

Issue #60

PBRN Week in Review | December 17, 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 Activities and Services Tracking (PHAST) Study Update.** The PHAST study held a webinar on December 14 for interested PHAST study PBRNs. The webinar provided an update of progress to date and discussed next steps—particularly around retrospective LHD services data related to *Maternal/Child Health*, *Environmental Health*, and *Communicable Disease Control*. These domains of practice appear to include some of the most comparable, existing data across our states/locals. Next steps include:
 - Each PHAST study state and those interested in participating will be contacted by Betty Bekemeier and related research staff during the week of Dec. 20 to provide existing, retrospective, state-level data specific to amounts (e.g. # of an activity, # of clients served) of public health services delivered per individual LHDs, per year 2005-2009, and in the above domains of service. More specific examples of service variables were provided during the webinar and can/will be provided by PHAST leads and staff. But most importantly, for now we are asking that states—provide data (when contacted) that are most *easy* to come by, not limit their thinking to what we *think* they might have (you may have interesting data we've not thought of!), and err on the side of providing more data than less (especially if it's easier to provide more than to tease out specifics.)
 - We will want to start gathering data from PHAST states as soon as we confirm with each PBRN and will continue gathering retrospective PHAST data throughout the month of January. After January we will reassess to see how much and what types of data we've been able to gather.

PHAST leads and staff (at the UW and UAMS) will compile, transform, and link our data together into a comparable data set for preliminary analyses.

- ◆ **Opportunities for PBRN Research Dissemination and Translation:** Last month several public health PBRNs and the National Coordinating Center collaborated in developing a proposal for a panel presentation at the 4th annual NIH Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation that, if accepted, will showcase implementation research happening through the PBRNs. Similar opportunities for developing collaborative panels for presenting PBRN research are now on the horizon for 2011, including proposals for the *AcademyHealth* Annual Research Meeting, the *Keeneland* Conference, the research track at the *NACCHO* Annual Meeting, and the *APHA* Annual Meeting. Abstracts for all of these meetings are due early in the new year. Please let us hear from you about your ideas and

interests for collaborative panel proposals at these meetings. The National Coordinating Center will be in touch early in January to follow up and mobilize submissions where there are interests.

- ✦ **Collaboration between PBRNs and PRCs.** The National Coordinating Center has been dialoging with CDC on ways of capitalizing on shared research interests and opportunities for collaboration between CDC-funded Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) and RWJF-funded PBRNs. Ideas on the table now include a webinar that would bring together the PRC and PBRN stakeholders, perhaps as early as January, and a later joint meeting between PRC and PBRN participants later in the year. Watch this space and special emails for forthcoming details.
- ✦ **New PBRN Funding for Research on Quality Improvement and Accreditation.** With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the National Coordinating Center will be releasing a special request for proposals for Quick Strike Research projects devoted to issues of quality improvement and accreditation in public health (tentatively referred to as the *Quality Improvement Quick Strike* [QIQS] research program). Both “core” and “affiliate” members of the Public Health PBRN program will be eligible to apply for awards at two levels, up to \$25,000 for smaller projects and \$50,000 for larger projects. More details and a request for proposals will be out in the coming weeks.
- ✦ **PBRN Research at Preventive Medicine 2011:** Thanks to the ideas and ingenuity of our National Advisory Committee chair Dr. Michael Caldwell, we are working with the American College of Preventive Medicine on the idea of a special session devoted to public health PBRN research at the ACPM’s annual [meeting](#) in February 2011. This opportunity was not yet finalized at press time but stay tuned for more information on this effort to reach another very important group of stakeholders in advancing the science of public health practice.
- ✦ **It’s a Wrap: 2010 NACCHO Data Collection:** We understand that NACCHO has completed data collection for its 2010 national census survey of local health departments with an impressive preliminary response rate. Kudos to PBRN participants that assisted and advised in this effort, including those that coordinated their own research efforts around this important data collection activity.

