

Issue #77

PBRN Week in Review | May 16, 2011

PH PBRNs: Please circulate relevant information to network members. To request additional information or make suggestions for future items, please contact the Public Health PBRN National Coordinating Center (NCC) at publichealthpbrn@uams.edu or 501-551-0106. [Newsletter archive](#).

Notable PBRN Activities

- **PH PBRN May Conference Call.** The Public Health PBRN monthly conference call is scheduled for Thursday, May 19, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. ET.

Research Presenter: Kim Gearin, Ph.D.

Research Scientist, Minnesota Department of Health Office of Public Health Practice and Co-Director, MN PH PBRN

Topic: Authority, Structure and Change: A descriptive study of Minnesota's local health departments



Suggest agenda items by contacting the NCC. During the call, we will ask for ideas for the next webinar, so think about topics and/or speakers that would be most helpful to your networks!

- **NACCHO Study of Model Practices.** Would your PH PBRN be interested in working with NACCHO to submit a PHSSR brief proposal related to a study series of select Model Practices to discover what evidence might exist in the literature or other sources to document further their utility? If the application were successful, this would establish a “rotating” research agenda over time, moving practitioner-vetted practices along a continuum toward a standard of the *Community Guide* tradition. This idea will be on the conference call agenda, and interested networks are welcome to send an [email](#) to the NCC.
- **Last call for feedback!** If you have not returned your survey responses regarding the Annual Grantee Meeting, please do so before the May conference call. Your feedback is valued and will contribute to plans for future meetings. For your convenience, the survey is linked [here](#).
- **AcademyHealth Methods Courses for PH PBRNs.** The AcademyHealth Spring Methods Webinars for PH PBRNs are available to access at your convenience and may be viewed as often as you like through June 30. Invite network partners to take these courses and/or schedule sessions for group participation:
 - ◆ Causality in Health Services Research
 - Part I: Introduction to Causal Concepts
 - Part II: Estimation Techniques for Causal Modeling
 - ◆ Do You Really Want to Test Whether Two Populations are Equal? The Science of Equivalency Testing
 - ◆ Introduction to Case Studies: A Public Health Methods Webinar

- **Draining Moats and Building Bridges.** Rosemary "Rosie" Summers does not like attention, but she does like to shine the spotlight on public health. In a [Hillsborough Herald Sun](#) article about her upcoming retirement, Rosie managed to address the myth of local public health departments as just clinics for the poor, mention more than 13 services, highlight the H1N1 vaccine campaign, emphasize relationships with other health providers and stakeholders, spotlight coalitions, and credit partners at UNC. And it was a short article!

Health director of the Orange County Health Department and co-PI of the PH PBRN, Rosie is retiring May 31 after more than 30 years in academia and practice in North Carolina. Her public health career began even earlier in her native Iowa doing outreach for the Model Cities program. "I was working in public health before I even knew what it was!" Rosie joked. She went to North Carolina as a VISTA volunteer in the 1970s, and following the advice of a health educator, Rosie earned a Master of Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill. Back to the Midwest, she worked for the Hospital Research and Education Trust writing a text of case studies supported by research and theory based on a Kellogg Foundation effort to establish rural primary care centers. To say that Rosie then returned to North Carolina "for good" hardly seems adequate.

Rosie worked at the School of Public Health for 17 years in a variety of roles, along the way earning a Doctor of Public Health in Health Policy. Almost 14 years at the Orange County Health Department followed, where she was able to apply at the local level what she had learned throughout her career. "One of my dreams while at the university was to find ways to foster collaboration between researchers and practice," Rosie noted, "and the PBRN is a natural fit. Ten health departments were already working together to find answers to common questions, and the RWJF award gave us a way to leverage incentives for faculty researchers. The network also provided a forum to bring together various kinds of practices. Some practitioners think of local health departments in academic communities as different from 'regular' health departments, and others are skeptical of researchers and how they can help."

