filter out those individuals who are not tasked with making evidence- based public health decisions, such as personnel involved in the budgeting and accounting functions of the department. To obtain face validity, the survey was sent to public health professionals and select faculty at the University of Kentucky School of Library and Information Science. The study and final survey was given approval by the University of Kentucky IRB.

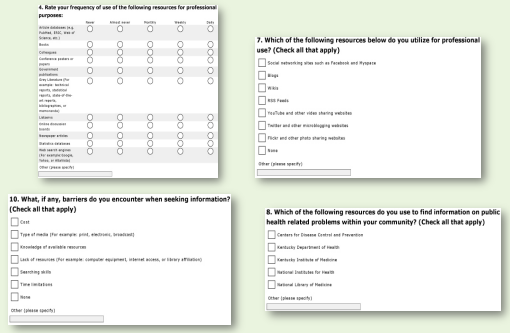
The survey will provide descriptive statistics about library affiliation, resources and their frequency of use, decision making, information seeking barriers, use of web 2.0 media, preferred formats of information delivery, and demographic information including professional roles and functions.

Leckie's Model Of Information Seeking



Case, D.O. (2007). Looking for information : a survey of research on information seeking, needs, and behavior. Amsterdam, NY: Academic Press.

Sample Questions



Kentucky Public Health Research Network

(K-PHReN), one of the first public health practice-based research network in the United States, is a joint initiative of the College of Public Health and the Kentucky Public Health Association.

KPHReN Kentucky Public Health Research Network

Implications

This study has immediate implications in public health informatics, primarily the ability for policy makers, practitioners and researchers to communicate in an efficient and effective manner. The time for public health to move toward an evidence-based decision making process is long overdue. This study will serve as an impetus in understanding the common ground where policy makers, researchers, and most importantly, practitioners converge to advance the public's health through communication channels such as academic journals, grey literature, websites, and white papers.

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