Activities on the Horizon

- ✦ **Incentivizing Public Health Collaboration.** HHS recently released the [new federal regulations for minimum medical loss ratios](#)) that health insurers must meet starting in January 2011 under the Affordable Care Act. An MLR is the proportion of premium revenue that insurers are required to pay out each year in expenses for medical services – a level set at 80%-85% of premium revenue in 2011. Thanks to the ingenuity of the public health policy community in the health reform discussions, a tiny little provision in these new regulations creates some potentially powerful incentives for insurers to invest in public health activities through collaboration with public health agencies. Under these regs, health insurers can count any costs they incur in conducting public health education campaigns toward their MLR, as long as these campaigns are carried out in collaboration with state and/or local public health agencies. As the behavioral economists teach us, small and well-timed incentives can have large effects on behavior. The NCC is teeing up a study to assess the responses to this new regulation – [send an email to us](#) if you are interested in being involved.

Calls for Abstracts/Proposals/Presentations/Review

- **Keeneland Conference.** The deadline has been extended to January 14 for the 2011 PHSSR Keeneland Conference Call for Abstracts. The conference is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12 to Thursday, April 14, 2011 in Lexington, Kentucky. Visit the [PHSSR website](#) to download submission forms and for more information. Note changes in venue and start times for the 2011 meeting.
- **AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting (ARM).** The [Call for Abstracts](#) is open for panels, posters, and presentations for the 2011 ARM, June 12-14 in Seattle. Details are available at the link above, including the 20 themes in health services research and policy for which abstracts are sought, **submission criteria**, and instructions. **Abstracts due: January 13, 2011.**
- **NACCHO Annual 2011.** The [Call for Sharing Session Proposals](#) is open for the NACCHO Annual 2011 Conference, July 20-22 in Hartford, CT. “Moving Public Health Forward in Challenging Times” is the conference theme. Due Date for proposals is January 21, 2011 at 5:00 pm EST.
- **APHA 2011 Annual Meeting.** The APHA [Call for Abstracts](#) is scheduled to open December 17. Scheduled from October 29 through November 2 in Washington, DC, the 2011 Annual Meeting theme is "Healthy Communities Promote Healthy Minds and Bodies." Deadlines for abstracts range from February 7 to 11, depending upon the entity within APHA.
- **2011 Annual NALBOH Conference.** The [Call for Presentations](#) is open for the National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH) 19th Annual Conference which will be held on September 7-9, 2011 in Idaho. This year’s conference theme is, “Public Health: Effective Governance, Strong Leadership, Engaged Citizens”. Proposal submission deadline is March 1, 2011.
- **AHRQ.** The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) Technology Assessment Program will release a Call for Review on next week. Public review of Lifestyle Interventions for Four Conditions: Type 2 Diabetes, Metabolic Syndrome, Breast Cancer, and Prostate Cancer will begin at 9:00 AM on December 20, 2010, and concludes at 5:00 PM on January 7, 2011. If you are interested in reviewing this document please visit [AHRQ](#) for more information.

Resources in Research and Practice

CONFERENCES

- **The 2011 National Health Policy Conference (NHPC).** Leading health policy experts will discuss policy priorities for the new Congress and issues ranging from relevant training for the future health care workforce to encouraging innovation in health care delivery. February 7–8, 2011 in Washington, DC. [View the NHPC agenda](#). Register by December 21.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- **Ready or Not.** Earlier this week, [Trust for America’s Health](#) (TFAH) released their 2010 Annual Report on the readiness of the US to deal with disease, disasters, and bioterrorism. The [report](#) includes state-by-state measures and rankings on public health emergency preparedness. While many gains in preparedness have been recorded, according to TFAH the recession and recent budget cuts threaten this hard-earned progress. Read [Full Report](#).

- **Health Rankings.** America's Health Rankings 2010 report has been released. Please visit the [website](#) to review highlights and/or read the full report.
- **IOM Report: Measurement in Public Health.** The IOM's new report on measurement for public health improvement is featured on the cover of [Modern Healthcare](#). The journal gave a very nice review featuring quotes from a number of colleagues and stakeholders.

To begin showing improvement in the health of communities, states, and the nation as a whole, "the health system" must be measurable. One of three major topics being examined by the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Public Health Strategies to Improve Health, measurement is the focus of a report released this week that "recommends changes in the processes, tools, and approaches used to gather information on health outcomes and to assess accountability." [For the Public's Health: The Role of Measurement in Action and Accountability](#) may be downloaded as a four-page Report Brief that highlights the committee's seven recommendations or the full report (uncorrected proofs of the forthcoming book) that provides the richly referenced supporting evidence for each recommendation.

