

PHSSR InsideTrack-March 2012

What an exciting time in PHSSR! Several new developments that deserve attention by those interested in this research and its application in practice and policy are in the offing. First, the fifth Keeneland Conference is coming up, the premier PHSSR event of the year. This conference will see some new things, including the new AJPM supplement that features the new PHSSR research agenda, along with the systematic reviews that drove the agenda and commentary from leaders in the field. We plan to have copies available at the conference. In addition, the harmonized database will be available shortly. We are in process of working with the University of Michigan to finalize that database for those who wish to use it. And don't forget the Keeneland Conference itself. The tentative agenda includes Dr. Thomas Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control; Dr. Harvey Fineberg, president of the Institute of Medicine; and Rich Umbdenstock, president/CEO of the American Hospital Association, along with Debra Perez of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. We have received a drove of excellent abstracts for the meeting, and the affiliate meetings will also be occurring during the conference. Hope we see you there!

F. Douglas Scutchfield

Director

**National Coordinating Center for Public Health Services and
Systems Research
Research**

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- Galvanizers, guides, champions, and shields: the many ways that policymakers use public health researchers.

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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.*

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NEWS FROM THE PHSSR COMMUNITY

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grants Aim to Help Shape Difficult Public Health Funding and Service Decisions

Protecting and improving the public's health in a time of scarce resources means challenging times for public health practitioners and policymakers, who face difficult decisions about addressing the ever-increasing health needs of communities. Against this backdrop, a series of new public health services and systems research (PHSSR) projects funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) will provide timely insights into the best strategies and practices to enable state and local health departments to be the most effective and efficient in keeping people healthy and safe. [Read More >>](#)

New Public Health Practice-Based Research Studies to Look at How to Reduce Health Disparities

A series of new studies will focus on how to reduce health disparities, while strengthening techniques used to compare the delivery of public health services.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks (PBRNs) are launching the studies, which are part of the Foundation's Research Acceleration and Capacity Expansion (RACE) Supplemental Awards Series, made available to public health PBRNs across the country. [Read More >>](#)

Have a J.D. and M.P.H. Degree?

Ten years ago, the dual J.D./M.P.H. degree was almost nonexistent. Today, there are 25 accredited programs in the U.S., and that number is growing. A dual degree can save a student both time and money while pursuing a comprehensive education. But the question is: How

does having both a J.D. and an M.P.H. degree affect one's professional career? Currently, there is not a lot of data. To help build the field of public health law, the [Network for Public Health Law](#) is collecting data to investigate the professional impact of earning both a J.D. and an M.P.H. If you have both degrees (or another degree similar to an M.P.H.), please help by taking the J.D./ M.P.H. survey here: http://svy.mk/NPHL_Survey

Practice

National Health Policy Conference Examines Public Health Under Reform

At the National Health Policy Conference on Feb. 13-14 in Washington D.C., discussion focused heavily on health reform implementation issues, including several sessions devoted specifically to public health services and systems and their roles in reform. A session that examined the implications of the Affordable Care Act for public health included remarks from Arkansas State Health Officer Dr. Paul Halverson, Public Health Practice Based Research Network National Advisory Committee member. Halverson commented that post-reform health departments may look very different from the public health agencies of today, but will likely continue to serve as "gap fillers" in assuring that the health care and public health needs of vulnerable and underserved populations are met. Halverson noted the need for health departments to assume expanded roles in information production and dissemination to guide the larger health system toward solutions that improve population health and reduce system costs. Texas BlueCross BlueShield official Dr. Eduardo Sanchez mentioned the need for more applied PHSSR studies that examine the health and economic value of investments in public health strategies, citing RWJF-funded research studies as examples.

