

PHSSR InsideTrack-January 2013

Perspectives in PHSSR

In the December issue of [InsideTrack](#), I highlighted the work of [Dr. Ross Brownson](#) and his colleagues at [Washington University](#) and [Saint Louis University](#) in developing training for Evidence-Based Public Health (EBPH). But, as mentioned, having the *skills* to identify and use EBPH is just one part of a complicated equation. **Getting** EBPH in the first place is perhaps the first challenge, and although there are many reasons for the relative paucity of EBPH, the topic for this column focuses on this notion: Evidence cannot be built when the research is not translatable. What makes research translatable or not?

In the Winter 2012 edition of [NACCHO Exchange](#) this question was approached by starting with the sentiment expressed earlier by [Green](#) and [Glasgow](#): "If we want more evidence-based practice, we need more practice-based evidence." Fundamental to this notion is *who* is asking the research question – the academician working in isolation, or the practitioner trying to solve a problem he/she has identified in the practice setting? In my experience, research issues that are primarily driven by academicians find less resonance than those coming from practitioners – the specific topics may have little relevance to the day-to-day challenges in public health practice. The questions posed solely by practitioners, however, tend to be more evaluative in nature, which is less attractive to the academician.

Perhaps the greatest potential for conducting research that is translatable comes from collaborative, equal partnerships between academia and practice, where research questions can germinate in an environment of trust and mutual respect, kneaded and worked over, allowed to rise and fall and rise again like a baker making bread. These

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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.

are the environments that are being nurtured by academic health departments, [Public Health-Practice Based Research Networks](#), [Prevention Research Centers](#), and [Public Health Training Centers](#). At least one of these entities exists in every state, providing opportunities to facilitate practice-based research - seek out such partnerships. The new online, open access journal [Frontiers in PHSSR](#) will be featuring a regular column, "From the Frontier: Translating Research to Practice," which will highlight research translation stories from the types of collaborative partnerships mentioned above. If you have, or know of, a good research translation story, let me encourage you to give me a yell at perwin@utk.edu. The aim of the column is to document, in narrative form, how the community of PHSSR is building the evidence-base of public health by, indeed, improving the climate for practice-based evidence.

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Research

Recently Published Research

[A multistate examination of partnership activity among local public health systems using the National Public Health Performance Standards.](#)

Barnes PA, Curtis AB, Hall-Downey L, Moonesinghe R.

J Public Health Manag Pract. 2012 Sep-Oct;18(5):E14-23. doi: 10.1097/PHH.0b013e31822ca424.

PMID: 22836543 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

[Related citations](#)

[Better health requires partnerships and a systems approach.](#)

Jarris PE, Monroe JA, Pestronk RM.

Am J Public Health. 2012 Nov;102(11):e4; author reply e4-5. doi:

10.2105/AJPH.2012.301018. Epub 2012 Sep 20. No abstract available.

PMID: 22994284 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

[Related citations](#)

[Strengthening public health and primary care collaboration through electronic health records.](#)

Calman N, Hauser D, Lurio J, Wu WY, Pichardo M.

Am J Public Health. 2012 Nov;102(11):e13-8. doi:

10.2105/AJPH.2012.301000. Epub 2012 Sep 20.

PMID: 22994274 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

[Related citations](#)

Grants Enable Next Generation of Researchers to Study How

Various Public Health Services Affect Population Health

Four new \$100,000 grants will enable a small cadre of emerging researchers to explore the effect of the organization, financing and delivery of public health services on population health.

The two-year awards from the [National Coordinating Center for Public Health Services and Systems Research](#) (PHSSR), housed at the [University of Kentucky College of Public Health](#) and funded by the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), will support the examination of issues including Health Information Exchange; disparities in access to public water and sanitation; costs of controlling tuberculosis; and local public health departments' use of social media tools.

The Mentored Research Scientist Development Awards are designed to produce timely evidence to guide decisions by public health practitioners and policy-makers, while enabling early career investigators to develop the backgrounds and skills needed to establish independent careers in PHSSR and compete for other funding opportunities. Find out [more](#) about the grantees and their projects.

New Issue of Frontiers Looks at Quality Improvement Efforts and Challenges

Quality improvement, or QI, and some of the barriers to adopting evidence-based decision making are among the topics addressed in the latest issue of [Frontiers in Public Health Services and Systems Research](#), the rapid-cycle online journal of PHSSR. *Frontiers* puts the most current research into the hands of practitioners and policy-makers. Check out the latest issue and [sign up](#) to receive *Frontiers* alerts for updates on the latest PHSSR research.

