

Issue #26

PBRN Week in Review | Oct 23, 2009

PBRN Grantees: Please circulate relevant information to your network members. For additional information and to make suggestions for future items, please contact Elaine Wootten, woottenelaineb@uams.edu or 501-526-6628. Newsletter archives are available [here](#).

Notable Activities

- **Round I Grantees Survive Proposal Submission!** Despite the short timeframe and new application process, all five PBRNs delivered Research Implementation Award (RIA) proposals on time and with great enthusiasm for the opportunity!

Activities on the Horizon

- **PBRNs at APHA**
 - **Session on H1N1 Research** is scheduled for 8:30-10am on Monday, November 9, and will have presenters from Kentucky, North Carolina, and Washington PBRNs.
 - **Session focusing on PBRNs** will be Monday afternoon, November 9, and all five PBRNs will share experiences and lessons learned from the first year of the program. [Here is a link](#) to the session. *Presenters upload your slides by November 2.*
 - **APHA Reception for PBRNs and other PHSSR Champions!** The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Public Health Team is hosting a reception at APHA to celebrate the progress being made in the field of public health services and systems research, including the work of PBRNs. Mark your calendar for Monday, November 9 from 5:30 – 8:30 pm, in the Pennsylvania Convention Center Room 111A. If you plan to attend, [click on this link to RSVP](#) to the Foundation by Wednesday, October 28.

**Response
Needed!**

Recent Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- **Physical Activity Promotion: A Local and State Health Department Perspective.** A commentary in the June issue of [Preventive Medicine](#) by Paul Simon and colleagues in Los Angeles, California, describes the need for local and state health departments to serve as catalysts for the institutional and community changes needed to increase physical activity across the population. This commentary emphasizes that local and state health departments' efforts should focus on evidence-based strategies, including those that support physical activity in communities, schools, and workplaces; and land use and transportation practices and policies in areas where the manmade environment has created major impediments to physical activity. The authors provide an excellent example of how local and state health departments can organize and prioritize their efforts based on *The Guide to Community Preventive Services*.

- **Quality Improvement in Local Health Departments: Progress, Pitfalls, and Potential.** A paper in the current issue of Journal of Public Health Management and Practice by Carolyn Leep and colleagues examines the deployment of quality improvement approaches within local health departments and describes the depth and intensity of QI activities. This study used data obtained from a web-based survey and follow-up interviews conducted with 30 LHDs representing all groups of 2005 NACCHO respondents who indicated that their LHD was involved in some kind of QI activities. Researchers found that overall, many LHDs are incorporating the basic elements of QI, and of those interviewed for the study, one-third of the respondents chose to discuss the QI efforts within their childhood immunizations program. The authors suggest that multiple factors, including funders and accreditation, may be driving the increase of QI for public health.
- **Comparative Effectiveness Research.** Earlier this year, the Institute of Medicine released its report on the top 100 research priorities for comparative effectiveness research to be funded by the federal government using ARRA funds. Several of these priorities have relevance to prevention and public health strategies. Find the report [here](#).
- **Best Practices in Emergency Preparedness.** The Institute of Medicine recently released a report offering guidance to state and local public health officials on how to establish standards of care in emergency situations. IOM notes “the influenza pandemic caused by the 2009 H1N1 virus underscores the immediate and critical need to prepare for a public health emergency in which thousands, tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of people suddenly require and seek medical care in communities across the United States. In the event of such emergencies, officials rely on standards of care policies and protocols to protect the public’s health. As the nation prepares not only for the 2009 influenza pandemic, but for any disaster scenario in which the health system may be stressed to its limits, it is important to describe the conditions under which standards of care would change due to shortage of critical resources.” Find the report [here](#).
- **Emergency Preparedness Research.** Fellow PHSSR researcher George Avery has a study in a recent issue of Evaluation and the Health Professions that examines the impact of federal preparedness funding on local health department preparedness activities. He finds that “overall budget, leadership, and crisis experience are...the most important determinants of local preparedness activity, but Centers for Disease Control and Prevention preparedness funding plays a mediating role by building capacity through the hiring of one key leadership position.”
- **Evidence-based public health.** The University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute recently launched a searchable database of research-tested programs and policies that have been shown effective in improving population health. Find the database [here](#).
- **Evidence-based Law.** A paper by Tony Moulton and colleagues earlier this year in AJPH conducted a systematic review of studies testing the impact of public health laws and regulations. This is yet another source for evidence-based practices in public health.
- **Evaluating Responses to County Health Rankings.** A recent study published in JPHMP by Angela Rohan and colleagues examined responses to Wisconsin’s county health rankings report, finding substantial media coverage and use by local public health officials.

