

Issue #14

PBRN Week in Review | April 24, 2009

PBRN Grantees: Please circulate relevant information to your network members. For additional information and suggestions for future items, please contact Elaine Wootten, woottenelaine@uams.edu or 501-526-6628.

Notable Activities This Week

- **Help us get the word out.** The *Public Health PBRN Round II Call for Proposals* is generating a great deal of interest! Coordinating Center crew is busy on the phones and a web conference for applicants is scheduled for Thursday, April 30, at 1:30 pm ET. In this round up to 10 grantees will be selected to join the initial cohort of 5 grantees in developing public health PBRNs. For details and important dates, see the PBRN website or the complete [Call for Proposals](#).
- **Washington PBRN** has its first full network meeting coming up on April 30 and will work on its research agenda. Good luck, and we will all look forward to hearing about it on the May 12th call.
- **Cross-cutting PBRN Research and Evaluation Activities.** Coordinating center staff are also continuing to work on possible research activities that will yield comparative information on how public health research networks develop and evolve over time, along with information about important, cross-cutting issues in public health practice. We mentioned a few articles on interorganizational network analysis in last week's newsletter (in the journals [HSR](#) and [ARPH](#)). If you need access to these or other articles mentioned in the newsletters, let us know and we'll get them for you.
- **PBRN Technical Assistance.** Coordinating center staff have developed an initial searchable database of public health research and practice consultants who are available to consult with PBRN grantees on a variety of topics relevant to developing and conducting research with PBRNs. This database along with a web-based form to request more information and indicate other TA needs will be launched on the PBRN website very shortly. While we work out the technical aspects, feel free to contact coordinating center staff directly with TA needs or requests for specific consultants.

Key Upcoming Dates

May 12: PBRN Monthly Conference Call -11:30-1:00 ET; 10:30 CT; 9:30 MT; 8:30 PT.

May 20: PBRN Quarterly Webinar - 2:00-3:30 ET; 1:00 CT; 12:00 MT; 11:00 PT.

A guest speaker (to be announced shortly) will help us think through some of the cross-cutting research issues identified at the April Keeneland meeting.

Activities on the Horizon

- **PBRNs at NACCHO.** Congratulations! The PBRN learning session proposal entitled *Measuring the Value of Public Health through Practice-Based Research Networks* was selected for presentation at the NACCHO Annual Conference, July 29-31 in Orlando, Florida. The session thus far includes Harold Cox (MA), Lee Thielen (CO), David Fleming (WA), and Glen Mays (NCC). We invite other PBRN presenters to be a part of this learning session – let us know if you are interested and able to join. We will work together to flesh out the structure and content of this session during the coming months.
- **June 24-26: AHRQ Primary Care PBRN Research Conference.** This conference is heavily focused on primary care PBRNs and their research priorities, but the implications for public health PBRNs are numerous. Sharla Smith attended this conference last year and is glad to share her experiences with you. For more information on the conference:
<http://pbrn.ahrq.gov/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=854&PageID=14485&mode=2>
- **June 28-30: AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting in Chicago.**
www.academyhealth.org
- **June 30-July 1: AcademyHealth Public Health Systems Research Interest Group Meeting, Chicago.** There is currently a call for student scholarships to attend this meeting, and a call for nominations for the Article of the Year in public health systems research. <http://www.academyhealth.org/interestgroups/phsr/2009.htm>

Elsewhere in PHSSR

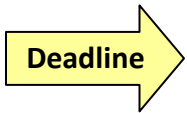
- Scutch's Blog is insightful as usual! What? Don't know about Scutch's Blog? Then you aren't receiving the *Inside Track* e-newsletter published by our fellow researchers at the Center for Public Health Systems & Service Research! Register under Join the PHSSR Community to begin a subscription to the newsletter, as well as to access other helpful resources, at <http://www.publichealthsystems.org/phssr>. A new edition of *Inside Track* was issued this week, and the work of PBRNs is mentioned.
<http://www.publichealthsystems.org/cphssr/1418/PHSSRInsideTrack/Volume2Issue2>.

Related Research and Practice Activities

- **States foresee trouble evaluating impact of stimulus spending.** A new GAO report suggests that many states are concerned about their ability to ensure accountability and

impact of the new funding made available through federal stimulus activities -- much of which is intended for health programs. According to the report, about two-thirds of this year's funding will go toward health programs because these needs typically are more pressing than other issues. The report is available [online](#). Practice-based research studies could play a role in documenting the effects of stimulus spending within public health systems, as the Washington PBRN is now contemplating.