Think Spring – and Keeneland Conference '13

It's not too early to think of spring – and an upcoming opportunity to gain and share knowledge about PHSSR at a premier national meeting in April.

The [National Coordinating Center for PHSSR's 2013 Keeneland Conference](#), April 8-11 in Lexington, Ky., brings together researchers and those who put the research into practice for a meeting that offers prominent speakers, stimulating discussions and invaluable networking opportunities.

Get involved now! Click [here](#) to find out how to:

1. [Register online.](#)
2. [Make your travel arrangements.](#)
3. [Apply for a scholarship.](#)
4. Follow [@KeenelandConf](#) or [#PHSSRK13](#).

Now in its sixth year, the Keeneland Conference brings people back year after year for the unique opportunity to learn from one another and move the field forward. Learn more about [previous years' conferences](#) and make plans now to join us in 2013!

Abstracts Due Jan. 17 for AcademyHealth ARM

Showcase your research at the [AcademyHealth](#) 2013 [Annual Research Meeting \(ARM\)](#) – submit to the call for abstracts by Jan. 17. Abstracts are invited for four categories:

- Call for papers
- Call for posters
- Call for research panels, and
- Call for policy roundtables.

Find out [more](#) about the call for proposals for presentation at the 2013 ARM, June 23-25 in Baltimore.

AcademyHealth Accepting Applications for Scholarships to Attend Upcoming Meetings

[AcademyHealth](#) is accepting applications for student scholarships to attend the [Annual Research Meeting](#) and [Public Health Systems Research](#) Annual Meeting in Baltimore (June 22-26). Applicants must be masters or doctoral students engaged in rigorous and policy relevant research. This year, the selection committee is especially interested in selecting student work that investigates the public health systems' contribution to population health outcomes, including timely research related to the transforming health system. Applications are due on March 1, 2013. Find instructions [here](#).

NALBOH Releases Six Functions of Public Health Governance

Working in collaboration with CDC and other partners, the [National Association of Local Boards of Health](#) (NALBOH) has released a model of the six functions of public health governance. NALBOH has defined the governance functions as: 1) policy development; 2) resource stewardship; 3) legal authority; 4) partner engagement; 5) continuous improvement; and 6) oversight. NALBOH co-founder and CEO Ned Baker stated, "These six functions are to public health governance what the three Core Functions and ten Essential Services have been to public health." Click [here](#) to read the full document.

2012 America's Health Rankings Report Details State-by-State Info

The 2012 [America's Health Rankings Report](#) was released recently, providing detailed health information on a state-by-state basis. The analysis indicates that cardiovascular behavior, diabetes, obesity, and

analysis indicates that sedentary behavior, diabetes, obesity, and hypertension continue to weigh nationally on both health and the economy.

New Report Shows Gaps in States' Ability to Respond to Emergencies

A new report issued by the [Trust for America's Health](#) (TFAH) and the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) shows that persistent gaps remain in states' ability to respond to events ranging from bioterrorist threats to hurricanes to disease outbreaks. In the 2012 [Ready or Not? Protecting the Public from Diseases, Disasters and Bioterrorism](#) report, 35 states and Washington, D.C., scored a six or lower out of 10 in preparedness indicators such as states' ability to fund public health programs, and to assemble decision-makers in an emergency. The report comes as federal funding for preparedness programs has decreased nearly 40 percent since FY 2005.

Among its recommendations, the report stresses that sufficient and dedicated funding is needed to enable health departments to carry out their core responsibilities, and act quickly in the face of major, unexpected emergencies.

RWJF: States Continue to Fall Short on Tobacco Prevention

A new [report](#) by the [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#) indicates that only 1.8 percent of the \$25.7 billion in Fiscal Year 2013 revenue that states will collect through the tobacco settlement and tobacco taxes will be spent on smoking prevention and cessation activities.

RWJF: Cities and States Report Declining Childhood Obesity Rates

While approximately one-third of children and teens are overweight or obese, the increased availability of healthy foods in schools and communities, along with efforts to integrate physical activity into daily lives, appear to be contributing to reduced childhood obesity rates in some cities and states, including Philadelphia, New York City and Mississippi. Learn more [here](#).