Funding Opportunities

- **RWJF and the Pew Charitable Trusts** have issued a Call for Proposals on their collaborative [Health Impact Project](#). Funding is available to support up to 15 health impact assessment (HIA) demonstrations with awards expected to range between \$25,000 and \$150,000, in addition to training, mentoring and technical assistance. Grantees will promote the use of HIAs, decision-making tools that assist policy-makers with recognizing health consequences of new policy and ways to incorporate health into the policy of other sectors. **Applicant Web Conference: November 5th, 1:30 pm ET.** Letter of interest required; full proposal invited based upon letter of interest. No deadline; rolling submission.
- **Dissemination and Implementation Research.** AHRQ recently announced the availability of funds to support studies that test innovative methods for disseminating Comparative Effectiveness Reviews to consumers, clinicians, and policymakers. Public health agencies could play a role in the dissemination chain, particularly for difficult-to-reach populations who exist outside the formal health care system. AHRQ says, “summary guides are intended to help bridge the gap between research and practice by translating and disseminating findings on the comparative effectiveness of clinical interventions for three broad audiences – patients/consumers, clinicians, and policymakers. For more information click [here](#). Letter of Intent due November 18. Application due December 16.
- **Pfizer Fellowships in Public Health Research:** Pfizer offers career development awards for junior faculty pursuing careers in public health systems and services research. Research collaboration with state and/or local public health agencies is required. The [2010 announcement](#) was released last week, and the application deadline is January 31, 2010. Glen Mays is on the academic advisory board for this fellowship and can answer questions.
- **Dissemination and Implementation of Evidence-based HIV Prevention:** NIH invites research to enhance the science of technology transfer, dissemination, implementation, and operational research for evidence-based HIV-prevention interventions in the United States. More information is [here](#). The next application due date is February 5, 2010.
- **Implementation of Quality Improvement Processes:** AHRQ has announced the Agency’s interest in supporting grants to rigorously study the implementation of quality improvement strategies and provide generalizable scientific findings about the implementation of the quality improvement strategy, related organizational changes, and their impact. There is increasing evidence that success in achieving quality improvement goals is at least partially attributable to implementation processes and contexts and not just to the nature of the quality improvement strategy. Research design and execution will yield results providing AHRQ, providers, patients, payers, policymakers, and the public with contextual details and high level of confidence about what works and what does not in improving health care in the United States. More information is [here](#). The next application deadline is January 25, 2010.
- **Community Infrastructure for Health Research:** NIH has released a new funding opportunity under ARRA for research infrastructure that is highly relevant for Public Health PBRNs, entitled *Building Sustainable Community-Linked Infrastructure to Enable Health Science Research*. These grants are designed to “support the development, expansion, or reconfiguration of infrastructures needed to facilitate collaboration between academic health centers and community-based organizations...in order to accelerate the pace, productivity, *dissemination, and implementation* of



health research.” Communities are defined to include “neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, *public health departments*, health care providers, community coalitions, local governments, campus-community partnerships...” Public Health PBRNs may be well positioned to compete for this funding in collaboration with their academic health center partners. **Deadlines: 12-Nov-2009 (letter of intent)** and 11-Dec-2009 (full application). More information is [here](#).

- **Communities Putting Prevention to Work:** HHS recently announced its comprehensive \$650 million initiative under the Prevention and Wellness Trust component of the ARRA allotted for chronic disease prevention. *Communities Putting Prevention to Work* has four components, two announced thus far, that make grants available to support the implementation of evidence-based public health programs and policies to reduce risk factors, prevent/delay chronic disease, promote wellness, and provide positive, sustainable health changes in communities. We expect this opportunity to create compelling situations for PBRNs to study the adoption, implementation, and impact of the prevention strategies supported under this initiative.
 - **Community Initiative:** The initial \$373 million cornerstone component will fund urban and rural communities “to achieve the following prevention outcomes: increased levels of physical activity; improved nutrition; decreased overweight/obesity prevalence; decreased tobacco use; and decreased exposure to secondhand smoke.” A revised [Full Announcement](#) further specifies the number of communities per state that may apply, etc. Closing date for applications: December 1.
 - **State and Territory Initiative:** HHS has also announced the second component of the initiative, \$120 million for which states may apply. The three major elements include: (1) statewide policy and environmental change; (2) tobacco cessation through quitlines and media campaigns; and (3) a competitive category of high impact health-promoting policy and environmental change with awards based on potential for health impact. According to the announcement, “Funded projects will emphasize state-level policy and environmental changes that will help communities and schools support healthy choices.” Further information, key dates and related events such as conference calls are listed [here](#).