Asked to reflect on her two years with the PH PBRNs, Rosie said, "We all need to learn to drain the moat and build a bridge. It still is hard to get faculty to frame local health department needs as generalizable questions rather than technical assistance. At the same time, it is challenging to get local health departments to value original research. This is very much a two-way communication issue. As usual in public health, we have to deal with whatever crisis is in front of us. H1N1 was an 'anticipated crisis,' but everything else still had to stop so we could focus on meeting those needs. This is frustrating to researchers, but it also presents opportunities to examine what is going on *while* it is going on to learn lessons for later. The Quick Strike Research Fund award allowed us to do that with H1N1. Similarly, the Research Implementation Award is facilitating a study of severe cuts in case management and the effects on health outcomes."

In 2010, Rosie served as a PHAB beta test site visitor. She is enthusiastic about the potential for accreditation to increase awareness among policymakers and the public about core public health structures and responsibilities. She believes accreditation will be helpful in eroding the myth that public health is different everywhere, an idea that contributes to the lack of knowledge of public health and its role in population safety, and that some standardization will bring positive results.

Rosie plans to spend the summer gardening and working on the dozen or so quilting projects she has started. This fall she hopes to work part time to support those hobbies. On behalf of everyone associated with the Public Health PBRN Program, THANK YOU Dr. Rosemary Summers for your devotion to our profession and the people you have served! Somehow, we think we will see you around.

Activities on the Horizon

- **Practice and Research Colleagues Meet.** Join our nation's largest gathering of local health officials at the NACCHO Annual 2011 in Hartford, Connecticut, July 20-22. With the addition of a research track to a program known for its interactive learning sessions, this is a great opportunity for public health practice and research colleagues to explore new ideas, examine strategies, and plan for the future. Don't miss the session led by a panel of four PH PBRN representatives.

Practice-Based Research Networks: Applied Systems Research to Inform Local Public Health Policy

Panel: Moderator Matt Stefanak (Ohio), David Gregorio (Connecticut), Bill Livingood (Florida), and Julie Myhre (Minnesota)

Public Health PBRN Presentations

Do you know of an upcoming presentation that features your PBRN's work or people? [Let us know!](#)

- **AcademyHealth PHSR Interest Group.** The Public Health Systems Research Interest Group meeting following AcademyHealth's Annual Research Meeting is rife with PH PBRN representation! Look at the three panels announced thus far...

Translating Systems Research for the Field

Tuesday, June 14, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

An Assessment of Response to the Release of the 2010 County Health Rankings

Bridget Booske, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

- ★ Co-PI for Research Implementation Award study

Applying Scientific Research Methods to Law: Demonstrating Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capacity

Patricia Sweeney, University of Pittsburgh

- ★ NAC member

Public Health Spending by Non-governmental Organizations

Patrick Bernet, Florida Atlantic University

- ★ Network participant

Variability in Practices for Investigation, Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases of Public Health Significance among Washington State's Local Health Jurisdictions

Hanne Thiede, Public Health-Seattle and King County

- ★ PH PBRN researcher presenting network small-scale research project

Implications of Social Network Analysis for Public Health Systems

Wednesday, June 15, 9:00-10:15 a.m.

Moderator: **Danielle Varda**, University of Colorado, Denver

- ★ Network participant and researcher

The Local Public Health System: Building a Model through Social Network Analysis

Paul Erwin, University of Tennessee

★ Director of affiliate PH PBRN

Determinants of Research Implementation and Translation Processes in Public Health Settings: Evidence from Network Analysis with PBRNs

Glen Mays, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

★ Director of NCC

Application of Social Network Analysis to a Public Health Emergency Preparedness-Funded Workforce Program

Christine Bevc, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

What Works? Best Practices for Public Health Systems

Wednesday, June 15, 10:30-11:45 a.m.

Moderator: **Mary V. Davis**, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

★ network researcher

Discussant: **Barry Kling**, Chelan-Douglas Washington Health District

★ PHAST study team

Process Analysis in Local Health Departments: Using QI Methods to Identify Failure Modes

William Riley, University of Minnesota

★ Co-PI for Research Implementation Award

Effectiveness of Alert Communications between Public Health and Health Care Providers for Emergency Preparedness and Response

Debra Revere, University of Washington

Improving the Efficiency of Local Public Health Using Quality Improvement Processes: Small Change Yields Significant Success in Berrien County, Michigan