2013 'I'm Your Community Guide!' Contest: Share How You've Used the Community Guide

In an effort to promote the [Guide to Community Preventive Services](#), also known as the Community Guide, the [Public Health Foundation](#) is collecting stories from those who have used or are currently using the Community Guide to improve health in their community. Stories are due Jan. 31, 2013. Here's how to [submit your story](#).

NNPHI Names New CEO

[Vincent Lafronza](#), EdD, MS, was recently named CEO of the [National](#)

[network of Public Health Institutes](#) (NNPHI). Lafronza began serving as NNPHI's CEO on Jan. 3, 2013.

Beginning his human services and public health career in 1985, Dr. Lafronza has worked in the fields of gerontology, behavioral health, community environmental health intervention, and public health systems development in communities, states, and American Indian/Alaska Native nations. Prior to establishing [CommonHealth Action](#) and NNPHI member the [Institute for Public Health Innovation](#), Dr. Lafronza held a 10-year appointment with the [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) where he served as Program Director for the Turning Point National Program Office and was responsible for program portfolios in excess of \$14M.

Previously, he held an appointment with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry](#) in Atlanta, Georgia that involved providing technical assistance to US communities affected by hazardous waste. Dr. Lafronza holds a Doctorate of Adult Education, Master of Science, Certificate of Gerontology, completed an [Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Engineering](#) Postgraduate Research Fellowship in Public Health as well as two [Salzburg Fellowships](#) focused on the social and economic determinants of public health. He is an active member of the [American Public Health Association](#) (APHA), and serves on the boards of directors for NNPHI and [Education, Training, and Research Associates](#) (ETR).

CDC *Preventing Chronic Disease* Journal Accepting Submissions for 2012 Student Research Paper Contest
Deadline: Jan. 23, 2013

[Preventing Chronic Disease](#) (PCD) announces its [2013 Student Research Paper Contest](#). PCD is looking for graduate and undergraduate students to submit papers relevant to the prevention, screening, surveillance, and/or population-based intervention of chronic diseases, including but not limited to arthritis, asthma, cancer, depression, diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease. A peer-reviewed electronic journal, PCD was established to provide a forum for researchers and practitioners in chronic disease prevention and health promotion. The journal is published weekly by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#). The winning manuscript will be recognized on the PCD website and will be published in a 2013 PCD release. Papers must be received electronically no later than 5 p.m. EST on Jan. 23, 2013. For more information on the contest and how to submit your manuscript, visit [PCD Student Research Contest](#).

PBRN

Shared Services More Prevalent than Expected

A recently completed PBRN Quick Strike research project in Wisconsin shows that more than 70 percent of the state's local health departments maintain some type of "shared services" arrangement with neighboring public health agencies, involving the shared use of staffing, funding, equipment or other resources to jointly deliver a program, service, or support function. Cost savings and improved service provision were among the most frequently reported motivations for these arrangements. An archived webinar on the study is available [here](#), and publications will be forthcoming.

Unwarranted Variation in Local Smoke-Free Policy Enforcement

A research article appearing in the upcoming issue of the journal [Public Health Reports](#) profiles the Ohio PBRN's study of local variation in the capacity to enforce compliance with the state's clean indoor air law. According to the study, "An estimated 77% of agencies lose money on enforcement annually; 18% broke even, 56% attributed a financial loss to uncollected fines, and 63% occasionally or never fully recovered fines. About half of agency leaders (49%) felt that state reimbursements were inadequate to cover inspection costs." The findings highlight the importance of funding local public health functions adequately in order to realize the full benefits of public health law and policy.

NALBOH Announces New CEO

The [National Association of Local Boards of Health](#) (NALBOH) has named [Anne Drabczyk](#), PhD, as the [new NALBOH Chief Executive Officer](#). She began her duties with NALBOH on Jan. 2, 2013.

Dr. Drabczyk has more than 30 years of public health and leadership experience, including serving as founding Director of A. Drabczyk Consulting, Inc.; National Program Director of the [Advanced Practice Center Program](#) for the National Association of County and City Health Officials; consultant and principal investigator at [The Ohio State University College of Public Health](#), and tenure-track assistant health professor at the [College of Health Human Performance at Indiana State University](#), where she also served as Director of the Health Education Program.

Policy

Washington Update

As part of the collaborative effort between the [National Coordinating Center for PHSSR](#) and [AcademyHealth](#), AcademyHealth offers a

Washington update on federal activities relevant to the field of PHSSR.

The Fiscal Cliff

On Jan. 1, the 112th Congress passed the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 ([H.R. 8](#)) to avert the fiscal cliff – a series of expiring tax breaks

and looming spending cuts known as “sequestration.” While principally a tax bill, the measure provides a brief reprieve for the research and public health communities by postponing until March 1 the sequester’s scheduled 8.2 percent across-the-board cut to discretionary programs (see the [Washington Post’s summary](#) of the health policy-related provisions). To pay for the \$24 billion cost of delayed sequestration, the bill relies on \$12 billion in new revenue and \$12 billion in spending cuts to discretionary programs in FY 2013 and FY 2014, which are divided equally between “security” and “nonsecurity” spending. According to the White House, “this will give Congress time to work on a balanced plan to end the sequester permanently through a combination of additional revenue and spending cuts in a balanced manner.” So we are left to face another fiscal cliff in March—the delayed sequester, the FY 2013 continuing resolution, and the debt ceiling.

FY 2013 Continuing Resolution

On Sept. 28, President Obama signed Public Law 112-175, a continuing resolution to keep the government running through March 27, 2013, at FY 2012 levels plus 0.6 percent. There are reports that House and Senate appropriators have completed work on an FY 2013 omnibus spending bill—consistent with the Senate’s proposed levels. However, the many pressing “fiscal cliff” issues left to the final days of the 112th Congress stalled passage of an omnibus measure (see AcademyHealth’s related [blog post](#)). The 113th Congress will likely pass a six-month continuing resolution for the remainder of FY 2013. History is on the side of this theory—the government has been funded by year-long continue resolutions for the past two presidential election years.

FY 2014 Budget Delayed

There are reports that the release of president’s FY 2014 budget request will be delayed three weeks, due in part to uncertainty caused by sequestration. The Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 established the basic blueprint for budget procedure, including the “requirement” that the president’s budget request to Congress be released on the first Monday of February. This deadline is often missed, as with most of the other statutory deadlines established in the Act.

PCORI Funding

The [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute](#) has announced the PCORI Challenge, a competition to create a system for connecting health care researchers and patient partners to advance patient-

centered comparative effectiveness research. PCORI will award cash prizes to the winning developers in two categories: conceptual model (\$10,000) and prototype (\$40,000). The submission period opened Dec. 14, and the deadline for entries is April 15, 2013. Interested developers can learn more and register to enter the challenge at www.pcori.org/challenge/.

What we're hearing from decision-makers

We've been meeting in Washington, DC, with AcademyHealth and key policy-makers, and the good news is that many are familiar with, and interested in hearing, the results from PHSSR. We're anticipating that continued budget cuts, as well as questions about the role of governmental public health post ACA, could heighten the relevance of PHSSR in the new year, particularly research related to public health's ROI and to innovations being adopted by the evolving public health system.

Funding

AcademyHealth Launches New Delivery System Science Fellowship

In partnership with prestigious delivery systems across the country, and with support from the [AcademyHealth](#) President's Fund, AcademyHealth is pleased to announce a new fellowship for students and researchers interested in delivery system science. The [Delivery System Science Fellowship](#) provides a paid post-doctoral learning experience to help researchers gain experience conducting research in delivery system settings. Information on the fellowship is provided on [AcademyHealth's website](#). **A brief statement of intent to apply for the fellowship must be submitted by Jan. 31.** For more information, please contact dssf@academyhealth.org. If you have any questions, contact dssf@academyhealth.org.

PHLR Announces Dissertation Grants

The [Public Health Law Research](#) (PHLR) [Strategic and Targeted Research Program](#) funds research to fill critical gaps in the public health law evidence base. As part of this effort, PHLR is offering dissertation grants to train doctoral students in public health law research methods, including the development of legal datasets. PHLR invites current PhD students in accredited doctoral degree programs to apply for grants awarded for up to \$20,000 each for 12 months maximum. These grants include:

- Qualitative or quantitative studies of the health effects of specific laws or regulations and/or related underlying mechanisms of effect.

- Mapping studies - Empirical legal research that creates a multi-jurisdictional data set of laws suitable for quantitative research. Mapping studies require the integration of legal analysis and public health research to ensure that the important dimensions of the relevant laws are accurately and comprehensively measured.

For more information and details on how to apply, visit the [Funding Opportunities page](#) on the PHLR website.