Related Research and Practice Activities

- **Developing a High Performing Health System.** Begin making plans to join the distinctive gathering of researchers, practitioners and policymakers at the 2010 PHSSR Keeneland Conference scheduled for April 20-22. Presentation abstracts are being accepted now. [Details and submission form](#) are linked here. **Deadline for abstracts is December 3.**
- **Global Climate Change: Implications for Public Health.** Catch this webcast and the live online discussion afterward to hear CDC’s distinguished experts share the potential health effects of climate change. On Thursday, November 5th, the presentation is from 2:00 – 2:45, with the online discussion forum with the experts from 2:45 – 4:00. Here is the [program information](#).
- **Planning for a Pandemic – Can History Inform Action?** This installment in the *Public Health Reports Meet the Author* webcast series brings public health historians and practitioners together to bring the 1918 flu pandemic alongside today’s practice issues for influenza preparedness planning. [Get the info here](#).

- **Strategies to Prevent Childhood Obesity.** The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices recently published *Shaping a Healthier Generation: Successful State Strategies to Prevent Childhood Obesity*, which includes an overview of related socioeconomic and environmental risk factors. State policy examples that promote healthy behaviors in a variety of settings are also highlighted. The [publication](#) was funded by RWJF.
- **Research Methods Resources:** AcademyHealth has launched a dedicated [website](#) containing resources on methods for health services research. Of course, these methods are highly relevant to the study of public health services and systems through PBRNs. Among the many resources are on-demand [webinars](#) accessible through the website for a modest fee. As an organizational affiliate of AcademyHealth, the PBRN National Coordinating Center may be able to secure preferred pricing or even coordinated viewing of these webinars. Check out the website and let us know if you see resources that are of interest.
- **Implementation Research Call for Abstracts:** The call for abstracts for NIH's 3rd Annual *Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation*, has a deadline of 5 pm PT on **Nov 6, 2009**. The conference will be held March 15-16, 2010 in Bethesda, MD. NIH says, "There is a recognized need to close the gap between research evidence and clinical and *public health practice*, but how is this best accomplished? Although emerging as a field of research in health and medicine, dissemination and implementation science is yet underdeveloped. A forum is needed to facilitate growth in the science of dissemination and implementation." For details, click [here](#).
- **Social Science Research and Public Health:** Throughout the fall and winter the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research at NIH is sponsoring symposia on understanding health through the tools of the social sciences. Each symposium will address an important health issue from four scientific perspectives: economics, health services, sociology and anthropology. Presentations will provide background on the concepts, definitions, methods, and theories through which social scientists study the causes of health problems and the application of this science for improving health. Lectures in this series are video cast and can be viewed [here](#). Video casts are archive only and posted approximately one week after the lecture; no live recording is available.
 - **Behavioral Economics and Health:** Describes a behavioral economics approach to human behavior with a focus on health. According to the website description, "our strategy combines research (infusion of new ideas, testing, and evaluation) with action (program implementation, service delivery, attention to process and on-the ground details) to design effective solutions to our most pressing health and social problems." (87 minutes)

Deadline!

Upcoming Key Dates

November 9: PBRN-related sessions at the APHA Annual Meeting

- 9:30-11am (H1N1 research)
- 2:30-4 pm (PBRN research)
- 5:30-8 pm (PHSSR reception)

November 10: PBRN Monthly Conference Call: cancelled due to APHA

November–December 2009: Year One PBRN Data/Reporting. These are our target dates for collecting data from the PBRNs about their development over the first year. Details to come.

November 18: PBRN Quarterly Webinar, 2-3:30pm EST

December 1: Start date for second cohort of Public Health PBRNs. The next group of networks begins their activities.

December 9: PBRN Monthly Conference Call

January 12: PBRN Monthly Conference Call

January 15, 2010: Annual Progress Reports due to RWJF.

Next Issue: October 30, 2009