

Issue # 69

PBRN Week in Review | Mar 11, 2011

PBRN Grantees and Affiliates: Please circulate relevant information to your network members. To request additional information or make suggestions for future items, please contact the National Coordinating Center at publichealthpbrn@uams.edu or (501)551-0106. Newsletter archives are available [here](#).

Notable PBRN Activities/Announcements

- **EXCITING NEWS FROM THE NY PH PBRN.** The NY PH PBRN recently completed the first phase of a two-part research project about evidence-based decision making (EBDM) in local health departments (LHDs). The research aims to identify facilitators and barriers of EBDM, and opportunities to increase its use in this setting. It is hoped that dissemination of the research findings will enhance and reinforce EBDM, especially among people in leadership positions. After completing an extensive literature review of EBDM, the first phase was a qualitative study that consisted of 25 individual and small-group interviews with commissioners, health directors, and upper-level staff with decision-making responsibilities. Two focus groups of eight people each were also conducted. Approximately half of the local health departments in New York State were represented in the sample. Participants supported the use of EBDM and expressed a desire to improve their department's use of it. While most people interviewed had a basic understanding of EBDM, only a few had substantial expertise and practice experience. Many indicated that they applied EBDM unevenly and utilized only certain aspects of it. The participants identified barriers of EBDM and facilitators to increase its use. They described two tiers of decision making: "big picture" decisions that were usually made by agency heads, and "day-to-day" decisions that still benefit from an evidence-based approach. Barriers and facilitators included the workforce and their competencies, management configurations, and working with local legislatures. Information from the qualitative phase will guide the development of a quantitative survey of all local health departments to assess EBDM practices and their determinants. A steering committee made up of all the PBRN partners has guided the research from its inception.
- **The association of changes in local health department resources with changes in state-level health outcomes.** An article in the April issue of *American Journal of Public Health* by Dr. Paul Erwin, Dr. Sandra Green, Dr. Glen Mays, Dr. Thomas Ricketts, and Dr. Mary Davis describes the results of a retrospective cohort study, utilizing information obtained from the 1997 and 2005 National Association of County and City Health Officials surveys, in which they examined the relationship between local health department (LHD) resource levels and health outcomes. Results of the study demonstrated a statistically significant ($P=.037$) association between increases in LHD expenditures and decreases in infectious disease, and a statistically significant ($P=.014$) association between increased staff and decreased cardiovascular disease mortality.

- ✦ **Dissemination Opportunity.** PBRNs that have research findings ready for dissemination are strongly encouraged to consider the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* as a venue. Findings from QIQSs and QSRFs are especially suited for the *MMWR* in that they are intended for rapid impact. Publishing in the *MMWR* will not preclude publication later in a peer-reviewed journal. Every piece submitted to the *MMWR* must have a CDC sponsor and, if possible, a state health agency sponsor. The NCC will be happy to assist in facilitating the CDC connection and advising on the appropriateness of the *MMWR* as an avenue for dissemination. Please visit the CDC [website](#) to review instructions for *MMWR* contributors.
- ✦ **PH PBRN Program Assessment Underway.** The online assessment launched this week, and a key informant from each of the 12 core PBRNs was notified, requesting their participation. We at the NCC know that this is a busy time for everyone, but the feedback will enhance our efforts to support the networks. Thanks to all who have already responded! We look forward to sharing the findings of the online assessment – and the follow-up interviews – at the Annual Grantee Meeting next month.

Activities on the Horizon

- ✦ **Keep Us in the Loop!** Please remember to include the NCC on all reporting of dissemination products to RWJF, by cc'ing the [National Coordinating Center](#). Keeping abreast of PBRN dissemination via presentations at national, regional, and state meetings; written reports, webinars, research briefs, journal articles, as well as web-based communication channels will enable the NCC staff to more effectively support all the networks and spread the word about their accomplishments. **The NCC also needs a copy all of the PBRNs' 2010 annual reports.** Thanks!
- ✦ **PH PBRN Research Panels at the Keeneland Conference.** The PH PBRN NCC has reserved two panel sessions for Round I and Round II Grantees to present RIA, QSRF, or small-scale projects' preliminary research findings at the 2011 Annual Keeneland Conference on Wednesday, April 13, 2011. The NCC has compiled all abstracts submitted by interested PBRNs and has organized the PH PBRN Grantee research panels based on common themes across networks. The times for the panels are listed below. If you have any questions, please contact the [National Coordinating Center](#).

