

Issue #87

PBRN Week in Review | Aug 5, 2011

PH PBRNs: Please circulate relevant information to network members. To request additional information or make suggestions for future items, please contact the Public Health PBRN National Coordinating Center (NCC) at publichealthpbrn@uams.edu or (501) 551-0106. Past issues are available in the [newsletter](#) archive.

Notable PBRN Activities

- **PH PBRN Quarterly Webinar.** Over forty participants from the twelve grantees and at least five affiliate networks joined the web-based discussion led by University of North Carolina Research Professor Ed Baker during his August 3 presentation of “Finding the Middle Way in Practice-Based Research.” Baker spoke of the North Carolina PBRN’s early experiences in identifying practice-based research questions when the research agenda developed by practitioners to meet their challenges was not of interest to the researchers. Realizing that the researchers’ interests may not be relevant to the practitioners or may not be disseminated and translated meaningfully from the practitioner perspective, the **NC PH PBRN** is working toward a “middle way” to identify and nurture relationships among researchers and practitioners who are oriented toward the other’s views, recognize research opportunities and pursue the resources, and other key principles. Baker used an example of research related to funding cuts in Medicaid reimbursement for maternal and child health services in local health departments, funded by a RWJF Research Implementation Award, to illustrate how the relevance of the research question both to practitioners and policymakers and ongoing relationships among research-oriented local health department administrators and researcher Rebecca Wells has contributed to the success of the ongoing project. The webinar will be archived on the Public Health PBRN website within a few days.
- **PHSSR Spins in the Blogosphere.** Some of the more influential health policy bloggers have begun to take notice of the research happening in the PHSSR field and its potential to inform health policy. Does this mean we have arrived? Check out a few recent posts by former legislator [Paul Gionfriddo](#) and by the bloggers at [The Incidental Economist](#) commenting on public health spending and the debt ceiling debates.
- **A Mention from Mays.** A reminder to PH PBRNs with doctoral students collaborating in research projects that these students can pursue dissertation funding to support their research activities. The three biggest and best federal sources for doctoral students pursuing HSR and PHSSR research projects are [NIH NRSA](#) awards (F-31s), [AHRQ's R36](#) awards, and [NSF's Dissertation Research Improvement](#) awards. And of course, the University of Kentucky [National Coordinating Center for PHSSR](#) offers dissertation support through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The eligibility criteria and deadlines vary -- November for AHRQ, December for NIH, January for NSF, UK yet to be announced. I strongly encourage my students to pursue these types of awards -- they are absolutely the best way to start extramural funding and the road to becoming an independent investigator. Most other research funding

opportunities require an established track record of funding and relevant publications, but these only require great ideas, strong research plans and supportive mentors and research environments--like those that can be found in Public Health PBRNs. Boarding the funding train is always easiest while it is stopped at the first station!

Activities on the Horizon

- **Updating the PHSSR Agenda.** Great strides are being made toward updating the PHSSR national research agenda through an effort sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other major public health stakeholders. Researchers and practitioners have contributed through sessions at AcademyHealth and NACCHO, and you are invited to participate in the vetting process via the **IDEASCALE Survey**. Before taking the survey and sharing your input, download a copy of the [research agenda](#) and the [recent issue brief](#). The survey will be open for 90 days.

Vetting
Process
Info!

- **AcademyHealth Methods Courses for PH PBRNs.** The AcademyHealth Summer Methods Webinars for PH PBRNs are available to access at your convenience and may be viewed as often as you like through **September 30**. Invite network partners to take these courses and/or schedule sessions for group participation:

- Best Practices in Designing and Analyzing Internet Surveys for HSR
- Analysis of Social Networks Part I: The Network Perspective and Network Data (First in the series)
- Applied Propensity Score Analysis I
- Multilevel Modeling: A Public Health Methods Webinar

We want your input on upcoming AcademyHealth Fall webinar offerings!! Are there methods courses your PBRN is interested in viewing or past course offerings you would like to view again or didn't get a chance to view? If so, please choose four topics you are most interested in for the next quarter via <http://PHPBRNsMethodCourses.com> and send your selections to publichealthpbrn@uams.edu by September 15.