- **A public health salary cap?** The Florida legislature is contemplating a cap on salaries that county health departments pay to health professionals who work under contract to the departments. The state association of counties is scrambling to blunt this proposal, according to a news story by [Health News Florida](#). The state contributes about 30% of county health department funding. One provision of the proposed budget would eliminate partnerships between eight counties and federally qualified health centers to hire professional staff. Practice-based research is needed to inform these types of policy decisions—and to evaluate their impact on service delivery and outcomes.
- **Opportunity for Input from the Public Health Community until April 30!** The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) is holding a public review and comment period for the draft standards, measures and documentation guidance related to the voluntary national accreditation standards for state, local, and territorial public health departments. Revisions of the standards depend upon feedback from the public health community, and PHAB makes a variety of input mechanisms available on its website: <http://phaboard.org>.
- **Input for Comparative Effectiveness Research Priorities.** The Federal Coordinating Council for Comparative Effectiveness Research recently held the first of three listening sessions in which interest groups and the public can express how they believe the \$1.1 billion from the stimulus package for comparative effectiveness research should be spent. The next hearings are tentatively scheduled for May 6 and May 13. At least one meeting is expected to be held outside of Washington, D.C. <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/programs/os/cerbios.html>



Recent PHSSR Literature

- In addition to the review on diffusion research by Larry Green (profiled in last week's newsletter), the brand new 2009 volume of the [Annual Review of Public Health](#) contains an extremely useful review on strategies that facilitate and inhibit evidence-based practice in public health—by the well-known practice-based researchers Ross Brownson, Jonathan Fielding, and colleagues. This paper provides an excellent foundation for PBRNs interested in studying the adoption of evidence-based practices within and across their networks.
- The upcoming May 2009 issue of [American Journal of Public Health](#) contains several commentaries relevant to public health systems and services research,

including a discussion on “Measuring the Value of Public Health Systems” triggered by an earlier article by PHSSR scholars Peter Neumann and Peter Jacobson (based on their recent RWJF-funded study), and a discussion on public health workforce enumeration issues by consummate workforce researcher Chris Gebbie.

Funding Opportunities for Public Health Systems Research

- **Systems Research for Population Health:** This NIH program announcement looks particularly well suited for practice-based research in public health. *Using Systems Science Methodologies to Protect and Improve Population Health (R21)*. The FOA solicits Exploratory/Developmental (R21) applications from institutions/organizations that propose to apply one or more specific system science methodologies to “policy resistant” public health problems and contribute knowledge that will enhance effective decision making around the development of and prioritization of policies, interventions, and programs to improve population health in the U.S. and abroad, especially where resources are limited and only a limited number of programs/policies/interventions can be implemented. Standard NIH submission deadlines apply. <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-224.html>



- **The next deadline for new applicants appears to be June 16.** Deadlines are a moving target in the world of ARRA funding, however, so the wise potential applicant would check closely!
- **Call for Proposals for Research on Public Health Law!** In the first round of funding, short-term, less-complex studies such as policy analysis or public health implications of specific laws or regulations will be funded up to \$150,000 each for up to 18 months. Complex and comprehensive legal and public health studies including long-term analyses and in-depth evaluations will be funded up to \$400,000 each for up to 30 months. The CFP and more detail about the program are available at http://www.rwjf.org/files/applications/cfp/cfp_PHLR2009.pdf.
Deadlines: Apply online by May 19.
 - If members of your PBRN are interested in public health law, they may want to subscribe to the monthly electronic newsletter, *CDC Public Health Law News*. Here is a link to this month’s newsletter, and the subscription box is right on the front: <http://www2a.cdc.gov/phlp/cphln.asp>.
- **NIH GO Grants.** A recently-announced component of the NIH Recovery funds is the Research and Research Infrastructure “Grand Opportunities” or “GO” grants program. GO grant key dates differ from other ARRA application dates, so be sure to check specific opportunities of interest. GO grant opportunities of participating NIH Institutes and Centers are posted at http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/ic_go.html
- All the **NIH Challenge Grants** announced so far under the federal stimulus package can be found at <http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/>. Click on the link and subscribe to

email updates if you so desire. We are finding that the individual NIH research institute web pages have more and clearer descriptions about their research priorities than does this web page. You may also want to keep an eye on the CDC, HRSA, and AHRQ web pages – and of course www.grants.gov

- The **William T. Grant Foundation** has issued a RFP for research “on the factors that affect policy makers’ and practitioners’ acquisition, interpretation, and use of research evidence. Grant awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$600,000 for direct and indirect costs for two to three years of work anticipated. Visit www.wtgrantfoundation.org/ for complete program guidelines. Letters of inquiry are due by May 12, 2009.

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