Wednesday, April 13, 2011

PH PBRN Research Panel 1 • 11:00am -12:30pm • Scientific Session 3.A

PH PBRN Research Panel 2 • 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm • Scientific Session 4.A

- ✦ **Annual Grantee Meeting.** The Annual Grantee Meeting is set for Monday and Tuesday, April 11 and 12, in Lexington in conjunction with the Keeneland Conference. Guidelines for travel planning have been distributed to network leaders. Each grantee may plan to send two persons to the meeting with expenses covered by the NCC and as many additional persons as desired with expenses covered by other organizations. Please let [Lenora Martindale](#) know the names of the persons attending from your network!
- ✦ **Agenda Items for PH PBRN Annual Grantee Meeting.** The Annual Grantee Meeting is a prime time to collaborate and learn about a wide array of topics germane to public health practice-based research or the broader field of public health systems and services research (PHSSR). We want to have a good mix of meeting formats and subjects to optimize these one

and a half days together. Please send your suggestions to the [NCC](#) about session formats (e.g., presentation, small group) and topics as soon as possible.

- **PH PBRN Program Keeneland Conference Exhibit.** If you will be at Keeneland, be sure to visit the PH PBRN Program Exhibit. The exhibit will be located in the Thoroughbred Pre-function space at the Lexington Convention Center.
- **2011 PHSSR Keeneland Conference Registration.** The 2011 PHSSR Keeneland Conference will begin Tuesday, April 12 and continue through Thursday, April 14, in Lexington, Kentucky. Join other researchers, practitioners and policymakers there and share innovative ideas on how to improve the public health system. A block of rooms has been reserved at the [Hyatt Regency Lexington](#). When you contact the hotel, please make sure to ask for the 2011 PHSSR Keeneland Conference rate of \$129.00 per night. They will also honor the government rate.

REGISTRATION FOR THE KEENELAND CONFERENCE AND HOTEL CLOSES MARCH 18. [Register On-line Today.](#)

- **AcademyHealth Methods Course Offerings for PH PBRN Grantees and Partners.** Don't forget to take advantage of these new opportunities for learning! The NCC and AcademyHealth have arranged for the PBRN grantees, affiliates and network partners to access, at no cost, some of AcademyHealth's most popular methods courses for health services research (HSR) and PHSSR. Course offerings change every quarter, so don't miss this opportunity to learn from some of the leading lights of HSR and PHSSR! You may access the courses at your convenience and view them as often as you like. We encourage you to invite your PBRN partners to watch the webinars and consider scheduling sessions for group participation. If you did not receive, or need another copy of, the email with course descriptions and access instructions, contact the [NCC](#).

Winter Quarter Methods Webinars for PH PBRNs – Available Through April 3:

- Intro to HSR Methods Seminar Series, Part I: Evidence-based Practice
- Intro to HSR Methods Seminar Series, Part II: Quality and Performance Measurement
- The GRACE Principles: Comparative Effectiveness and HSR
- Methods Matter: Correlation and Causation in PHSSR
- Paper vs. Speech vs. Poster: Different Formats for Communicating Research

We want your input on upcoming webinar offerings. In what sessions are you most interested for the next quarter? View the [AcademyHealth Professional Development Catalog](#) for a comprehensive list of training opportunities and be ready to choose four topics when we survey the group in early March.

Please contact [PH PBRN NCC](#) if you have any questions or concerns.


- **PBRN Research Publication Opportunities.** The Coordinating Center is in discussions with several leading journals in PHSSR and HSR about the possibility of a special issue or theme issue dedicated to research from the PBRNs. Details will be forthcoming, but manuscripts likely would need to be ready for submission by May or June 2011. We encourage networks to consider what findings they may have ready to disseminate, and let us know any thoughts you may have on content, timing, venues, etc.

Public Health PBRN Leaders' Presentations

Do you have an upcoming presentation at a conference or other venue that features your PBRN's work with the *Public Health PBRN Program*? [Let us know!](#) Recent and coming events that put public health practice-based research in the limelight:

- **NIH Conference.** The *Public Health PBRN Program* will be well represented at the 4th Annual [NIH Conference](#) on the Science of Dissemination & Implementation, March 21-22, in Bethesda, Maryland. Julie Marshall (CO PH PBRN), Betty Bekemeier (WA PH PBRN), and Rebecca Wells (NC PH PBRN) will comprise a panel entitled, "The Science of Public Health Practice: Using PBRNs to Conduct Implementation Research in Public Health Settings." Glen Mays will moderate.
- **Missouri Affiliate.** On Friday, February 25, in Columbia, Mo., Glen Mays presented "Strengthening the Science of Public Health Delivery: PHSSR & PBRNs" at a meeting of the Missouri Public Health PBRN, an affiliate of the *Public Health PBRN Program*.
- **Keeneland Conference**
 - ◆ Florida PBRN co-principal investigator Bill Livingood will present findings of the network's study of county health department leaders' perceptions of funding for essential services.
 - ◆ Ohio PH PBRN Quick Strike project, "Variation in Enforcement of the Ohio Smoke-Free Work Place Act by Local Health Departments," will be presented by David Bruckman.
 - ◆ Wisconsin PH PBRN project, "Local health department financial practices and outcomes during economic challenging times," will be presented by Susan Zahner.
 - ◆ Wisconsin PH PBRN's "Public Health Systems and Services Research Inventory" will be presented as a poster.

