

Issue #49

## **PBRN Week in Review | July 23, 2010**

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

### **Notable PBRN Activities**

◆ **July Conference Call.** The first cohort of Public Health PBRNs met on July 13, 2010 and reported progress on Research Implementation Award (RIA) projects and other work.

- ◆ **Colorado PH PBRN** is developing eligibility criteria for community coalitions to participate in their study of how local public health departments (LHD) influence the adoption and use of evidence-based practices in chronic disease prevention through community partnership. They also are drafting the survey instrument that will be used to gather data from all 54 LHDs in early fall. CO PH PBRN is coordinating with Washington and Massachusetts PH PBRNs to construct common survey items to enhance multi-network study.

**Julie Marshall** also reported progress in their RWJF Public Health Law research project on law and regionalization, including new collaboration with law school faculty and student partners. This work involves a national review of state laws that directly impact regionalization; a legal analysis of the Colorado Public Health Act of 2008 as it impacts regionalization and regional approaches; a mapping study of regional approaches in Colorado that includes an analysis of related legal instruments; and a qualitative study of the determinants of the legal or structural barriers to regional approaches.

- ◆ **Washington PH PBRN's** RIA investigators **Betty Bekemeier** and **Anthony Chen** worked with state and local stakeholders to “fine tune” the second iteration of a statewide survey to measure evidence-based practice implementation and service delivery. The questionnaire is currently in the field, and data should be available for analysis in about a month. Survey results will help in selecting key informant interview participants from LHDs experiencing budget cuts. Overall, the study is examining variation in LHD funding cuts, how those cuts affected evidence-based practices, and the factors that influenced decision-making.

**Karen Hartfield** also reported the wrap-up by month's end of the network's study of H1N1 mass vaccination planning and implementation.

- ◆ **North Carolina PH PBRN** is developing a statewide survey as part of its RIA evaluation of a recent state policy change that eliminated Medicaid funding for evidence-based maternity case management services provided by LHDs. The research is exploring the impact on the LHDs' delivery of the services and the resulting birth outcomes, the “spill over” effect on core capacity to provide other services, and how LHDs adapt to preserve their core capacity.

**Brittan Wood** gave an update of other activities, including the Steering Committee's efforts to expand beyond the network's inaugural membership of LHDs and researchers in the central region. The network is also expanding its web presence with development of its own site.

- ◆ **Kentucky PH PBRN**, known locally as **K-PHReN**, has conducted training sessions for facilitators from the UK Center for Clinical and Translational Science who are involved in the RIA project. The network is examining the extent to which quality improvement strategies in LHDs that house Diabetes Centers of Excellence influence the adoption and implementation of evidence-based diabetes self-management interventions.

**Sarah Wilding** noted that network representatives presented results of their H1N1 research, funded by a RWJF PH PBRN Quick Strike Research Fund (QSRF) award, at the recent AcademyHealth and NACCHO meetings. Plans are underway for an ITV full membership meeting in September or October, a change from annual to semiannual gatherings of the entire network.

- ◆ **Massachusetts PH PBRN** is working on the infectious disease control performance standards to include in its RIA examination of variation in evidence-based practices for food safety and infectious disease control and the influence of scale effects, performance standards, and regionalization strategies on their adoption and use.

Regarding the network's initial research project, **Justeen Hyde** reported that the three groups of communities receiving funding to explore regionalization in their areas are either planning or have implemented strategies to help answer questions important to the regionalization process.

## Activities on the Horizon

- ◆ **Call for Abstracts: Modeling for Public Health Action.** CDC's Preparedness Modeling Unit invites abstracts for 20-minute presentations at its 2010 Conference on Modeling for Public Health Action. The conference is designed to "promote the exchange of information and ideas about modeling uses to shape public health action" to an audience of public health practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. **Abstracts are due September 15, 2010.** [More about the conference and Call for Abstracts.](#)
- ◆ **Quick Strike Research Funds (QSRF).** PH PBRNs are urged to submit QSRF ideas quickly! The initial submission should be a one page description of the proposed research. Send to [publichealthpbrn@uams.edu](mailto:publichealthpbrn@uams.edu). If the summary shows promise, the network will be invited to submit a 3-5 page proposal that describes: (1) how the project will meet a current or emerging need for which quick (time-sensitive) research results will be useful for a larger practice or policy action; (2) the research questions of interest; (3) data and methods to be used; and (4) a brief budget.
- ◆ **Washington State Public Health Conference.** An abstract from the **Washington PH PBRN** has been accepted for presentation at the state public health conference. **Karen Hartfield, Hanne Thiede, Betty Bekemeier, and Anthony Chen** will present the 90-minute session entitled "Practice-Based Research Networks: The Washington State Experience" on October 10, 2010.

