



**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](mailto:woottenelaineb@uams.edu) or 501-551-0106. Newsletter archives are available [here](#).

## Notable Recent Activities

- ✦ **Quarterly Webinar Focuses on Round I Baseline Evaluation.** Round I networks worked together this week on the draft baseline network analysis that will give us an early snapshot of the patterns of interaction forming within the 5 inaugural PBRNs. This method will help us to track progress and, more importantly, to understand how research networks develop and function over time. Remember to send your feedback as soon as possible in these four areas to the Coordinating Center so that we can prepare for the next discussion:
  - (1) Timing: Consider the feasibility of fielding a brief survey in mid-February to obtain a true baseline.
  - (2) Content: What information is most important to capture? The goal is to obtain a baseline snapshot of the nature and intensity of interaction related to practice-based research, so that we can monitor changes over time. We probably will be measuring activities with very low intensities at baseline but with the potential for growth over time as research activities develop.
  - (3) Respondents: How do we define PBRN participants at baseline in a way that allows us to use a consistent case definition across networks and over time?
  - (4) Instrumentation: How to measure feasibly, reliably, validly? What can be culled, condensed, refined, and targeted from the draft instrument? Think *longitudinally* about what can be measured that may change in important ways over time, and also *cross-sectionally* about what can be measured that may reveal important differences across practice settings and networks.
- ✦ **PHSSR at APHA.** The [RWJF Blog](#) wrapped up its coverage of APHA late this week. Check in one last time for any updates you may have missed, and remember to post your comments, too!

## Activities on the Horizon

- ✦ **Orientation Conference Call:** Round II PBRNs should expect a polling communiqué from Lenora Martindale in the Coordinating Center to determine the best date for our first conference call, ideally in December. Project directors, PI/co-PIs, and program coordinators usually participate in the conference calls. Take a look at your calendars and anticipate Lenora's inquiry.

- **Keeneland Conference Call for Abstracts.** Begin making plans to join the distinctive gathering of researchers, practitioners and policymakers at the 2010 PHSSR Keeneland Conference scheduled for April 20-22. Conference details and abstract submission forms linked [here](#). **Deadline for abstract submission is December 3.**

## Recent Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- **Workforce Development:** A new supplement of the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* features 23 reports by noted authors highlighting the needs of the public health workforce. This journal issue was sponsored by CDC's Office of Workforce and Career Development, and the full-length articles are [available online](#) free.

## Related Research and Practice Activities

### Webinars

Soon!

- **Closing Schools to Control Disease: Clarifying the Decision Making Criteria.** In an upcoming Public Health Grand Rounds, the Office of Public Health Practice at the University of Michigan School of Public Health will “provide participants with tools to make informed decisions regarding whether or not to close schools in their jurisdictions during infectious disease outbreaks, including H1N1 influenza.” **Monday, November 23, 12-1:30 ET.** For more on the speakers and to register for the free event, go to [www.mipreparedness.org](http://www.mipreparedness.org).

Soon!

- **Planning for a Pandemic – Can History Inform Action?** This installment in the *Public Health Reports*’ Meet the Author webcast series brings together public health historians and practitioners to examine the 1918 flu pandemic alongside today’s practice issues for influenza preparedness planning. **Monday, November 30, 1:00 pm ET.** [Get the info here.](#)

### Other Presentations

- **CDC Public Health Grand Rounds:** The third session of “The Public Health Impact of Tobacco Product and Advertising Regulation” was presented this week and is [available online](#) in a variety of formats. The presentation examined recent legislative victories and the challenges still to come.
- **Economic Evaluation Methods:** CDC also has a [webcast available](#) illustrating the value of economic evaluation, “a process to identify, measure, value, and compare the costs and outcomes of programs and policies.” The five-part webcast shows how to choose and incorporate the most appropriate method for your program. As the emphasis on evaluation and maximization of resources intensifies, these tools stand to become routine arrows in the research quiver.

### Publications

- **New Research on Physical Activity:** Two new reports [linked here](#) add weight to the growing body of evidence for increasing physical activity to improve health. Both reports are from *Active Living Research*, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. *Making the Link from Transportation to Physical Activity and Obesity* summarizes the latest findings related to investment in public transportation and safe places to walk and bike and the impact on health and amount of physical activity. *The Regional Response to Federal Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects* compares utilization strategies for federal funds allocated to improve

pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The remarkable regional variation, what accounts for the differences, and key recommendations to achieve the greatest health impact are all in the report.