Theresa Green, Berrien County Health Department

Research Dissemination Opportunities

- **Science of Community Engagement.** The Clinical & Translational Science Awards (CTSA) has issued a [Call for Papers](#) focusing on the science of community engagement for a special issue of the journal, *Progress in Community Health Partnerships: Research, Education, and Action*. The call specifically invites PBRN contributions and prioritizes papers that are collaborative and co-authored by community members. The deadline for submitting papers is Monday, August 1.
- **Integrating Primary Care and Public Health.** The *American Journal of Public Health* and the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* are planning a joint issue addressing the question: “How do we improve population health and promote health equity through the effective integration of primary care and public health?” The multi-agency [Call for Papers](#) seeks submissions in the areas of science, education, practice, and policy and especially invites submissions co-authored by professionals in the public health and primary care fields. Manuscripts are due by August 1.

Resources in Research and Practice

CONFERENCES

- **AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting.** AcademyHealth recently released its [meeting agenda](#), which indicates that multiple sessions each day with overarching themes of public health, organizational performance and management, health care workforce, and several quality topics will appeal to PH PBRN practitioners and researchers. Methods workshops in health services research are available at all skill levels. The ARM is June 12-14 in Seattle.
- **AcademyHealth PHSR Interest Group Meeting** in Seattle, June 14-15. [Registration](#) is open.
- **APHA Midyear Meeting** in Chicago, Illinois, June 23-25. The theme for the meeting is *Implementing Health Reform – A Public Health Approach*. [Registration](#) deadline is May 20. Learn more about the [APHA Midyear Meeting](#).
- **NACCHO Annual 2011** in Hartford, Connecticut, July 20-22. [Registration](#) is open.
- **APHA Annual Meeting** in Washington, D.C., Oct. 29-Nov. 2. Registration for the meeting and housing will open on June 1. Learn more about the [APHA Annual Meeting](#).
- **NASHP Conference.** The [National Academy for State Health Policy](#) (NASHP) Annual State Health Policy Conference is October 3-5 in Kansas City, Missouri.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- **PHSSR Progress Report.** RWJF has published [Strengthening the Performance and Impact of Public Health Departments: A Progress Report](#) highlighting the work of the University of Kentucky, NACCHO, ASTHO, and NALBOH in building the field of PHSSR.
- **Spending Cuts and Public Health.** In the May 11 issue of JAMA, Steven Woolf's [commentary](#) on the public health implications of government spending reductions is quite relevant to ongoing PH PBRN research such as the PHAST study and several RIA projects.
- **New NACCHO Data.** NACCHO has published a [preliminary report](#) of its fall 2010 survey on local health department (LHD) job losses and program funding cuts. These state-level data show the impact of ongoing financial strain on the ability of LHDs to serve and protect the health of their communities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

- **PHF Wants to Know...** Have you used the *Guide to Community Preventive Services* to address public health challenges in your community? Enter the [“I’m Your Community Guide” Contest](#) from the Public Health Foundation (PHF) and be eligible for a \$1,000 conference scholarship and other prizes! Entries must be received by June 10. Visit the [contest website](#) for more information. The *Community Guide* is a free resource to help you choose programs and policies to improve health and prevent disease in your community. It provides evidence-based recommendations on 18 health topics. Access the *Community Guide* online at www.thecommunityguide.org. If you have questions, or if you would like to help PHF further promote the “I’m Your Community Guide” Contest, please contact Olivia Vandenbussche at olivia@phf.org or 202-218-4431.

- **PHSSR Website.** Provide feedback on the PHSSR website by taking a brief [survey](#). Share your views about the features and benefits offered on the site.

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

The NCC maintains a [list of funding opportunities](#) of interest to its networks. Grant opportunities with recurring deadlines are tracked and updated.

NEW LISTINGS THIS WEEK

- **Public Health and Prevention Fund: Community Transformation Grants.** HHS has opened the application process for the Community Transformation Grants, a key piece of the ACA still to be implemented through the Public Health and Prevention Fund. This is an important expansion of the nation's investment in evidence-based, cross-cutting public health work, so its reach, implementation and impact needs to be studied in PHSSR and perhaps through the work of the PH PBRNs.



