

North Carolina Practice-Based Research Network (NCPBRN)

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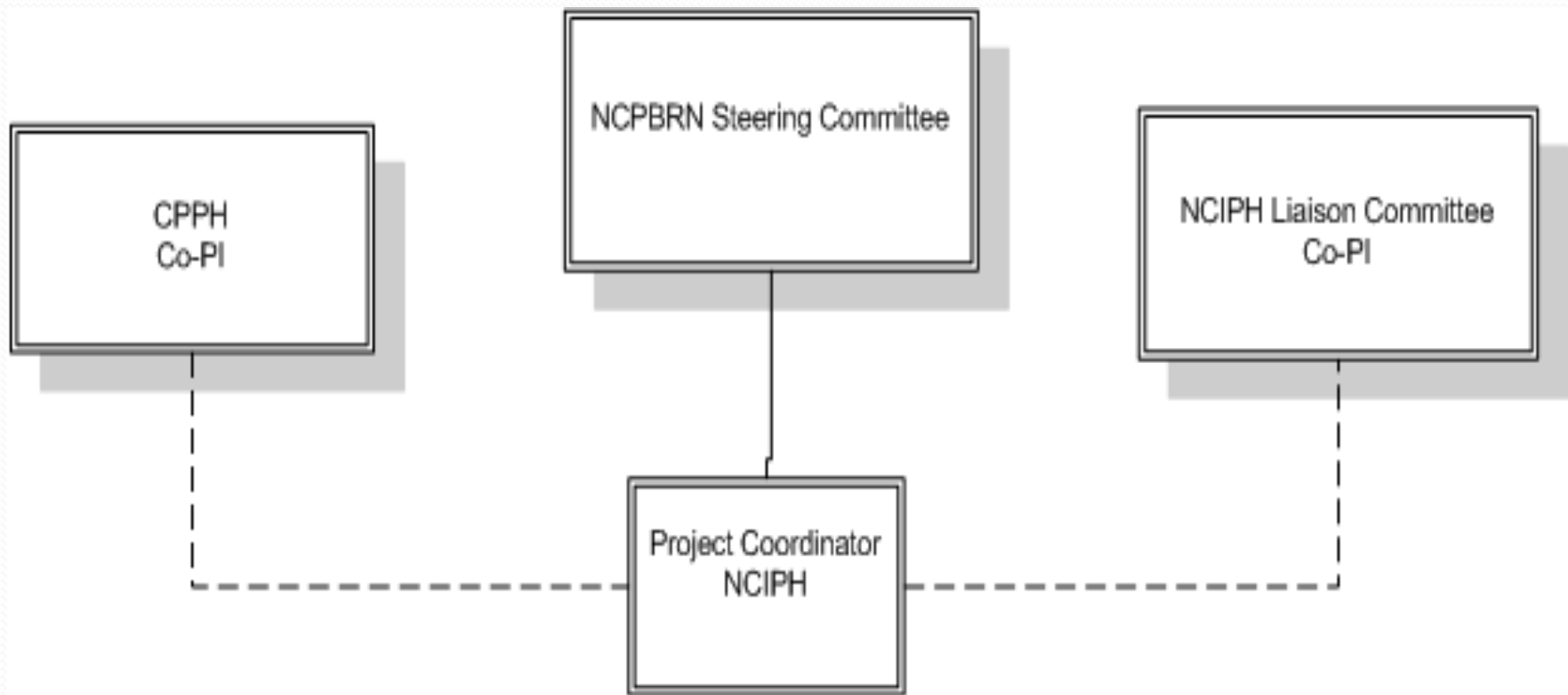
Background and Focus

- Central North Carolina Partnership for Public Health (CPPH)
- One focus area on research initiatives to benefit practice

Two “highlight” objectives in PBRN Grant:

1. Bridge the gap in communication & collaboration between public health practice and academia.
2. Increase local health dept capacity to effectively deliver the 10 Essential Public Health Services.

NC PBRN Organization





Practice-based Research Agenda

- Definition: An evolving, prioritized list of technical assistance and research questions identified by public health practitioners.
- Purposes:
 - Inform scholars about important practice-related information needs;
 - Focus for discussion between practitioners and scholars.



Developing a Practice-Based Research Agenda

- Series of 7 Focus Groups with CPPH Health Dept Staff (N = 67)
- **Objective:** Systematically generate an extensive list of issues faced by local public health practice community that may benefit from targeted research and scholarship.



Developing a Practice-Based Research Agenda

Focus Group Questions:

- List the activities your daily work involves that pertain to the *10 Essential Health Services*.
- For any of these activities, what would you like to know that you don't already know, or would it be helpful to organize the information you already have differently?
- Are there techniques, tools, policies or processes that you think don't work very well –that you think take too long, foster poor service, reduce staff productivity or satisfaction, etc.?
- Is there legislation or an administrative rule that makes your work more difficult?
- Are there things you would change to make them work better?

Focus Group Analysis

- A. Transcripts reviewed to identify themes and a related coding structure.
- B. Phrases within transcripts assigned to codes for data entry.
- C. Content Analysis using ATLAS software.
- D. Draft listing of Research Questions.
- E. In-person review (*react+respond*) by CPPH Health Directors
- F. Next Steps: Crosswalk w/Academia; Decision-making Criteria



PBRA Focus Group Findings

Priority Themes (Systems Focus)

- Public Health and the Larger Community
- Communications
- Clients
- Programs and Services
- Budget and Funding
- Laws and Regulations
- **Public Health Workforce**



Drill-down:

Public Health Workforce Research Categories

- Public Health Workforce Recruitment
- Staffing Levels
- Training/Professional Development
- Employee Pay and Benefits
- Employee Retention
- Employee Morale and Productivity
- Working with Students

NCPBRN Networking Processes

- Engaging Practitioners
 - Formal focus groups with LHD staff (N = 67);
 - Regular CPPH meetings and PBRN special sessions;
- Engaging Scholars
 - Regular meetings with faculty representatives across UNC SPH academic departments on the;
 - Individual meetings with selected scholars about specific research questions.
- Both
 - Practitioner/Faculty Workshops
 - Technology-mediated forums (i.e. blogs, social networks, newsletters)