

Issue #55

PBRN Week in Review | October 8, 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

- **Public Health Nursing Research Agenda.** Earlier this week a group of public health and nursing researchers convened in Chicago as part of an AHRQ-funded consensus meeting to develop a research agenda on public health nursing quality, safety, and outcomes, led by Dr. Michele Issel of University Illinois-Chicago. Among the Public Health PBRN researchers and collaborators participating in the meeting were **Susan Zahner (Wisconsin PBRN), Betty Bekemeier (Washington PBRN), Doug Scutchfield (Kentucky PBRN), and Glen Mays (National Coordinating Center)**. Nursing researchers at the meeting expressed considerable enthusiasm for the public health PBRN model as a vehicle for stimulating more and better research on the single largest component of the public health workforce. Several researchers noted a specific interest in becoming more engaged in their local PBRNs (Ohio, Nebraska, North Carolina and Connecticut come to mind). Preliminary recommendations from this meeting will be discussed at an APHA Annual Meeting special session (Monday at 10:30 am).
- **2010 NACCHO Profile Survey Launched.** Encourage LHD network partners to complete this very important census survey of the nation's local public health agencies. This year's survey has been carefully harmonized with the ASTHO census survey (currently in the field) and the NALBOH census survey (planned for fielding in January-March 2011). The NACCHO Profile is an extremely important data source for the research and practice communities concerning the organization and operation of public health at the local governmental level. Several PBRN collaborators serve on the scientific advisory committee for this year's survey, including **Lisa VanRaemdonck (Colorado PBRN), Jeff Jones (Kentucky PBRN), and Glen Mays (NCC)**. More information is [here](#).
- **Accreditation Beta Test Concludes.** Last week the beta test fieldwork for the PHAB accreditation program wrapped up, bringing this important national initiative closer to implementation in 2011. The NCC's Glen Mays met with others on the PHAB Research and Evaluation Committee to consider analytic recommendations for the beta test data, including psychometric analyses. The latest news and documentation related to PHAB accreditation is available on the [website](#).
- **Federal Research Agenda for Public Health Policy and Practice.** Last week the NCC's Glen Mays met by request with officials at the White House Office of Management and Budget to discuss the PHSSR research program authorized by the ACA law and how this field of inquiry can inform policy and practice, including questions about the implementation and impact of

public health delivery systems under health reform. Key among the topics discussed was the work of the Public Health PBRNs in growing this research enterprise. Considerable enthusiasm for this research in national policy circles continues.

- **Washington PBRN Research Results Released.** The **Washington Public Health PBRN** has released the final report of results of a nine-month study of the state's public health preparedness for and response to the 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak. The network conducted four telephone and two online surveys with health officials of 15 local health jurisdictions in an effort to identify facilitating and hindering factors for public health response planning and activities. The analysis was used to describe lessons learned, develop recommendations for future events, and define future research needs. The study was conducted at the request of the Washington State Department of Health and supported by PBRN and CDC funding. Research results are [linked](#) at the PBRN web page.
- **2010 Public Health PBRN Research Implementation Awards (RIA).** Round II PBRNs are developing research proposals on the theme of measuring and improving quality in public health practice in response to the RWJF limited competition RFP for 2010 RIAs. Proposals must include both 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 examining variation in the tested measures across organizations and practice settings over time.

Research Topics. PBRNs are working on proposals such as:

- ◆ a natural experiment involving development of an integrated HIV and STD field services model where two separate approaches now exist;
- ◆ definition, development and implementation of QI measures for LHDs in rural contexts;
- ◆ investigation of process, content, and quality of local health department (LHD) role in foodborne illness, including development of a direct observation tool
- ◆ factors that have moved LHDs from plan development to implementation/action of state-mandated community health improvement plans;
- ◆ measurement of emergency response activities and capacity; and
- ◆ development and testing of a measure to assess family planning services for teens.

Technical Assistance. In preparing their proposals, applicant PBRNs may access up to three days of technical assistance in developing research plans. Researchers with expertise in the topics above or the theme of measuring and improving quality in public health practice and with interest in providing TA may contact the National Coordinating Center by [email](#).

Deadline! **Deadline:** Proposals due in the RWJF electronic system by **Friday, October 15, 6:00 pm ET.**

Activities on the Horizon

- **Collaboration to Measure LHD Services.** Public Health PBRNs interested in working together to develop research on measuring LHD services will meet on **October 21 and 22** in Little Rock. Enthusiasm for a multi-network approach to the topic is evident, with 20 participants of 11 PBRNs planning to attend. Meeting objectives are to: 1) identify shared/similar variables related to LHD practice and programs being collected within states; 2) establish criteria for choosing similar practice-related variables to collect, compile, and examine against related outcomes; 3) discuss opportunities for collecting similar/same data and for sharing best data collection strategies and instruments; 4) identify issues for study leaders to

consider as the project moves forward; 5) determine individual network interest in and the level of commitment to this multi-network study; and 6) establish a preliminary research team. To learn more about this meeting contact the NCC at publichealthpbrn@uams.edu.

- **Washington State Public Health Conference.** **Karen Hartfield, Hanne Thiede, Betty Bekemeier, and Anthony Chen** will present a 90-minute session entitled "Practice-Based Research Networks: The Washington State Experience" on October 11 at the Washington State Joint Conference on Health in Yakima.
- **Community Outcomes Conference.** Glen Mays will speak at a conference organized by **Ohio PBRN** participants in Dayton, Ohio entitled "Show Me the Outcomes: Put Evidence to Work & Create Healthier Communities" on Thursday, October 28. The conference is jointly sponsored by Wright State University and the Dayton-Montgomery County health department, among others. Conference information and registration [linked here](#).
- **PBRN Publication.** A reminder to Round I Public Health PBRNs that the National Coordinating Center requests a draft of each network's ten-page, double-spaced manuscript for the *Leadership in Public Health* journal by **Friday, November 12**. The Coordinating Center will review and may suggest editorial changes to help the articles flow together as a special issue. Please email your network's article to publichealthPBRN@uams.edu.

**Save
the
Date!**

- **RWJF Reception at APHA.** Save the date of **Monday, November 8**, for the **RWJF Public Health Reception** at the Colorado Convention Center in Korbel Ballroom 4. The Public Health team invites grantees to drop by for refreshments and networking between 6 and 8 pm.
- **APHA Annual Meeting.** The following abstracts from PBRN representatives have been accepted for presentation at APHA:
 - ◆ "Communication Capacity during the Outbreak of Novel Influenza H1N1: An Evaluation of Health Departments in a Public Health Practice-Based Research Network" **Robin Pendley (KY PH PBRN)**
 - ◆ "Resource Allocation and Funding Challenges for Regional Local Health Departments in Nebraska" **Li-Wu Chen and Dave Palm (NE PH PBRN)**
 - ◆ "Effectiveness and Challenges of Regional Community Health Planning Partnerships in Nebraska" **Li-Wu Chen and Dave Palm (NE PH PBRN)**
 - ◆ "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**)

➤ **APHA Workshop on Communicating Public Health Data.** On **Saturday, Nov. 6**, from 1:30 to 5 p.m., this APHA Learning Institute Workshop provides practical suggestions and examples on how scientists, health promoters, health educators, clinicians, statisticians, and others can better communicate data to the public, policy makers, and the news media. Workshop agenda [linked here](#).

➤ **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 venue is the Hyatt Regency Denver, and [Kathi Traugh](#) at Yale can provide more information. To indicate tentative plans to attend and provide input into topic selection, [follow this link](#).

Reminder...

Research Dissemination Opportunities

➤ **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](#).

Deadline

Resources in Research and Practice

WEBINARS

➤ **CER Webinar:** A web conference, *Integrating Comparative Effectiveness Research into Everyday Practice*, featuring AHRQ Director Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D. and others will be held on Tuesday, October 12, 2010 from 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET. According to the news release, "this conference will highlight AHRQ's existing comparative effectiveness research and ways that it can be used by clinicians for day-to-day decision-making." [Registration](#) is required.

NEW TOOLS

➤ **All the News that's Fit.** The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) launched a new resource called *Local Health Departments in the News*, a “first-ever, ongoing, publicly available collection of news stories about public health issues facing communities across the nation. News clips are searchable by state or in areas including: budget cuts, County Health Rankings, H1N1, etc.” The database is available [here](#).

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT

- **National Strategies.** On Friday, HHS released a draft [framework](#) for the National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy as required under the ACA law. This provides our first glimpse of the direction of the federal government's strategy for improving public health infrastructure and population health. Comments are welcomed, and can be communicated via the following e-mail address: prevention.council@hhs.gov.

Similarly, HHS is seeking comments and feedback on its proposed [framework](#) for the National Health Care Quality Strategy and Plan (deadline October 15th).

- **Research Opportunities.** HHS recently announced \$1.9 million in awards for sodium reduction initiatives and \$155 million in teen pregnancy prevention grants at state and local levels. Research will be needed to examine the impact of these new initiatives.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

- **ASTHO Annual Meeting.** The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials' Annual Meeting will be October 20-22 in Colorado Springs. The agenda includes health reform, accreditation, health equity, preparedness and other priorities. Speakers include Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, HRSA Administrator Mary Wakefield, and CDC Director Tom Frieden.
 - ◆ [Registration Information](#).
 - ◆ [Preliminary Program-At-A-Glance](#)
- **Health Policy Orientation Oct. 25–28, 2010– Washington, D.C.** AcademyHealth's annual Health Policy Orientation gives participants an in-depth understanding of the formal and informal processes shaping the nation's health policy agenda. With expert faculty members, group discussions, hands-on tutorials, and a congressional site visit, participants master the fundamentals of policy development and implementation and experience the Washington health policy environment with insiders. The program reviews the essentials of health policymaking and provides diverse stakeholder perspectives on timely issues. Space is limited to 50 participants for a nearly one-to-one ratio of participants to faculty. Follow [this link](#) for more information.
- **Comparative Effectiveness Research Methods Conference.** The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) are co-sponsoring "Methodological Challenges in Comparative Effectiveness Research," a conference in which participants will use case studies to examine and address the limitations of existing intervention research. According to the announcement, the meeting is designed to "explore current methodologic, data analytic, infrastructure and database research challenges in order to help develop a vision for shaping the methodological tools of tomorrow." Conference dates are December 2 and 3rd on the NIH main campus in Bethesda, Maryland; registration deadline is November 17. [Link](#) to more information, including registration.

Modeling for Public Health Action. CDC's Preparedness Modeling Unit is hosting the 2010 Conference on Modeling for Public Health Action on December 9 and 10 in Atlanta. According to the announcement, the conference is designed to "promote the exchange of information and ideas about modeling uses to shape public health action." Intended audiences include "public health practitioners and policy makers in state and local health departments, state and local health policy makers; scientists and modelers working at CDC and its federal partners in public health; academic researchers, non-government organizations, and international practitioners, modelers and policy makers." Conference details are [linked here](#).

New Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- **CER.** The [October issue](#) of *Health Affairs* is devoted to the emerging and rapidly growing scientific paradigm of Comparative Effectiveness Research, which aims the research enterprise toward the goal of producing information needed for real-world decision-making by health professionals, policy-makers, and the public. Although much of the public attention focuses on clinical research and medical care, CER has equally compelling applications in public health research and practice.
- **Production Functions for Public Health.** In a new article by famed Wisconsin health economist John Mullahy in CDC's journal [Preventing Chronic Disease](#), traditional economic theories of health production are applied to the work of public health, generating some interesting policy recommendations for new payment models.
- **The Quality Improvement Experience.** A recent article in [Journal of Public Health Management and Practice](#) by Jeffrey Gunzenhauser and colleagues discusses the development of an integrated, comprehensive public health quality improvement program in the Los Angeles Department of Public Health. The approach includes focusing on three overlapping areas that align with the essential public health services: 8 (competent workers), 9 (evaluation) and 10 (research). Broadening the focus of quality improvement efforts to include these three areas provides additional opportunities to address key infrastructure issues that may affect outcomes. The investigators concluded by acknowledging that the quality improvement program supports the organization in its efforts to increase desired health outcomes and conditions in which the population can be healthy.
- **Methods Collection.** [Survey Methodology for Public Health Researchers: Selected Readings from 20 years of Public Opinion Quarterly](#) is a collection of *POQ* articles of interest to public health and health services researchers. Eighteen articles are organized into four categories: evaluations of survey-based data, reviews of health policy and research issues, assessment of data collection protocols' impact on data quality, and effect of survey question design on accuracy of results. Online access is free.
- **Vaccination Attitudes.** Beginning this year, the annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all people age six-months and older. An article by Uscher-Pines and colleagues in a forthcoming issue of *Vaccine* presents their examination of what is known about the vaccination behaviors and attitudes of the healthy 19 to 49 age group that has not previously been targeted. Among their recommendations at the study's conclusion is the need to try "new and untraditional strategies" to influence this target audience to get the vaccine. [Of course, those strategies will need to be measured and compared across settings over time...] An early look at the [article](#) is available through RAND.
- **Research Design in Public Health.** As part of the [American Journal of Public Health](#) Voices from the Past series celebrating the publication's 100th anniversary, Steckler and colleagues excerpted the 1961 work of Rosenstock and Hochbaum that suggested principles "for planning and designing of administrative research in public health." To make the article more meaningful to public health workers of the day, the original authors illustrated the principles with Hochbaum's 1950s study of factors associated with participation in tuberculosis screening. The principles discussed by Rosenstock and Hochbaum included: 1) problem formulation, 2) literature review, 3) formulating hypotheses and making assumptions explicit, 4) data specifications, 5) methods selection, 6) analysis planning, 7) pretest study design, 8) data collection, 9) data analysis, and 10)

interpretation and reporting. They noted that these principles should be used when the purpose of a data-gathering activity was "to discover or establish new facts in a way that is generalizable to other situations and free of certain bias." Their effort to apply scientific research principles to practice-based questions and to disseminate their findings in practice-interest terms are fundamental to the work of today's Public Health PBRNs. [Hochbaum earned his Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota and was on faculty at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, both partners in their states' PBRNs.]

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

Funding
List Link

The Coordinating Center maintains a [list of funding opportunities](#) of interest to Public Health PBRNs. Grant opportunities with recurring deadlines are tracked and updated.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED HERE:

- **RWJF PHSSR Call for Proposals.** The RWJF CFP for investigator-initiated research in PHSSR is in the drafting phase. We now anticipate that the CFP will be released in early 2011. Stay tuned for more details.

Update!

- **HRSA/MCHB**
Maternal and Child Health Research Program (R40)
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." [Link](#).

Deadline!

Deadline: Oct 15, 2010

- **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. [Link](#).

Deadline!

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 reduce costs or even improve health. 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. [Link](#).

Application Due: October 26, 2010

- National Institutes of Health
NIH 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. [Link](#).

Application Due Date(s): October 26, 2010

- National Institutes of Health
[Systems-Oriented Pediatric Obesity Research & Training \(SPORT\) Center of Excellence Grant](#)
This jointly funded program is accepting grant applications "to establish a center of excellence of childhood obesity research and training based on a transdisciplinary systems science framework and systems-based methodologies, including the use of systems modeling to capture the complexity of the etiology of childhood obesity and the potential impact of environmental and/or policy interventions." The center of excellence will conduct epidemiological research linking multiple factors related to childhood obesity, provide research funding for evaluations and interventions, and develop infrastructure for related postgraduate research. In FY2011, one award of \$4.25M for up to five years is anticipated.

Application Deadline: December 31, 2010.

National Institutes of Health

Effects of the Social Environment on Health: Measurement, Methods and Mechanisms (R01)
RFA-DA-11-003

This FOA, issued as part of the NIH Basic Behavioral and Social Science Opportunity Network (OppNet), solicits proposals to investigate structural, behavioral, sociocultural, environmental, cognitive, emotional, and/or biological mechanisms through which the social environment affects health outcomes. Proposed research should: (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. [Link](#).

Letters of Intent Receipt Date: December 6, 2010

Application Due Date: January 6, 2011

- **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. The 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.

➤ **Public Health Law Research Rapid Response Studies.**

RWJF's *Public Health Law Research* (PHLR) program is accepting proposals for "time-sensitive and opportunistic studies on emerging or anticipated changes in public health laws." The nonpartisan studies should inform policy discussions or contribute to the related evidence base.

Two categories of research are sought:

- ◆ Rapid response evaluation studies where natural experiments are created by changes in law, regulation or policy at any level of government may be funded up to \$100,000 each for 12 months;
- ◆ Public health law mapping projects that produce "state-of-the-art legal datasets of high importance to policy-makers and researchers may be funded up to \$50,000 for 8 months.

Proposals accepted online on a **rolling basis** during the next 12 months. [Link to details](#).

Career Opportunities

- **PHSSR Faculty Search.** The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences is seeking candidates for a tenure-track, open-rank faculty position in the Health Policy and Management Department to advance its research program in public health systems and services research. Candidates should have a successful record of research relevant to the organization, financing, and delivery of public health services or the ability to develop such a record. For more information, contact HPM Department Chair [Glen Mays](#).

- **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. [More information](#)

Deadline!

Application deadline: October 13, 2010.

- **NCHS/AcademyHealth Health Policy Fellowship.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and AcademyHealth are seeking applicants for their 2011 Health Policy Fellowship. This program brings visiting scholars in health services research-related disciplines to NCHS to collaborate on studies of interest to policymakers and the health services research community using NCHS data systems. Applications are welcome from doctoral students through senior researchers and/or faculty. For more information about the fellowship and application requirements, visit www.academyhealth.org/nchs or e-mail AcademyHealth at nchs@academyhealth.org.

Application deadline: January 5, 2011

Key Dates

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|--------------------|---|
| 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 | CANCELLED for STiNC: Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call |
| Oct 21-22 | STiNC Working Group meeting in Little Rock |
| Nov 6-10: | 2011 APHA Annual Meeting in Denver |
| Nov 9 | CANCELLED for APHA: Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call |
| Nov 17 | Quarterly webinar (date subject to change depending upon speaker) |
| Nov 18 | Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 ET |
| April 10-12 | 2011 Annual Grantee and NAC Meetings in Lexington |
| April 12-14 | 2011 PHSSR Keeneland Conference in Lexington (conference changes to a Noon kick-off in 2011) |

Next Issue October 15, 2010



Columbus Day is Monday, October 11