

## PHSSR InsideTrack-April 2012



Recently, I have been listening to a lot of TED talks, you know, those dynamic speakers who in 8, 11 or 17 minutes can change your life? Well, I had one of Oprah's "aha-moments" after listening to Simon Sinek, author, "[Start with Why](#)." In it, he talks about The Golden Circle. This circle codifies what makes the most inspiring people and organizations so successful and influential. According to Sinek, we all know the "what" we do and, more often than not, we know "how" we do it. But it is the "why" that matters most.

As I thought about RWJF's work in PHSSR, I began asking myself about the "why." In PHSSR, the "what" is simple. Since 2003 we have invested in building the field of public health services and systems research with nearly a hundred grants totaling over \$60 million. The "how" is our strategic approach and the targeted investment in fostering junior investigators to build careers in PHSSR, supporting data harmonization and integration that provides the bulk of knowledge on infrastructure, organization, governance and finance; supporting practice-based research networks that connect the research community to the realities of practitioners; setting the agenda for the future focus of research and finally coordinating all these efforts to build on each other. But the "why"? To me, the "why" of PHSSR is about being accountable to the nation's most vulnerable and the belief that what can happen to any one of us, happens to all of us. We have the public's health in our hearts.

The "why" is what drives local and state health leaders to get up in the morning, despite huge obstacles like the loss of nearly 40,000 jobs due to layoffs or attrition. or the massive cuts in funding at the federal.

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*ABOUT PHSSR - The emerging field of public health services and systems*

*research (PHSSR) examines questions that relate to the financing, organization and delivery of public health services - and how those factors translate to population health.*

...and the importance of the message being delivered at the national, state and local levels. Those inspired leaders think, act and communicate from their hearts. We owe it to them to advocate and drive toward a stronger public health system. Remember when you talk about PHSSR, not to focus so much on the “what” and “how” but the “why” and we will engage more followers in our cause.

**Debra Joy Pérez, M.A., M.P.A., Ph.D.**

Associate Vice President for Research and Evaluation  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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## Research

### PUBLICATIONS

[How do we know when research from one setting can be useful in another? A review of external validity, applicability and transferability frameworks.](#)

Burchett H, Umoquit M, Dobrow M.  
J Health Serv Res Policy. 2011 Oct;16(4):238-44. Review.  
PMID: [21965426](#) [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]  
[View related citations.](#)

[Complementary public health: not what it seems.](#)

Sim F, Mackie P.  
Public Health. 2011 Sep;125(9):565-6. Epub 2011 Aug 26. No abstract available.  
PMID: [21872286](#) [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]  
[View related citations.](#)

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## Practice

### Share Your *Community Guide* Story

Have you used [The Guide to Community Preventive Services \(The Community Guide\)](#) to address public health challenges in your community? If so, the Public Health Foundation (PHF) wants to hear from you! PHF invites you to share your experience by entering the [“I’m Your Community Guide!” Contest](#). Your stories will help to identify model practices for implementing the evidence-based strategies outlined in *The Community Guide*.

The contest announcement is open until April 30, 2012, on the Public Health Foundation's [website](#). Need more information or just want to provide us with a quick testimonial? Contact us at [communications@phf.org](mailto:communications@phf.org). Enter today!

### NACCHO Announces Profile-IQ Online Data Query System

Do you need a few key statistics on local health departments? Are you looking for just the right piece of information to help with a proposal, report, or needs assessment? Then NACCHO's Profile-IQ is the tool for you. Profile-IQ is an easy-to-use online data query system. View up-to date statistics on local health department finance, workforce, and activities based on information collected by NACCHO's 2010 National Profile of Local Health Departments (Profile) study. Profile-IQ is useful to practitioners and policymakers at the local, state and federal level; researchers; students; the media; educators; and the public. For more information about Profile-IQ, view an instructional video [here](#). To access this cool tool, visit <http://profile-iq.naccho.org>.

### **ASTHO Tracks Continuing State Budget Woes**

New data reveal that more than 52,000 state and local public health jobs have been lost since 2008. Federal, state and local government budget cuts are jeopardizing a decade of significant gains made by state and territorial health agencies (SHAs). Critical SHA programs and services have been cut or reduced, staff positions have been eliminated and many staff have been laid off or furloughed. The [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials](#) has been following this trend since 2008, when it initiated a longitudinal study to investigate the impact of budget cuts on SHAs and the people they serve. The March 2012 update of the [Budget Cuts Impact Research Brief](#) reports the results of the eighth round of the Budget Cuts Survey. For more information, please contact [Katie Sellers](#) or [Rivka Liss-Levinson](#).

### **IRS Clarifies Community-Building Activities for Non-Profit Hospitals**

The IRS provides clarification on community-building activities for non-profit hospitals. These activities, and other community benefit activities, provide opportunities for collaboration between non-profit hospitals and the public health community. For more information, visit the Hilltop Institute's [website](#).

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## **Policy**

### **Public Health Law Research Posts New Methods Guides**

Public Health Law Research recently posted three new Methods Guides on its website. These guides are designed to help public health professionals understand how to conduct research in law, and help legal professionals understand scientific methods:

- ["Measuring Statutory Law and Regulations for Empirical Research"](#) provides researchers with a practical how-to guide

to apply the scientific method to measure the law for quantitative research.

