

Issue #52

PBRN Week in Review | September 10, 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 or 501-551-0106. Newsletter archives are available [here](#).

Notable PBRN Activities

- ◆ **Research Implementation Awards RFP.** On Tuesday, September 7, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) issued a targeted Request for Proposals to the second cohort of networks funded through the *Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks Program*. Public Health PBRNs are invited to submit proposals for Research Implementation Awards (RIAs), a type of supplemental support designated for funded networks to pursue a larger scale study in addition to the smaller projects conducted with initial awards.

Proposed research for the 2010 RIAs must focus on the common theme of measuring and improving quality in public health practice. Projects must have two components: a *measure development and testing* component that involves specifying, validating, and testing measures of quality in public health practice settings and a *comparative analysis* component that examines variation in the tested measures across organizations and practice settings over time. Each grantee will be expected to use funds to implement a research project within their PBRN and to participate in a related, collaborative research project involving multiple RIA grantees selected through the RFP process.

Grants for RIA projects may be up to \$150,000 and used over 18 to 24 months. In developing the research aspects of RIA proposals, each network may utilize up to three days of technical assistance paid through the National Coordinating Center.

Twenty representatives from the seven networks participated in a Q&A conference on Friday, September 10, demonstrating enthusiasm for the opportunity to expand practice-based research. Proposals must be submitted through the RWJF online proposal system by Friday, October 15, no later than 6:00 pm ET.

Activities on the Horizon

- ◆ **APHA Workshop on Practice-Based Research.** Public health practice-based research is the focus of a workshop slated for Sunday, November 7, from 8:00 until 11:30 am during the APHA 2010 Annual Meeting in Denver. The workshop is an opportunity for academic and practice representatives to work together in exploring “selected priority research areas” of public health systems and services research. Hosted by the Yale School of Public Health (a partner in the **Connecticut PH PBRN**), the workshop is free to attendees and breakfast is provided. The

New!

venue is the Hyatt Regency Denver, and [Kathi Traugh](#) at Yale can provide more information. To make a workshop reservation and provide input into topic selection, [follow this link](#).

New!

- **Ohio PH PBRN** (known locally as Ohio Research Association for Public Health Improvement, RAPHI) representatives Aylin Drabousky, Matt Stefanak, and Scott Frank will present their poster, "Development, Structure, and Function of the Ohio Research Association for Public Health Improvement" at the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners annual conference on September 21 in Columbus.
- **Multi-State Learning Collaborative (MLC)**. Public Health PBRN representatives **Nancy Winterbauer (FL)**, **Karen Hartfield (WA)** and **Robin Pendley (KY)** will present work in quality improvement at the MLC 2010 Open Forum: A National Conference of Leaders in Public Health Quality Improvement. Slated for **September 15-17** in Washington DC, this is the MLC's final open forum culminating five years of work in QI and accreditation. Glen Mays will moderate the PBRN session on Wednesday, the 15th.
- **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:
 - ◆ "Local Public Health Leadership and Community Efforts to Obtain ARRA Stimulus Funding" **Bill Livingood (FL PH PBRN)**
 - ◆ "Formative Evaluation Results for a Local Public Health QI initiative to Improve Immunization Rates" **Bill Livingood (FL PH PBRN)**
 - ◆ "A Participatory Approach to Planning for Regional Public Health Services in Massachusetts" **Justeen Hyde (MA PH PBRN)**
 - ◆ "Changes in Public Health Programs over Time...and How They Relate to Disparities in Mortality" **Betty Bekemeier (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**)
- **RWJF PHSSR Call for Proposals**. The CFP for investigator-initiated research in PHSSR is in the drafting phase. Look for the CFP around November 30 with brief proposals due in early January. Preference is given to researchers new to the field.

Research Dissemination Opportunities

Deadline!

- ◆ **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 policymakers, and researchers. **Abstracts are due September 15, 2010.** [More about the conference and Call for Abstracts.](#)
- ◆ **Request for Papers: Community-University Partnerships.** *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement* is planning a spring 2011 special edition on the topic of "Sustaining Community-University Partnerships." Papers co-authored by a community member and academic researcher will be given preference. Submissions are due by Thursday, **October 14** at 7:00 pm ET. Full details are included in the [call for papers](#).

Resources in Research and Practice

WEBINARS

- ◆ **CDC Public Health Grand Rounds.** On Thursday, September 16, at 12:30 pm (ET), CDC Public Health Grand Rounds will host *Why H1N1 Still Matters*. The session will "review the roles that preparedness, surveillance, vaccine development, and risk communication played in the H1N1 response, discuss lessons learned, and tackle the myths and truths of this controversial and still relevant public health issue." The archived version will be available on September 18. More information, including details for CE credits, is available at the [CDC web site](#).

CONFERENCES

- ◆ **Training in Social Network Analysis.** A [workshop](#) focusing on the tools and techniques of social network analysis is scheduled for September 23-24 in Sacramento. Hosted by the UC Davis Clinical and Translational Science Center, the event will include both instruction and research presentations. Space is limited for this no-fee workshop, so priority will be given to participants from CTSA institutions.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ **NACCHO Report on Trends.** The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recently released *Trends in Local Health Department Finances, Workforce, and Activities*, a report based on data collected in the 2005 and 2008 National Profile of Local Health Departments studies. Highlights of changes that took place in local health departments between 2005 and 2008 include:

- one in five LHDs experienced decreased expenditures;
- the total size of the LHD workforce increased by five percent, but the numbers of nurses, epidemiologists, and health educators employed by LHDs decreased; and
- LHDs were more likely to add or eliminate population-based activities than clinical services.

The report includes maps showing the variation in changes across states during the period. This and other reports from NACCHO's Profile study are available at www.naccho.org/profile and are supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

COMMENTARY

- ◆ **Prevention and the ACA.** In a recent [New England Journal of Medicine](#), HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Assistant Secretary for Health Howard Koh summarize the components of the 2010 Affordable Care Act (ACA) that emphasize disease prevention and health and wellness promotion.

New Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- ◆ **Social Network Structure of a Large Online Community for Smoking Cessation.** In a recent [American Journal of Public Health](#) article, Cobb and colleagues discussed their efforts to characterize the structure and function of QuitNet, the largest online community for smoking cessation support, using social network analysis methods. This work would serve as a basis for future studies of the effectiveness of online communities as tools for behavior change. In their study of QuitNet, which included comparison to other networks, the authors found characteristics of positive social support and connectedness previously shown to be important in smoking cessation and abstinence. They also identified subgroups for further study.
- ◆ **A Network Assessment of Community-Based Participatory Research.** Also in the July 2010 [American Journal of Public Health](#), Valente and colleagues describe their effort to examine whether a community-based initiative aimed at reducing cancer disparities increased connectedness between the participating community-based organizations (CBO) and university researchers. Ninety-one CBO and 56 university members were interviewed at two points in time, and results showed that the CBOs increased in connectedness to each another and to the researchers, but that the researchers did not increase in connectedness to the CBOs or to each other. Overall, the study confirmed the usefulness of social network analysis for evaluating community-based initiatives and for explicating many of the intangibles of such work.

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

- ◆ **AHRQ**
Researching Implementation and Change while Improving Quality (R18)
The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) announces the Agency's interest in supporting grants to rigorously study the implementation of quality improvement strategies and to 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. The research funded through this announcement may be conducted by the team designing/implementing the quality improvement strategy or by a separate team. The quality improvement strategy must be one expected to result in major improvements in health care delivery that will enhance patient outcomes. 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.
Deadline: September 25, 2010
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-136.html>
- ◆ **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](#)

- HRSA/MCHB

R40 Maternal and Child Health Research Program

From the RFA: "Research proposals should address critical MCH questions such as public health systems and infrastructure, health disparities, quality of care, and promoting the health of MCH populations, which also support the goals of the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Deadline: Oct 15, 2010

<https://grants.hrsa.gov/webExternal/SFO.asp?ID=2E514D5E-EA9E-4D9B-93B6-E180E5837AB7>

- American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society invites applications that investigate the impact of healthcare costs, healthcare system and capacity, insurance status, social factors and delivery of health care services on outcomes in cancer prevention, early detection and treatment.

<http://images.delivery.net/cm50content/19439/22023/RoleOfHealthcareRFA.pdf>

Deadline: Oct 15, 2010

- National Institutes of Health

Economics of Prevention (R21)(RFA-RM-10-015)

The success of efforts to reform the American health care system depends on both improving health outcomes and reducing health care costs. Prevention is a key element of both those objectives, but not all prevention measures are cost-reducing or even health-improving. Wise use of resources demands that prevention measures are targeted appropriately and implemented effectively to reduce the burden of ill health throughout the life course. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA) included incentives for expanded use of prevention services that confer net health benefits. Wise use of limited resources also demands consideration of the costs associated with generating those benefits. Economic research is needed to advance our understanding of critical issues pertaining to the allocation of resources to prevention, as distinct from treatment or other services.

Application Receipt Date(s): October 26, 2010

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-10-015.html>

Opening Date: September 28, 2010 (Earliest date to submit an application to [Grants.gov](#))

Letters of Intent Receipt Date(s): September 28, 2010

Application Due Date(s): October 26, 2010

Peer Review Date(s): March 2011

Council Review Date(s): May 2011

Expiration Date: October 27, 2010

- ◆ National Institutes of Health
 Science of Structure, Organization and Practice Design in the Efficient Delivery of Effective Healthcare (R21)(RFA-RM-10-016)
 This FOA solicits R21 applications for exploratory and developmental research projects that will lead to increased efficiency in the production of health and delivery of health care. Specifically, research sought under this announcement should inform 1) the identification of specific, modifiable causes of high and increasing health care costs related to the structure, organization, and production of health care; and 2) the development and refinement of interventions, practices, or policies that can address these causes while maintaining or enhancing outcomes. This initiative is part of the Health Economics Common Fund Program.

Application Receipt Date(s): October 26, 2010
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-10-016.html>
 Opening Date: September 26, 2010 (Earliest date to submit an application to Grants.gov.)
 Letters of Intent Receipt Date(s): September 26, 2010
 Application Due Date(s): October 26, 2010
 Peer Review Date(s): February 2011
 Council Review Date(s): May 2011
 Earliest Anticipated Start Date(s): July 1, 2011
 Expiration Date: October 27, 2010
- ◆ National Institutes of Health
 RFA-DA-11-003 Effects of the Social Environment on Health: Measurement, Methods and Mechanisms (R01)
 This FOA, issued as part of the NIH Basic Behavioral and Social Science Opportunity Network (OppNet), solicits Research Project Grant (R01) applications from institutions/organizations that propose to investigate structural, behavioral, sociocultural, environmental, cognitive, emotional, and/or biological mechanisms through which the social environment affects health outcomes. To address this objective, applicants should propose research studies that will: (1) deepen our understanding of which aspects of social environments affect health outcomes for women and men at different stages of the lifecourse and in different social, economic, geographic, racial and ethnic sub-populations; (2) lead to clearer understanding of mechanisms through which social environments have such effects; or (3) improve measurement methods and/or contribute to advances in analytic methods used in the study of social environments and health.

Opening Date: December 6, 2010
 Letters of Intent Receipt Date: December 6, 2010
Application Due Date: January 6, 2011
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-DA-11-003.html>
- ◆ **Research in Innovation.** The National Science Foundation (NSF), the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation are emphasizing research to expand understanding of the influence of innovation. The three organizations have funding opportunities “to inform the future development of a data infrastructure for the study of innovation within and across organizations.” An NSF [Dear Colleague Letter](#) details the offerings of these organizations and includes links to contact persons.
- ◆ **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 **rolling basis**. Letter of Intent required and accepted until July 1, 2011.

PBRN/PHSSR Colleagues in the News

- ◆ **Betty Bekemeier**, a research partner in the **Washington Public Health PBRN** and co-PI of its RIA project, has been selected as one of this year's 12 recipients of the RWJF Nurse Faculty Scholar award given to junior faculty who demonstrate promise as leaders in academic nursing. Bekemeier is an assistant professor at the University of Washington School of Nursing. Her research in evidence-based decision making in public health practice will be discussed in an upcoming issue of *PBRN Week in Review*. Congratulations, Betty!

Key Dates

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
Sep 14:	Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET
Oct 12	Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET
Oct 15:	RIA Proposals due in RWJF online system by 6:00 pm ET
Oct 21	Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 ET
Oct 21-22	STinC Working Group meeting in Little Rock
Nov 6-10:	2011 APHA Annual Meeting in Denver
Nov 17	Quarterly webinar (subject to change depending upon speaker)

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