- **Special Issue of *Leadership in Public Health* Devoted to PH PBRN Research.** The University of Illinois-Chicago School of Public Health is dedicating an upcoming issue of their journal, *Leadership in Public Health*, to the work of the Public Health PBRNs and the interplay between practice-based scholarship and leadership in public health. Editor Lou Rowitz tells us that the issue is in production and we should have a publication date soon. Stay tuned!

Research Dissemination Opportunities

- **Call for Presentation Abstracts -- 2012 Public Health Preparedness Summit.** Abstracts are being accepted for Interactive Sessions, Workshops, Informal Sharing Sessions, and Posters. [Abstract Guidelines](#). Abstracts must be submitted by **Friday, August 19** at 11:59 PM, EDT. The [2012 Public Health Preparedness Summit](#) will be in Anaheim from February 21 through 24.
- **Call for Publication Abstracts – QI Models, Methods, Measures and Outcomes.** HRSA, the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* are accepting abstracts for a theme issue entitled Evidence for Informing the Next Generation of Quality Improvement Initiatives: Models, Methods, Measures and

Outcomes. [Guidelines for abstracts](#) and details about the theme issue are available online, and **abstracts are due September 1.**

- **Rapid Dissemination through *MMWR*.** Does your network have some early data or preliminary findings from a research project that have important implications for public health practice and policy? The CDC publication, *the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, provides an excellent vehicle for rapid and widespread dissemination of this information to the public health field. If you share your concept for an article with the NCC, we can assist in crafting the submission. Early release of findings through *MMWR* typically does not preclude publication of final results in peer-reviewed journals.

Related Practice and Research Developments

- **New Health Research Funding.** A new quasi-governmental research program created by the Affordable Care Act – The Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute – soon will begin issuing funding opportunities in the area of comparative effectiveness research, and PHSSR is included in its scope of funding priorities. The research funding authorized by ACA for this institute is expected to reach a steady state of more than \$600 million annually after a few years of ramp-up, promising a serious enhancement to the nation’s translational health research enterprise. Last week PCORI released a working definition of PCOR along with descriptions of initial pilot projects for funding, and invited public comments on both of these entities. While PCORI is heavily focused on patient care, its mission includes studying *prevention* as well as treatment options, and comparing *delivery system* innovations as well as clinical interventions. This leaves the door open for PHSSR oriented studies – perhaps even studies that offer head-to-head comparisons of the health impact of prevention vs. treatment strategies. **PCORI is soliciting public comments through September 1** and it is important for them to hear from the PHSSR community about the significance of studying the comparative effectiveness of public health interventions and delivery systems – not just “sick care” strategies. Recall the recent [JAMA commentary](#) by noted public health scholar and LA County Health Department staffer Steve Teutsch on comparative effectiveness research and public health. Submit your comments to PCORI through their [website](#).
- **The X Prize for Health Innovations to Close Evidence Gaps.** AcademyHealth is sponsoring a competition for researchers to join with practitioners and others to develop new interactive applications that translate data into useful information that can improve health and health care. The winning team receives \$5000 and a chance to present their applications at the Annual Research Meeting and the National Health Policy Conference. Submit an outline of your idea by August 15 to receive consultation and help with the next stage of the competition called the [Relevant Evidence to Advance Care and Health \(REACH\) Challenge](#). PH PBRNs could make great incubators for these kinds of innovations.



Input
Needed

Public Health PBRN Presentations

- **Keep Us in the Loop!** Do you know of recent or upcoming presentations, reports, publications, etc. that feature the work of your PBRN or its members? Remember to submit these products to RWJF following the [Electronic Submission Guidelines](#), copying the [NCC](#).