Organized by AcademyHealth's Public Health Systems Research Interest Group, a meeting on the second day of the conference focused squarely on PHSSR and its potential to inform policy decisions in the context of health reform. As part of this meeting, Dr. Paul Wallace of the Lewin Group discussed opportunities for realizing greater synergy between the public health and primary care components of the health system by focusing on the shared goal of population health improvement. The Public Health PBRN Coordinating Center's Dr. Glen Mays profiled various approaches for estimating the value of public health systems and services, and highlighted studies underway within the PBRNs to examine the impact of economic shocks on public health service delivery. The resulting discussion underscored the fact that the PHSSR community is in the midst of unprecedented opportunity to prove its value in informing policy decision-making concerning the current and potential roles of public health in health system reform.

Missouri PBRN Examines Association between Voluntary Accreditation on QI Culture

In a recent comparative, mixed-method Quick Strike project, the Missouri Public Health PBRN Affiliate studied QI culture and practices among local health departments in Missouri that have undergone or refrained from participating in that state's voluntary accreditation program to date. The study's qualitative findings revealed that accredited agencies surpassed their non-accredited counterparts in some important elements of integrating QI into routine practice. However, the study's quantitative findings failed to find statistically significant differences between accredited and non-accredited agencies on available measures of QI implementation. The research calls attention to the need for more sensitive and specific measures of QI practice that can be used to evaluate the impact of accreditation and other system-level innovations.

Funding

Call for Proposals Released for Research Related to Building Evidence for Decision Making in Public Health Practice

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is pleased to release a Public Health Services and Systems Research Call for Proposals entitled Building Evidence for Decision Making: http://bit.ly/RWJF_PHSNE. The solicitation seeks to produce evidence to inform public health practice and policy decisions through natural experiments that will compare systems with change in organizational structures, legal infrastructure, financing mechanisms, and service delivery strategies to systems without changes.

Find out more here: http://bit.ly/PHSSR_Funding

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: http://bit.ly/RWJF_PHLR The deadline for submitting brief proposals is April 4, 2012 (3 p.m. EST).

Find out more here: http://bit.ly/PHLR_Funding

Events

Registration for the 2012 PHSSR Keeneland Conference Open Until Friday, March 9, 2012

Registration for the 2012 PHSSR Keeneland Conference is now open. The conference will be held on Friday, March 9, 2012, at the Keeneland Race Track in Lexington, Kentucky. The conference is a free event and is open to all public health professionals. For more information, please visit <http://www.phssr.org/keeneland>.

Premier PHSSR Event Register by March 9 for the fifth Keeneland Conference, the premier event in the field of public health services and systems research, April 17-19 in Lexington, Ky. The conference features prominent speakers, a unique networking opportunity and a chance to hear about the latest work that's making a difference in the field.

Find out more here: <http://bit.ly/2012KC>

Annual Ned E. Baker Lecture Tells the Story of Public Health

The National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) will co-sponsor the 13th Annual Ned E. Baker Lecture in Public Health on March 29. In the lecture, Andy Goodman, director of the Goodman Center, will emphasize how to affect policy, engage elected officials, and inspire citizens. The lecture will take place from 4-5:30 p.m. EST. A live, interactive Webcast will be open to the public. For more information, visit the NALBOH website, www.nalboh.org or contact Tim Tegge at tim@nalboh.org, 419-353-7714.

PHSSR at AcademyHealth in June 2012

- [Register](#) for the 2012 [Annual Research Meeting](#) (ARM) and follow the 'public health track' to be held, June 24-26, 2012 in Orlando, Florida.
- [Register](#) for the 2012 Annual PHSR Interest Group Meeting held June 26-27, 2012.
- [Apply](#) for the [PHSR Student Scholarship](#). Ten students will be awarded \$1,000 to attend the 2012 ARM.
- Submit nominations for PHSR [Article of the Year](#) by April 1. Winner will be announced at 2012 PHSR IG Meeting
- Special Offer of the Month for this List Serve: [Join AcademyHealth](#) by April 1 for a special introductory rate of \$100. Enter discount code MM12PHN to receive \$75 off normal dues.

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