

Issue #90

PBRN Week in Review | Sep 9, 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 September Research Conference.** The Public Health PBRN monthly Research Conference will be next week on Thursday, September 15 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. ET. Representatives of the Washington PH PBRN will present findings from a study in which they investigated factors, including the use of evidence, influencing decision-making by local health jurisdiction (LHJ) leaders under major financial pressure. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the study results.

The research discussion will be followed by reports from PH PBRNs and highlights of coming events. The agenda is near final, but you may submit items to the [Coordinating Center e-mailbox](#) until early Tuesday, September 13.

- **A Quick Look at Wisconsin's QSRF.** Like many states, funding prospects are uncertain for local public health departments (LHDs) in Wisconsin. On average, these agencies rely on their county governments for about half of their budgets, and large cuts in state funding for county governments are projected in the coming biennium. With support from the PH PBRN Quick Strike Research Fund (QSRF or "Q-surf"), Andrew Reschovsky, Susan Zahner and their research team at the University of Wisconsin-Madison are constructing a model that will forecast the resources available to finance public spending by each LHD annually through 2014. Knowledge of likely revenue trends several years in advance will allow LHDs to develop strategies to respond to resource changes. The Wisconsin PH PBRN is working with the research team to develop targeted dissemination strategies, including LHD-specific fact sheets and an interactive LHD map that will present relevant data in a format useful to practitioners. The distinctive structure of the PBRN brings together Reschovsky's expertise in applied economics, Zahner's focus on public health systems performance, and the knowledge of "real world" practitioners to address a critical issue in public health finance.
- **Speak Up for PHSSR Priorities.** An important opportunity is at hand for shaping the research agenda, priorities, and resources for public health services and systems research.
 - ◆ The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Common Fund supports exceptionally innovative programs that are inherently high-risk but have the potential for high-payoff by catalyzing research across all of NIH and the health research continuum. New ideas for Common Fund programs are identified annually by internal and external scientists and stakeholders. NIH is soliciting input on these ideas to help shape new programs for 2013. This is an ideal

vehicle for seeking NIH support for PBRN research related to public health services and systems research, so make sure that NIH hears your voice. As an example, one of the topics addressed by last year's Common Fund involved research on the economics of prevention. Submit your comments until **September 14** at The NIH Common Fund website: <http://commonfund.nih.gov/strategicplanning>.

Activities on the Horizon

Note
Date

- **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
 - Applied Propensity Score Analysis I
 - Multilevel Modeling: A Public Health Methods Webinar
- **PHSSR Session at APHA 2011.** On Saturday, October 29, from 12:30 to 3:30 pm ET, "Translating PHSSR to Practice" will provide an opportunity for public health researchers and practitioners attending APHA to work together addressing the challenges of translating research results to practice. Among the familiar names on the program are NAC Chair Michael Caldwell, **Ohio PH PBRN** Co-PI Matt Stefanak and **Tennessee affiliate PH PBRN** leader Paul Erwin. Because room arrangements must be finalized, please **RSVP ASAP** to [Rebecca Brown](#) at UK.

New Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

- **PH PBRN Researchers.** The September issue of *American Journal of Public Health* includes several articles written by and/or of interest to network participants.
 - ◆ Mary Davis, Brittan Wood and Ed Baker of the **North Carolina PH PBRN** are among the authors of "[Informing the National Public Health Accreditation Movement: Lessons from North Carolina's Accredited Local Health Departments.](#)" The state-mandated LHD accreditation process has been unfolding systematically in North Carolina since the initial legislation was passed in 2004, and all the 85 LHDs must undergo accreditation review by 2014. The article highlights findings of a study in which all 48 accredited LHDs in North Carolina responded to questions about the preparation, performance and benefits related to the process. The voluntary national accreditation program established by PHAB was patterned after systems in place in several states, including North Carolina.
 - ◆ Bridget Booske, a **Wisconsin PH PBRN** researcher, co-authors the article, "[US Opinions on Health Determinants and Social Policy as Health Policy,](#)" which examines public opinion related to determinants of health. Their findings are interesting and significant to public health professionals who may take for granted that "a broad array of social, political, and economic factors affect health" and serve as an important reminder that public opinion influences policy. Several PH PBRNs have active projects or strong interests in social determinants of health. (Ed. Note: RWJF's work "[A New Way to Talk about Social Determinants of Health](#)" is essential to this research topic.)

- ◆ Note the article "[Using Geographic Information Systems to Match Local Health Needs with Public Health Services and Programs](#)," by PHSSR-familiar names Jacobson, Lurie, and others. This work will sound familiar to the PH PBRNs participating with Bekemeier and team in the PHAST study – using GIS and spatial methods to map the reach and the gaps of LHDs and their services.

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](#).

- ◆ The **MA PH PBRN** will be presenting at the APHA Conference. J. Hyde, J. Waggett, B. Mills, L. Fried and G. Wilkinson will be presenting their paper, “Catalysts of Organizational Change: What Sparks and Maintains Interest in Regional Approaches to Public Health Service Delivery?”

Resources in Research and Practice

REPORTS, BRIEFS AND PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ **Performance Standards and Accreditation.** In a policy atmosphere already attuned to measuring and rewarding quality and performance, economic anxiety may have heightened public health's awareness that it lacked a common set of standards by which to gauge its own work. With support from RWJF and CDC, the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) developed and pilot-tested a national voluntary accreditation system that now is ready for its public debut. Information about the September 14 event at the National Press Club is available at the [PHAB](#) website. In addition, RWJF has collected at its website [tools and resources for health departments](#) to help with performance improvement, assist with accreditation preparation, etc.
- ◆ **BRFSS Data.** Additional BRFSS data and maps for 2010 have been released. The [SMART BRFSS data](#) is available at the metropolitan, micropolitan, and many county levels from 2002 through 2010, and [BRFSS maps](#) provide a visual element to enhance understanding of the data. As web conference participants saw and heard in the Florida presentation (page 1), LHDs, policymakers, and other stakeholders may react to data by denying its accuracy, minimizing its prevalence, or ignoring its existence. Multiple data sources in various formats are important to the well-stocked toolkit.
- ◆ **PHAB Report.** *Evaluation of the PHAB Beta Test: Brief Report*, which includes recommendations and revisions to the accreditation process, standards and measures, is available on the [organization's website](#).

WEBINARS

- ◆ **Translating Research to Policy.** The RWJF New Connections program will host [Translating Research to Policy](#) on Wednesday, September 14 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Eastern. According to the program announcement, "participants will learn how to: increase the policy relevance of their work; find opportunities to interact with policy makers and influencers; present their data so it connects with policy people; and gain visibility for their work beyond research journals."

CONFERENCES

- **APHA Annual Meeting.** Washington, D.C., Oct. 29-November 2. [Registration and hotel info.](#) [APHA general meeting info.](#)
- **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
- **2012 PHSSR Keeneland Conference.** Lexington, April 17-19. [PHSSR Keeneland Conference general information.](#)

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

- **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. 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!
- **RWJF Public Health Law Research Rapid Response Studies.** Proposals accepted online on a rolling basis. Details available in the [CFP](#).

Key Dates

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.
April 17-19	PHSSR Keeneland Conference 2012, Lexington, KY