Resources in Research and Practice

CONFERENCES

- ✦ **NALBOH Conference.** 19th Annual [NALBOH](#) Conference in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, September 7-9.
- ✦ **APHA Annual Meeting.** Washington, D.C., Oct. 29-November 2. [Registration](#) for the meeting and housing are now open. Learn more about the [APHA Annual Meeting](#).
- ✦ **NASHP Conference.** The [National Academy for State Health Policy](#) (NASHP) Annual State Health Policy Conference is October 3-5 in Kansas City, Missouri.
- ✦ **2012 Public Health Preparedness Summit.** [PHP Summit](#) in Anaheim, February 21-24, 2012.

REPORTS, BRIEFS AND PUBLICATIONS

- ✦ **Public Health Newswire.** APHA has launched a new online portal resource for current news and events on the top issues affecting public health. This portal is a resource for participating in discussions, sharing your opinions, and getting involved. Visit the [Public Health Newswire](#) homepage for more information.
- ✦ **The Best of ARM.** Some of the most popular sessions from the 2011 Annual Research Meeting (ARM) are available for viewing on the [ARM website](#) until Sunday, September 19, to registered conference participants only.



However... three key public health sessions sponsored by RWJF are available even to the unregistered masses!

- [IOM Report on Measuring Health Methodological Implications](#) - **Glen Mays**, panelist. ([slides](#))
- [New Directions: The Public Health Systems and Services Research Agenda](#) - **Doug Scutchfield**, PHSSR Coordinating Center, ([slides](#)); and **Debra Perez**, RWJF, panelists
- [Emerging Findings in Public Health Systems and Services Research](#) - **Debra Perez**

New Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- ✦ **More evidence on accreditation:** PHSSR scholar **Mary Davis** and colleagues have a new article out in [AJPH](#) that describes North Carolina's experience to date with local health department accreditation. The study identifies common facilitators and barriers encountered by departments in seeking accreditation, and the benefits that accredited departments have experienced to date. In addition to Mary, several of the study's authors work within the **North Carolina Public Health PBRN**, including **Ed Baker** and **Brittan Wood**.
- ✦ **National Health Spending Projections.** In the [August issue](#) of *Health Affairs*, Keehan and colleagues provide a model for projecting health spending trends at various time intervals, by sector, payer group, etc. to 2020 to examine how health care dollars may be spent as a result of the ACA.

- ◆ **Local public health resource allocation decision making.** In the May-June issue of *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, Nancy Baum and colleagues report findings of their national survey of more than 600 local health officials. Their analysis considers a host of agency characteristics; quantifies processes used in allocation decisions; and poses some interesting questions for further research.

Transitions

- ◆ In the next few weeks, Glen Mays will begin the transition to the University of Kentucky College of Public Health to occupy the F. Douglas Scutchfield Endowed Professorship in Health Services and Systems Research. The work of the Public Health PBRN Program will continue uninterrupted as NCC operations move to a new home base in Kentucky. Of course, connections and collaborations with the many great colleagues in Arkansas also will continue unabated.

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

The NCC maintains a [list of funding opportunities](#) of interest to its networks. Grant opportunities with recurring deadlines are tracked and updated.

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED LISTINGS

- ◆ **Effectiveness and Efficiency of Public Health.** CDC has released a [FOA](#) to support an “Initiative to Educate State and Territorial Officials about Increasing the Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Public Health System.” Although Public Health PBRNs are not likely to be eligible for this grant, this will be an excellent dissemination vehicle for PBRN research – especially studies that address implementation of evidence-based practices, financing, and resource allocation decision-making. Application Submission Deadline: August 8.
- ◆ **Maternal and Child Health Research Program (MCHR).** HRSA has released a [FOA](#) to support applied research relating to maternal and child health services. This is an excellent funding vehicle for PBRN research projects that examine organization, financing, and delivery of MCH services – and public health systems research is specifically named as a priority in this FOA. Application submission deadline: September 7.
- ◆ **RWJF Public Health Law Research Rapid Response Studies.** Proposals accepted online on a rolling basis. Details available in the [CFP](#).

Key Dates

Aug 18	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET
Sept 15	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET
Oct 20	Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET
Oct 29-Nov 2	APHA Annual Meeting 2011, Washington, D.C.