- **Health Rankings:** The latest [America's Health Rankings](#) report is available online. The resources are highly customizable to produce charts, graphs, tables, and even full reports and presentations for one state, two or more compared to each other or to the nation, etc. Since this is the twentieth edition of the rankings, the website has a wide variety of reports, tools, and organizational commentaries/retrospectives on the findings.

## Conferences

- **Call for Abstracts:** The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Conference Committee is accepting abstracts for posters and presentations related to BRFSS topics in survey research, epidemiology, evaluation, policy and public health. The committee is especially interested in research pertaining to the conference theme of “Leading the Way in Public Health Surveillance.” [Abstracts](#) are due Thursday, December 31, 2009, and the conference is scheduled in San Diego, CA, for March 20-24, 2010.

## Opportunity for Involvement

- **Position Paper Development in Public Health Finance:** APHA’s Health Administration Section is looking for subject matter experts to assist in developing a position paper on the topic of Public Health Financing/System Capacity. Membership in APHA is necessary, but section membership is not. “The paper's focus will not be on financing clinical services or primary care services, but rather on preventive core public health functions (assessment, policy development, assurance) and the capacity of the system to deliver public health services.” The paper must be submitted to APHA’s Joint Policy Committee by February 17, 2010, so the bulk of the work must be done by the end of January. If you would like to be part of the working group developing the paper, [contact Marcia Rosenstein](#).

## Funding Opportunities

- **Obesity Policy Research.** NIH recently announced an opportunity to apply for support using the exploratory/developmental (R21) mechanism in proposing to: “(1) conduct evaluation research on obesity-related natural experiments (defined as community and other population-level public policy interventions that may affect diet and physical activity behavior), and/or (2) develop and/or validate relevant community-level measures (instruments and methodologies to assess the food and physical activity environments at the community level).” “The overarching goal of this FOA is to inform public policy and research relevant to (1) diet and physical activity behavior, and (2) weight and health outcomes of Americans.” Click [here](#) to read the announcement and [here](#) to read about the R21 mechanism and related deadlines.
- **Tobacco Control RFA.** The National Cancer Institute recently released its State and Community Tobacco Control Policy and Media Research RFA soliciting cooperative agreement applications for research projects examining the effectiveness of state and community tobacco control policy and media interventions. According to the announcement, “focal areas include secondhand smoke policies, tax and pricing policies, tobacco industry marketing and promotion, mass media countermeasures, and community and social norms.” [Additional information](#) about the RFA is linked here.

- **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, plus 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. Letter of interest required; full proposal invited based upon letter of interest. No deadline; rolling submissions until all funding is obligated. The applicant web conference is archived at the project link above.

- **Communities Putting Prevention to Work.** This comprehensive \$650 million HHS initiative under the Prevention and Wellness Trust component of the ARRA allotted for chronic disease prevention makes 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.

**Deadline!**

- **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.” Application linked [here](#). **Closing date: November 24, 2009.**

**Deadline!**

- **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.**

- **Community Infrastructure for Health Research:** *Building Sustainable Community-Linked Infrastructure to Enable Health Science Research* is a NIH funding opportunity for research infrastructure that is highly relevant for Public Health PBRNs. These ARRA 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. **Deadline: December 11, 2009 (full application).** More information is [here](#).

- **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. More information is [here](#). The next application deadline is **January 25, 2010**.

- **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**.

## PHSSR and PBRN Colleagues in the News

- HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius appointed seven new members to the National Advisory Council for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) this week. Twenty-one private sector members and seven ex-officio members from other federal agencies make up the council, tasked with advising the Secretary and the AHRQ director on national health services research agenda priorities. Among the new council members is **Nebraska PBRN Steering Committee member Keith Mueller**. Dr. Mueller is director of the Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis and Nebraska Center for Rural Health Research, and associate dean of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health in Omaha. More on the council at <http://www.ahrq.gov/about/council.htm>.
- **Betty Bekemeier** was honored at APHA with the 2009 APHA Executive Director's Citation. Active in the **Washington PBRN**, Dr. Bekemeier was recognized for her work in strengthening APHA sections. [Read more](#) about her organized and deliberate approach to working with section chairs and subcommittees that led to improvements and resulted in this award.

## Upcoming Key Dates

**December 1:** Start date for Round II Public Health PBRNs.

**December 9:** PBRN Monthly Conference Call (Round I Networks)

**January 12, 2010:** PBRN Monthly Conference Call

**January 15, 2010:** Annual Progress Reports from Round I grantees due to RWJF.

**Next Issue:** December 4, 2009

The newsletter will take a Thanksgiving break next week.