- ◆ **American Public Health Association (APHA).** The following abstracts have been accepted for presentation at APHA:
  - ◆ "Changes in Public Health Programs over Time...and How They Relate to Disparities in Mortality" **Betty Beckemeier (WA PH PBRN)** and colleagues
  - ◆ "An Innovative Service Learning Program for MPH Students: Applying Problem-Based Learning in Community Settings" **Karen Hartfield (WA PH PBRN)**
  - ◆ "Closing the Quality Chasm in Public Health: Lessons from Practice-Based Research Networks" (**National Coordinating Center**)
  - ◆ "Accelerating Evidence-based Management in Public Health: Results from the First Two Years of PBRN Research"(**National Coordinating Center**)
  
- ◆ **New PBRN Research Opportunity.** Glen Mays (NCC) is working with the CDC's National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) on an opportunity to conduct a comparative analysis of environmental health service delivery issues in collaboration with interested PBRNs. A "small amount" of end-of-year CDC funding is available to support this activity via CDC's [ORISE Faculty Fellowship program](#), which funds a portion of salary for faculty at accredited academic institutions. An initial allotment of funding is available to support a small-scale study between August and December 2010. This may enable the PBRN program to demonstrate "proof of concept" to NCEH. CDC is interested in a small-scale study that would examine variation and change in environmental health service delivery across communities and/or states, ultimately leading to larger projects that could examine impact, quality, and cost-effectiveness of services and service mix. Services pertaining to food, water, air, and land use quality are of particular interest. Please contact the NCC if interested. Investigators should be available to devote about 10% effort to the project during August-December 2010 through the ORISE program.

## New Resources for Research and Practice

### WEBINARS

- ◆ **Social Determinants of Health.** On Thursday, July 29 at 3:00 pm ET, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Grantmakers in Health are hosting a 90-minute webinar to share research and best practices in effective communication about the social determinants of health. Based on four years of research about this complex topic, the presenters will share frames for social determinants messages, best practices in language, ways to use data, and insight into policymakers' perspectives. [Register](#) by **Tuesday, July 27**. Participants will receive a copy of a new messaging guide on social determinants.

### REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ **H1N1 Policy Barriers.** The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and the National Association of County and City Health Officers (NACCHO) have completed assessments of the legal and non-legal policy barriers encountered by state and local public health officials in addressing H1N1. [ASTHO report](#). [NACCHO report](#).
  
- ◆ **Health Department Accreditation.** An opinion piece entitled "Looking Back from the Future: Connecting Accreditation, Health Reform, and Political Opportunities" authored by **NC PH PBRN's Ed Baker** is in The Management Moment column of the July/August 2010 issue of the

[Journal of Public Health Management & Practice](#). Baker highlights the need for adequate resources for all local, tribal, and state public health agencies to be fully accredited by 2020.

## Recent Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- ◆ **Comparative Effectiveness Research Methodology.** A June 2010 supplement to [Medical Care](#) is devoted to comparative effectiveness research. Among the articles is a summary of proceedings of a 2009 AHRQ-sponsored symposium on comparative effectiveness research methods. While the topical content of the research in the supplement is mostly clinical, PH PBRNs may find helpful the discussions of the applications and implications of the methodology. All the articles in the supplement are available free online.
- ◆ **LHD Characteristics and Program Offerings.** A paper in the August 2010 *American Journal of Public Health* presents a study by Zhang and colleagues in which data from the 2005 National Profile of Local Health Departments were used to conduct a cross-sectional analysis of 2300 LHDs nationwide. Researchers assessed whether LHDs were conducting obesity prevention programs and diabetes screening programs, and examined associations between LHD characteristics and whether they conducted these programs. The study concluded the presence of obesity prevention and diabetes screening programs was significantly associated with LHD structural capacity and general performance. However, the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of both types of programs remain unknown. [Link to abstract](#).
- ◆ **LHD Strategies to Address Disparities and Diversity.** A recent [HCFO Brief](#) by Jennifer Lucado and Claudia Schur reports on approaches LHDs have used to meet the needs of their changing populations. As part of a larger study, investigators conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 13 representatives of LHDs that had developed innovative programs to reach members of a socioculturally or demographically diverse population in their communities. The study found that LHDs in both urban and rural areas across the United States are taking steps to better serve their increasingly diverse populations. Some of the common approaches identified were partnering with community organizations, performing outreach and understanding the cultural norms of clients. (One of the highlighted approaches is from the Orange County Health Department where **North Carolina PBRN leader Rosemary Summers** is Health Director.)

## Funding Opportunities and Announcements

The Coordinating Center is developing a [list of funding opportunities](#) for and grant awards to Public Health PBRNs. Grant opportunities with recurring deadlines will be tracked and updated. PH PBRNs are asked to help keep the awards list up to date by notifying the Coordinating Center of funding received.

### New in this column...

- ◆ **Health Issues of Women and Girls.** The Office of Women's Health seeks proposals for evidence-based health and wellness projects targeted to health issues that adversely affect women and girls in the applicants' communities. Support is available for a one-year Phase I planning effort by

community coalitions and a five-year Phase II implementation stage competitively awarded to successful Phase I grantees. [Link to information](#). **Application deadline: August 13, 2010.**

- ◆ **Comprehensive Cancer Control Programs.** CDC has announced the [availability of funding](#) to the 65 current Comprehensive Cancer Control Programs "to develop and implement a cancer-specific policy agenda, including implementing activities to advance policy, environmental, and systems changes to improve cancer control." PBRNs in jurisdictions with CCCPs may want to explore partnership opportunities.
- ◆ **Health Disparities Research.** NIH is accepting R01 applications for funding of innovative research addressing health disparities. The approaches and aims are quite broad, although the [announcement](#) states, "the research should take into account the characteristics of health systems and health seeking behaviors that propagate disparities." The research focus may include racial/ethnic minorities, low income, rural and other health disparity populations. **Application deadline: September 29, 2010.**
- ◆ **Scholars in Health Policy Research.** RWJF is accepting applications to its *Scholars in Health Policy Research* program. Applicants should have earned a doctoral degree in economics, political science or sociology after January 1, 2006 or have completed degree requirements by July 15, 2011. Preference is given to applicants who have not worked extensively in health or health policy research. Up to nine individuals are selected each year for two-year fellowships at one of three universities to develop creative thinkers in health policy who will make important research contributions to the field. **Application Deadline: October 13, 2010.** [More information](#)

#### Previously announced in this column...

- ◆ **Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure.** CDC is accepting applications to its "Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure for Improved Health Outcomes" five-year cooperative agreement program. The program includes a non-competitive base funding component and a competitive "enhanced" funding component. Applicants must be state health departments and others designated as eligible in the [Funding Announcement](#). Public Health PBRNs may want to discuss opportunities for partnership with appropriate applicant organizations. **Application Deadline: August 9, 2010.** [Link to recorded technical assistance information sessions.](#)
- ◆ **Occupational Safety and Health Education (T42).** CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) invites grant applications for Education and Research Centers (ERC) focused on occupational safety and health training and research training. NIOSH is mandated to provide an adequate supply of qualified personnel to carry out the purposes of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the ERCs are one of the principal means for meeting this mandate. ERCs are academic institutions that provide interdisciplinary graduate training and continuing education in the core occupational safety and health areas of industrial hygiene, occupational health nursing, occupational medicine residency, occupational safety, and other closely related occupational safety and health fields. Research and research training are integral components of ERCs, thus ERC scientists conduct peer reviewed, investigator initiated research on issues related to the National Occupational Research Agenda. [Funding Announcement](#). **Application deadline: September 10, 2010.**

- ◆ **RWJF Rapid-Response Call for Proposals.** [Active Living Research](#) is an RWJF national program supporting research to inform policy and environmental strategies for increasing physical activity and preventing obesity in children and adolescents, particularly among those at highest risk. With characteristics similar to the Public Health PBRN Quick Strike Research Fund (QSRF), this CFP seeks proposals for "opportunistic, time-sensitive studies on emerging or anticipated changes in physical activity-related policies or environments. Rapid-response grants are expected to accelerate progress toward policy and environmental strategies to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. For maximum impact, studies should be completed in as short a time frame as realistically possible, and results disseminated using methods designed to reach local, state or national decision-makers in time to help inform key policy decisions." **Deadline:** Awards made on a rolling basis. A Letter of Intent is required and will be accepted until July 1, 2011.

### Colleagues in PH PBRNs and PHSSR

- ◆ The Boston University School of Public Health's Office of Public Health Practice, organizational home of the **MA PH PBRN**, recently was recognized by the city's mayor and health commissioner for its role in the H1N1 flu prevention and vaccination campaign. **Harold Cox**, associate dean for public health practice and PI of the state's PH PBRN project, was instrumental in encouraging public health student involvement in the campaign. [Read more about their work.](#)
- ◆ As public health stakeholders in Kentucky work toward state health department accreditation, eleven "Champions" have been identified for the [eleven domains of measurement](#). **Sarah Wilding, co-PI of the KY PH PBRN**, has been identified as the champion for Domain 10, "Identify and Use Evidence-Based and Promising Practices and Promote Understanding and Use of Research." Wilding's role is to participate in systems changes and to coordinate activities across domains that are relevant to EBP and research.

### Upcoming Key Dates

- Aug 10:** Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 11:30-12:30 ET
- Aug 18:** Public Health PBRN Quarterly Webinar | 2:00-3:30 ET  
(Regularly scheduled date and time remain flexible to accommodate speaker(s).)
- Aug 19:** Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 1:00-2:30 ET
- Sep 8:** National Advisory Committee Conference Call | 1:00–2:00 ET
- Sep 14:** Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 11:30-12:30 ET
- Sep 16:** Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 1:00-2:30 ET

**Next Issue:** Week of July 30, 2010