Calls for Abstracts/Proposals/Presentations/Review

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- **Abstract Submissions Due Next Week.** The National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) annual conference is scheduled for May 16-18, 2011 in New Orleans, Louisiana. If you are interested in presenting at this conference, please visit the [NNPHI](#) website for more information about abstract submission and to complete the abstract submission form. Submission deadline: 5 pm CST, March 18.
 - **Call for Policy-Relevant PHSSR Findings:** Will your research produce evidence regarding the effectiveness and value of investments in the public health system? Several Public Health PBRNs are studying related issues such as uses of funding streams, responses to economic shocks, and efforts to reconfigure delivery systems for improved capabilities and efficiency. As your network gathers early findings and preliminary evidence, please let the NCC know so that we can help you think through dissemination opportunities with policymakers. There are some very effective vehicles for rapid release of early findings that will not preclude subsequent opportunities for publication of scientific articles. Send us a quick [email](#) with your updates.

Resources in Research and Practice

PUBLICATIONS, REPORTS, AND TOOLS

- **Building Community Resilience to Disaster.** The Rand Corporation has released a [report](#) on community resilience, a key policy issue that has been included in the National Health Security Strategy. The authors conducted a literature review and series of community focus groups which resulted in a discussion of a set of eight levers and five core components for building community resilience, suggested activities for strengthening community resilience, and the identification of challenges to implementation.
- **Cross-Jurisdictional Relationships in Local Public Health.** Former NACCHO Director Patrick Libbey was commissioned by RWJF to conduct an environmental scan, research and report on collaborative relationships among health departments. He has authored an executive summary of the project's preliminary report. The [report](#) is available on the RWJF website.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT AND INVOLVEMENT

- **NEW Analysis of Social Networks Webinar Series.** AcademyHealth is offering a new three-part webinar series on social network analysis taught by Robert Hanneman, Ph.D. The three sessions are:
 - 1) Analysis of Social Networks Part I: The Network Perspective and Network Data
Thursday, March 31, 2011, 1:00-2:30 pm (ET).
 - 2) Analysis of Social Networks Part II: Basic Network Analysis
Thursday, April 14, 2011, 1:00-2:30 pm (ET).
 - 3) Analysis of Social Networks Part III: Beyond the Basics
Thursday, April 28, 2011, 1:00-2:30 pm (ET).

Please contact [PH PBRN NCC](#) if you are interested in these seminars or have any questions.

- **Public Health Law Research (PHLR) Program 2011 CFP Call.** A brief proposal Web applicant informational conference call. March 16, 2:30-3:30 pm ET. [Register](#) online today.
- **Webcast: 12th Annual Ned E. Baker Lecture.** "Using Social Marketing to Strengthen Public Health Policies." March 31, 4:00-5:30 pm ET. Please visit [NALBOH](#) for more information and to register.
- **Training on Impact Evaluation Using Randomized Trials.** The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab is partnering with NIH to offer atwo-day training, March 21-22, that will focus on how to incorporate rigorous impact evaluation methodologies into operations and implementation research. This [workshop](#) is not part of the 4th Annual NIH Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation and requires a separate application process.

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

The PBRN National Coordinating Center maintains a [list of funding opportunities](#) of interest to Public Health PBRNs. Grant opportunities with recurring deadlines are tracked and updated. Here are opportunities available now:

- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Healthy People 2020 Action Project.** Twenty awards of up to \$35,000 will be administered for projects that highlight multi-sector collaboration and employ Healthy People 2020 concepts. Please contact the U.S. Health and Human Services for more [information](#) and to apply for this funding. Deadline: **April 1, 2011**.
- **Public Health Law Research (PHLR) Program.** The 2011 [Call for Proposals](#) – Round 3 from the PHLR program has been released, with \$2.85 million available. The PHLR Program is a national initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Deadline for receipt of brief proposals: **April 20, 2011** (3 pm ET).
- **RWJF Healthy Eating Research.** The RWJF *Healthy Eating Research: Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity* program has released its 2011 [Call for Proposals](#). The **Rapid-response award concept** papers are due *August 2*
- **RWJF Public Health Law Research Rapid Response Studies.** Proposals are accepted online on a rolling basis. Details about the solicitation and the application process are [linked here](#).

Career Opportunities

- **APHA Public Health Fellowship.** Applications for the APHA Public Health Fellowship in Government for 2012 are now being accepted. APHA is looking for candidates with strong public health credentials who wish to spend one year in Washington, D.C., working in a Congressional office on legislative and policy issues such as health, the environment or other public health concerns. The deadline for submission is **April 4, 2011**. For more information, please go to this [link](#).

Key Dates

March 17	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 pm ET
April 10-12	2011 Annual Grantee and NAC meetings in Lexington
April 13	Round I and Round II Grantees Keeneland Conference Research Panels
April 12-14	2011 PHSSR Keeneland Conference in Lexington
April 26	Hold date for webinar! 2:00 pm ET
May 19	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 pm ET
June 12-14	AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting
June 16	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 pm ET