According to the [announcement](#), "the purpose of the program is to create healthier communities by: 1) building capacity to implement broad evidence and practice-based policy, environmental, programmatic and infrastructure changes, as appropriate, in large counties, and in states, tribes and territories, including in rural and frontier areas and 2) supporting implementation of such interventions in five strategic areas (Strategic Directions) aligning with Healthy People 2020 focus areas and achieving demonstrated progress in the following five performance measures outlined in the Affordable Care Act: 1) changes in weight, 2) changes in proper nutrition, 3) changes in physical activity, 4) changes in tobacco use prevalence, and 5) changes in emotional well being and overall mental health, as well as other program-specific measures."
Applications due: July 15

- **Testing Evidence-Based Interventions.** HRSA's Healthy Weight Collaborative is recruiting community teams with existing linkages between primary care, public health, and community organizations with experience working together in obesity prevention to implement, test, and disseminate promising and evidence-based interventions to prevent and treat obesity for children and families using the Breakthrough Series Collaborative approach. Additional information is available at the [project website](#). Applications are being accepted online until June 3.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED LISTINGS

- **National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD).** According to the [FOA](#), "priority topic areas for projects include: 1) information and communications technologies to increase access to care, 2) policies or initiatives to increase the supply of rural healthcare practitioners and/or the use of paraprofessionals or peer-led health services to supplement existing healthcare services, 3) strategies to organize, manage, finance, and deliver high quality care, and 4) translational and trans-disciplinary research linking the social determinants of health and health disparities that is innovative, rigorous and well grounded in appropriate theoretical framework." Deadline for application: June 8.
- **Accreditation Preparation.** NACCHO is sponsoring a funding opportunity for LHDs to engage in community health assessments and community health improvement plans. The program will award 12 competitive grants of \$35,000 each. Visit the NACCHO [website](#) for additional information. Application deadline: May 23.

- **AHRQ Research Centers for Excellence in Clinical Preventive Service.** AHRQ has made \$4.5 million available to fund three research centers with a focus on one of the following programmatic areas: patient safety, health equity, or health care system implementation. The project period is for three years with a \$1.5 million annual budget for each year. For more information, click on [RFA-HS-11-005](#). Application deadline: May 23.
- **PHSSR Call for Proposals.** RWJF has issued a [CFP](#) "to expand the evidence base for effective public health policy and practice through investment in *Public Health Services and Systems Research* (PHSSR). PHSSR examines the organization, financing and delivery of public health services within a community and determines the links between the quality and performance of the public health system and population health outcomes." Deadline for Brief Proposals: May 24.
- **Health Impact Project.** A [CFP](#) has been issued for the Health Impact Project: Advancing Smarter Policies for Healthier Communities, a collaboration of RWJF and The Pew Charitable Trusts. This CFP is for organizations that wish to undertake a health impact assessment as a way to demonstrate their value in policymaking. Grants will range from \$25,000 to \$125,000 with 18-month project periods. Up to eight projects will be awarded. Deadline for brief online proposals: June 1.
- **SIPS.** CDC's Prevention Research Centers [Special Interest Project Competitive Supplements](#) (SIPS) are available to universities housing PRCs. Application deadline: June 1.
- **Round Two: Digging into Data Challenge.** Eight international research funders have announced a grant competition designed to encourage cutting-edge research in the humanities and social sciences. Information about the competition and the application process can be found on the [Digging into Data Challenge](#) website. Final application deadline: June 16.
- **HHS Preparedness.** CDC's [Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement Program](#). Note eligibility requirements and opportunities for collaboration. Application deadline: June 17.
- **RWJF Healthy Eating Research.** The RWJF *Healthy Eating Research: Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity* program has released its 2011 [Call for Proposals](#). Rapid-response award concept papers are due August 2.
- **RWJF Public Health Law Research Rapid Response Studies.** Proposals accepted online on a rolling basis. Details available in the [CFP](#).



Key Dates

May 19	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET
June 12-14	AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting, Seattle
June 14-15	AcademyHealth PHSR Interest Group Meeting, Seattle
June 16	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET
June 23-25	APHA Midyear Meeting, Chicago
July 20-22	NACCHO Annual 2011 Conference, Hartford
July 21	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET