

Issue #30

PBRN Week in Review | Dec 4, 2009

PBRN Grantees: Please circulate relevant information to your network members. For additional information and to 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 Activities

- **Monthly Conference Call.** Round I networks will have the final conference call of the first grant year on Tuesday, December 8, from 11:30-1:00 ET. A detailed look at the network analysis instrument, integrating and mentoring new networks, strategies for learning together with similarly-arranged alliances, Keeneland planning, funding and research opportunities, annual reporting...it's all in this 90-minute agenda!
- **Orientation Conference Call.** Round II PBRNs will “meet” for the first time on Thursday, December 10, from 1:00 – 2:00 pm ET. Be prepared to give an overview of your network in five minutes or less! This call is packed with information, and you will receive a binder by mail with even more materials and resources before Thursday.

Research and Practice Activities

Calls for Papers

- **AcademyHealth** is accepting abstracts for papers, posters, and panels through **January 14, 2010** for the Annual Research Meeting (ARM). New this year in the panel presentation category, proposals for round-table discussions in health services research or health policy will be considered. The ARM is organized around *twenty themes* in health services research and policy; the description of the Public Health theme is pasted below just to innervate your creative synapses. Calls in each category are quite specific, so [note the details at this link](#). Our **Massachusetts PBRN** friends will make us feel at home in Boston, where the meeting will be held from June 27-29, 2010.

Public Health Theme of ARM

- Using evidence-based practices to deliver public health services
- Cost, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and ROI of public health services and systems, especially prevention strategies focusing on obesity, smoking cessation, and other major public health concerns
- Resource allocation decisions for public health practitioners, including input from the community and elected officials
- Understanding the effects of organizational change and innovation on population health

- Measuring and improving quality in public health practice (including accreditation/performance standards)
- **AcademyHealth Interest Groups (IG)** issue [separate calls for papers](#) for their meetings held in conjunction with the ARM. **All IG abstracts are due February 15, 2010**, including the Public Health Systems Research (PHSR) IG [detailed here](#). The PHSR meeting is June 29-30 immediately following the ARM. **Glen Mays, PBRN Coordinating Center**, is active in AcademyHealth and the PHSR IG and can provide additional information.
 - Two distinct Calls for Papers | Two submission/review processes | Two deadlines
- **APHA** begins accepting abstract submissions for the 2010 Annual Meeting on December 18, 2009. The 2010 conference theme is Social Justice: Public Health Imperative, and our **Colorado PBRN** colleagues will help APHA welcome us to Denver. **Abstracts are due February 1-5, 2010**. [Link to details](#).
- **BRFSS**. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Conference Committee is accepting abstracts for posters and presentations related to BRFSS topics in survey research, epidemiology, evaluation, policy and public health. The committee is especially interested in research pertaining to the conference theme of “Leading the Way in Public Health Surveillance.” [Abstracts are due Thursday, December 31, 2009](#), and the conference will be held in San Diego from March 20-24, 2010.

Webinars

- **Webcast Archive: Planning for a Pandemic – Can History Inform Action?** Earlier this week, the *Public Health Reports*’ Meet the Author webcast series brought together public health historians and practitioners to apply lessons from the 1918 flu pandemic to today’s practice. [Link to the archived webcast here](#).

Other Presentations

- **CDC Public Health Grand Rounds**. The third session of “The Public Health Impact of Tobacco Product and Advertising Regulation” was presented recently and is [available online](#) in a variety of formats. The presentation examined recent legislative victories and the challenges still to come.
- **Economic Evaluation Methods**. CDC also has a [webcast available](#) illustrating the value of economic evaluation, “a process to identify, measure, value, and compare the costs and outcomes of programs and policies.” The five-part webcast shows how to choose and incorporate the most appropriate method for your program. As the emphasis on evaluation and maximization of resources intensifies, these tools stand to become routine arrows in the research quiver.

New Literature

- The [December 2009 issue](#) of *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* focuses on physical activity and is now available online.
- **Physical Activity among Older Adults**. The December 2009 issue of the *Journal of Urban Health* reports evaluation findings of a Southeast Seattle program using “a community-organizing approach to disseminating evidence-based interventions in a sustainable way” to promote physical activity among older adults. Among the authors is **PBRN NAC Chair Jeff Harris**. Read the promising results in this link to the [full article](#).

- Those of us who spend much of our time peering through the PHSSR window on the world sometimes forget that our **RWJF senior program officer Debra Pérez** is also a researcher and central figure in other Foundation programs, including several related to health disparities. In a recent supplement to the [Journal of General Internal Medicine](#) focusing on quality of health care among Latino groups, Pérez presents three papers, including results related to patient-provider communication and improved health outcomes, perceptions about health insurance, and perceptions of discrimination.

Publications

- **Impact of Health Department Funding Cuts.** When local, state, and federal governments reduce funding to local health departments' budgets, leading to personnel and service cutbacks, will the public ultimately pay the price in the form of poorer health? The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) recently released a report on the consequences of LHD budget cuts. [Linked here](#) are various formats of the report and brief interviews with the author and with **NACCHO Executive Director Bobby Pestronk, a PBRN NAC member.**
- **Living in a Healthy Place.** A RWJF Investigator awardee, Jason Corburn, has written a book entitled, *Toward the Healthy City: People, Places and the Politics of Urban Planning*. Corburn looks at urban planning and public health from a historical context and then proposes a collaborative approach to urban health issues, using contemporary success stories as examples. His recommendations parallel a number of those of the Foundation's Commission to Build a Healthier America and the RWJF/Pew Charitable Trust collaborative [Health Impact Project](#). More about the book and related topics [here](#).
- **New Research on Physical Activity.** Two new reports [linked here](#) add weight to the growing body of evidence for increasing physical activity to improve health. Both reports are from *Active Living Research*, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. *Making the Link from Transportation to Physical Activity and Obesity* summarizes the latest findings related to investment in public transportation and safe places to walk and bike and the impact on health and amount of physical activity. *The Regional Response to Federal Funding for Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects* compares utilization strategies for federal funds allocated to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The remarkable regional variation, what accounts for the differences, and key recommendations to achieve the greatest health impact are all in the report.
- **Health Rankings.** The latest [America's Health Rankings](#) report is available online. The resources are highly customizable to produce charts, graphs, tables, and even full reports and presentations for one state, two or more compared to each other or to the nation, etc. Since this is the twentieth edition of the rankings, the website has a wide variety of reports, tools, and organizational commentaries/retrospectives on the findings.

Opportunities for Involvement

- **Comment on Competencies.** The Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice has opened the public comment site for the Tier 1 and Tier 3 draft Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals. At [this link](#) you will find a brief introduction to project and the need for updating the competencies, the comment form and related instructions, and ideas for using the competencies for workforce development.

- **Voices from the Past.** The year 2010 will be the 100th year of publication for the [American Journal of Public Health](#). To mark this significant milestone, the *Journal* will feature Voices from the Past in each issue, brief extracts of works of public health pioneers originally published before 1985. Contributions are invited, and to make it easier, *Journal* articles from 1911 to the current issue are available and searchable online at the link above! For more details about how to be a part of Voices from the Past, [click here](#).

Funding Opportunities

Update!

- **Obesity Policy Research: Evaluation and Measures.** *Three* NIH mechanisms now are available to fund obesity policy research. The initiatives are related, and each announcement states, “The overarching goal of this FOA is to inform public policy and research relevant to (1) diet and physical activity behavior, and (2) weight and health outcomes of Americans.”

The R21 exploratory/developmental grant was mentioned here in an earlier edition. Recent announcements for R01 research grants and R03 small research projects are linked below. All three announcements seek applications to: “(1) conduct evaluation research on obesity-related natural experiments (defined as community and other population-level public policy interventions that may affect diet and physical activity behavior), and/or (2) develop and/or validate relevant community-level measures (instruments and methodologies to assess the food and physical activity environments at the community level).”