- **Public Health Quality.** The Office of Assistant Secretary for Health, Howard Koh, has issued [Priority Areas for Improvement of Quality in Public Health](#), a report of the recent efforts of Koh and the Public Health Quality Forum (PHQF) to develop priority areas for improving quality in public health.
- **Decennial Health Agenda.** Perhaps one of the most recognizable signposts in the oft-unnoticed work of public health, the Healthy People initiative has announced the new 10-year health promotion and disease prevention goals and objectives and launched a [new website](#). Healthy People 2020 includes 39 topic areas (several more still are evolving) and 600 objectives with more than 1300 measures.

NEW TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- **New Resources in PH Law.** The [Public Health Law Network](#) (PHLN) is a companion program to RWJF's *Public Health Law Research*. PHLN connects and serves individuals and organizations committed to applying the law to improve public health. Available resources include law technical assistance, training materials and programs on public health law.

New Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- **Risky Networking:** Public health scholar and Ohio PBRN co-leader **Scott Frank** had his research on teen texting and risky health behavior profiled in a recent [New York Times](#) article. The study finds that urban Ohio high schoolers who spend more time texting and on social networking sites face elevated risks of engaging in harmful health behaviors.
- **Communication Efforts among Local Health Departments.** In the January-February issue of the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, Dearinger and colleagues present findings from their **Public PBRN** Quick Strike Research Fund (QSRF) analysis of the effectiveness of communication between health departments, community physicians and pharmacist in Kentucky during the initial H1N1 outbreak. This study used a cross-sectional survey to gather information from the participants regarding dissemination and receipt of information during the early H1N1 outbreak. 95% of participating local health departments reported that health care professional notification was a risk mitigation strategy initiated in their local jurisdiction, and 81% of LHDs

rated their capacity to disseminate information to health care providers very good or excellent. However, only 52% of surveyed physicians and 16% of survey pharmacist reported receiving any information about H1N1 from the LHDs. Findings from this study suggest that deficiencies exist in the outreach and effectiveness of information dissemination efforts from LHDs to health care professionals during outbreaks. Read more about the results and recommendations in the article titled, "[Community Efforts Among Local Health Departments and Health Care Professionals During the 2009 H1N1 Outbreak.](#)"

- ✦ **Pandemics and Health Equity.** In the January-February issue of the *Journal of Public Health Management Practice*, Alonzo Plough and colleagues discussed lessons learned from the H1N1 response in Los Angeles County. This study estimates wide racial/ethnic disparities in H1N1 vaccination rates, with African Americans having the lowest rate followed by whites. This study resulted in a partnership strategy, developed in response to the challenges, to improve outreach and build trust and engagement with African Americans in Los Angeles County. Read more about this article titled, "[Pandemics and Health Equity: Lessons Learned from the H1N1 Response in Los Angeles County.](#)"

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

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

- ✦ **RWJF Public Health Law Research Rapid Response Studies**
Proposals are accepted online on a rolling basis. Details about the solicitation and the application process are [linked here](#).
- ✦ **NIH**
Effects of the Social Environment on Health: Measurement, Methods and Mechanisms [Link](#).
Application Due Date: January 6, 2011
- ✦ **PHSSR Funding for Post-Docs and Junior Faculty.** Applications are being accepted for the [2011 Pfizer Fellowships in Public Health](#). According to the award details, "The Fellowship in Public Health is intended to support research that fosters academic science, knowledge of public health, and collaborative partnerships between accredited schools or programs of public health and federal, state, and local departments of public health." **Key Dates:** The application deadline is February 11; awards will be announced April 15, and funding begins July 1, 2011.

Career Opportunities

- ✦ **NCHS/AcademyHealth Health Policy Fellowship.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and AcademyHealth are seeking applicants for the 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 the AcademyHealth [website](#) or [e-mail](#) AcademyHealth. **Application Deadline: January 5, 2011.**

- **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 gpmays@uams.edu.

Key Dates

Jan 11	Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET
Jan 20	Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 ET
Feb 8	Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET
Feb 17	Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 ET
Mar 8	Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET
Mar 17	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)

Happy Holidays!

The next issue of the newsletter will be published in the new year.