CDC Offers Internship/Fellowship Opportunities

[CDC's Office of Minority Health and Health Equity](#) (OMHHE) supports [internship opportunities](#) for qualified undergraduate and graduate students to gain meaningful experiences in public health settings. Whether you are looking for a summer internship or a year-long fellowship, the programs provide valuable exposure to a wide range of public health opportunities. [Learn more and apply.](#)

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

[Improving Methods for Conducting Patient-Centered Outcomes Research](#)

Letter of Intent Due Date: Jan. 15, 2013

Application Deadline: March 13, 2013

Every day, patients and their caregivers face crucial healthcare decisions while lacking key information that they need. The [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute](#) (PCORI) has addressed this lack of information in its [National Priorities and Research Agenda](#) and has issued funding announcements requiring a comparative clinical effectiveness approach that engages patients in collaboration with their clinicians. To support the conduct of meaningful patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) and to produce valid findings, it is critical to continue developing stronger research methods in a number of areas.

[Third Cycle Funding Announcements](#)

Letter of Intent Due Date: Feb. 15, 2013

Application Deadline: April 15, 2013

PCORI has launched the third cycle of funding requests to support \$96 million in comparative clinical effectiveness research that will give patients and those who care for them the ability to make better-informed health care decisions. The new [PCORI Funding Announcements](#) (PFAs) correspond to four of the five areas of focus outlined in its [National Priorities for Research and Research Agenda](#):

1. Assessment of Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment Options - for projects that address critical decisions that patients, their

- caregivers and clinicians face with too little information.
2. Improving Healthcare Systems - for projects that address critical decisions that face health care systems, the patients and caregivers who rely on them, and the clinicians who work within them.
 3. Communication and Dissemination - for projects that address critical elements in the communication and dissemination process among patients, their caregivers and clinicians.
 4. Addressing Disparities - for projects that will inform the choice of strategies to eliminate disparities.

An additional PFA that addresses PCORI's fifth priority, [Accelerating Patient-Centered and Methodological Research](#), Improving Methods for Conducting Patient-Centered Research, is mentioned above.

PCORI is an independent, non-profit organization authorized by Congress in 2010 to fund research that will provide patients, their caregivers and clinicians with evidence-based information needed to support better-informed health care decisions. PCORI is committed to continuously seeking input from a broad range of stakeholders to guide its work. More information is available at www.pcori.org.

National Library of Medicine (NLM)

[NLM Grants for Scholarly Works in Biomedicine and Health \(G13\)](#)

Letter of Intent Due: Jan. 21, 2013?

Application Due: Feb. 21, 2013

NLM Grants for Scholarly Works in Biomedicine and Health are awarded for the preparation of book-length manuscripts and other scholarly works of value to U.S. health professionals, public health officials, biomedical researchers and historians of the health sciences.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

[AHRQ Conference Grant Program \(R13\)?](#)

Application Due: Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, and Nov. 1, 2013

The [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#) (AHRQ), announces its interest in supporting conferences through the AHRQ Conference Grant Program. AHRQ seeks to support conferences that help to further its mission to improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care for all Americans. The types of conferences eligible for support include: research development, research design and methodology, dissemination and implementation conferences, research training, infrastructure and career development. This funding opportunity announcement supersedes previous AHRQ Conference Grant FOA's, including [PA-09-231](#) (the AHRQ Small Grant Program for Conference Support) and [PAR-09-257](#) (the AHRQ Grant Program for

Large or Recurring Conferences).

Events

Meetings

[2013 Public Health Law Research: Driving Legal Innovation](#)

Jan. 16-18, 2013

New Orleans, La.

[National Health Policy Conference](#)

Feb. 4-5, 2013

Washington, D.C.

[Environmental Health 2013: Science and Policy to Protect Future Generations](#)

March 3-6, 2013

Boston, Mass.

[PHSSR Keeneland Conference](#)

April 8-11, 2013

Lexington, Ky.

Webinars

Implementation of State Youth Concussion Laws:

Perspectives from the Frontlines

Thursday, Jan. 24, 2:30–4 p.m. ET

This webinar will provide an update on states' youth concussion laws, as well as preliminary results from an interview survey with state officials and organizational leaders charged with implementation of these laws in their own states. Three presenters with different organizational perspectives will share their experiences in implementing the laws in their states. [Get details and register.](#)

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