- "[Using Qualitative Research Strategies for Public Health Law Evaluation](#)" discusses ways to evaluate laws effectively when quantitative analysis is not possible.
- "[Economic Evaluation of Public Health Laws and their Enforcement](#)" explains the two questions that are considered when evaluating the economic value of public health law: whether its benefits exceed its costs, and the how the distribution looks for those costs and benefits across the stakeholders.

These guides, and many more, are available on the [PHLR website](#).

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## Funding

### **Deadline is April 4 for Public Health Law Research Opens Fourth Funding Round to Researchers Studying Effects of Laws and Policies on Public Health**

Public Health Law Research (PHLR), a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has released its fourth call for proposals on studies that focus on the effects of laws and policies on public health.

- The new call for proposals is available [online](#).
  - The deadline for submitting brief proposals is April 4, 2012 (3 p.m. EST).
  - Find out more on the PHLR [website](#).
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## Events

### **Prominent National Health Leaders to Speak at Keeneland Conference**

Prominent health leaders representing the public, private and nonprofit sectors will speak this month at the [2012 PHSSR Keeneland Conference](#), a premier national meeting focused on advancing the science, policies and delivery of programs and services to protect and improve Americans' health.

Keynote speakers scheduled for the conference, set for April 17-19, 2012, in Lexington, Ky., include:

- Harvey Fineberg, M.D., Ph.D., president of the Institute of Medicine

- Thomas Frieden, M.D., M.P.H., director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Carol Moehrle, chair of the board of directors of the Public Health Accreditation Board; district director, North Central Idaho District Health Department
- Debra Joy Perez, M.A., M.P.A., Ph.D., interim vice president for research and evaluation at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Richard J. Umbdenstock, M.S., FACHE, president/CEO of the American Hospital Association

Sponsored by the [National Coordinating Center for Public Health Services and Systems Research](#), the Keeneland Conference brings together researchers, practitioners and policy-makers to share the latest research and insights into what types of public health funding and delivery strategies enable state and local health departments to most effectively and efficiently keep people healthy and safe.

This year's conference, which has been held since 2008, will focus on the translation of research into public health policy and practice. "The conference is an invaluable opportunity to discuss how we can take what we've learned through research on making the most of public health dollars and get it into the hands of public health practitioners and policy-makers who face difficult decisions about how best to address the growing health challenges that communities are facing," said F. Douglas Scutchfield, M.D., director of the National Coordinating Center, which is housed at the University of Kentucky College of Public Health and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

For more information about the conference, visit [www.keenelandconference.org](http://www.keenelandconference.org).

### **First Public Demonstration of PHUD\$ is Part of PH PBRN Grantee Meeting**

As part of the annual Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks Grantee Meeting (held in conjunction with the Keeneland Conference), [Peggy Honoré, DHA](#), will present a one-hour workshop on Tuesday, April 17, entitled ***Using the PHUD\$ for Management and Improvement of Public Health Finance***. The workshop, from 10:30-11:30 a.m., will be open to all attendees of the Keeneland Conference and marks the first public demonstration of PHUD\$.

PHUD\$ is a web-based financial data collection and analysis portal hosted by the National Association of County and City Health Officials ([NACCHO](#)). PHUD\$ is designed to collect local public health agency financial data and generates immediate feedback on agency financial and operational conditions through dashboards, benchmarking, ratio and trend analysis. and analysis of program financial performance.

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Sustainability of the governmental public health system is dependent principally on the financial health of state and local public health agencies. This is a challenge because public health programs and services are often provided in fiscally challenging environments. Effective utilization of resources requires that public health professionals have access to timely, reliable and uniform data to assess agency and system conditions and to use that information to support decisions. Development of the *Public Health Uniform Data System (PHUD\$)* responds to that need. An overview of the Public Health Finance & Management (PHF&M) website is also scheduled during this session. The PHF&M site includes a comprehensive portfolio of information that can be used to improve and sustain the public health system.

Honoré is director of the Public Health System, Finance, and Quality Program in the Office of Healthcare Quality, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, and an Associate Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi. She is leading national efforts to establish and implement concepts for quality in the public health system, develop a field of study in public health finance, and promote public health systems research. PHUD\$ and PHF&M are being developed through support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to the University of Southern Mississippi.

#### **PHSSR at AcademyHealth**

Save the Date! [Annual Research Meeting](#) (ARM) June 24-26 and Annual PHSR Interest Group Meeting June 26-26 in Orlando

- Early registration ends April 26
- Full ARM Agenda will be available in early April, see [here](#) for current agenda highlights
- IG Agenda to be released mid-April

#### **University of Pittsburgh MIDAS National Center of Excellence Announces Conference; Call for Abstracts Open**

The University of Pittsburgh MIDAS National Center of Excellence, in cooperation with the *Journal of Public Health Management & Practice* and the Center for Communicable Disease Dynamics at the Harvard School of Public Health, invites researchers, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows to present their work at the Dynamics of Preparedness Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa., Oct. 22–24, 2012. Submission of abstracts (approximately 500 words) is invited for consideration for oral or poster presentation. The deadline for submission is Friday, June 1, 2012. Abstracts should be submitted via the abstract submission form. For more information, visit [their website](#) or email [midas@pitt.edu](mailto:midas@pitt.edu).

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