- R01 [Announcement](#): Research grants ([About R01](#))
- R03 [Announcement](#): Small research grants ([About R03](#))
- R21 [Announcement](#): Exploratory/developmental grants ([About R21](#))

- **Health IT Funding.** HHS Secretary Sebelius and Health IT Coordinator David Blumenthal have announced \$235 million in ARRA funding available for 15 communities that are already leading in the adoption of electronic health records (EHR). Known as the Beacon Hill Community Program, funded communities will establish cooperative agreements “to build and strengthen their health IT infrastructure and health information exchange capabilities to achieve measurable improvements in health care quality, safety, efficiency, and population health.” Funding is also available to the communities for technical assistance and program evaluation. Qualified applicants are expected to: (1) build upon existing health IT infrastructure; (2) have adopted EHR at a significantly higher rate than national estimates; and (3) coordinate with new national programs for developing and disseminating best practices. [Click here](#) for Beacon Hill Program information and the application link. **Deadlines: Letter of Intent required - January 8; Application - February 11, 2010.**

- To learn more about how the US fares in the use of health information technology in primary care, check out this recent *Health Affairs* web exclusive: [A Survey of Primary Care Physicians in 11 Countries, 2009: Perspectives on Care, Costs, and Experiences](#) by Schoen and colleagues.

Deadline
Soon!

- **Community Infrastructure for Health Research.** *Building Sustainable Community-Linked Infrastructure to Enable Health Science Research* is a NIH funding opportunity for research infrastructure that is highly relevant for Public Health PBRNs. These ARRA grants are designed to “support the development, expansion, or reconfiguration of infrastructures needed to facilitate

collaboration between academic health centers and community-based organizations...in order to accelerate the pace, productivity, *dissemination, and implementation* of health research.” Communities are defined to include “neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, *public health departments*, health care providers, community coalitions, local governments, campus-community partnerships...” Public Health PBRNs may be well positioned to compete for this funding in collaboration with their academic health center partners. **Deadline: December 11, 2009 (full application)**. More information is [here](#).

- **Tobacco Control RFA.** The National Cancer Institute recently released its State and Community Tobacco Control Policy and Media Research RFA soliciting cooperative agreement applications for research projects examining the effectiveness of state and community tobacco control policy and media interventions. According to the announcement, “focal areas include secondhand smoke policies, tax and pricing policies, tobacco industry marketing and promotion, mass media countermeasures, and community and social norms.” Additional information about the RFA [linked here](#). **Deadlines:** Letter of intent due December 22; Application due January 22, 2009
- **RWJF and the Pew Charitable Trusts** have issued a Call for Proposals on their collaborative [Health Impact Project](#). Funding is available to support up to 15 health impact assessment (HIA) demonstrations with awards expected to range between \$25,000 and \$150,000, plus training, mentoring and technical assistance. Grantees will promote the use of HIAs, decision-making tools that assist policy-makers with recognizing health consequences of new policy and ways to incorporate health into the policy of other sectors. Letter of interest required; full proposal invited based upon letter of interest. No deadline; rolling submissions until all funding is obligated. The applicant web conference is archived at the project link above.
- **Implementation of Quality Improvement Processes.** AHRQ has announced the Agency’s interest in supporting grants to rigorously study the implementation of quality improvement strategies and provide generalizable scientific findings about the implementation of the quality improvement strategy, related organizational changes, and their impact. There is increasing evidence that success in achieving quality improvement goals is at least partially attributable to implementation processes and contexts and not just to the nature of the quality improvement strategy. More information is [here](#). The next application deadline is **January 25, 2010**.
- **Pfizer Fellowships in Public Health Research.** Pfizer offers career development awards for junior faculty pursuing careers in public health systems and services research. Research collaboration with state and/or local public health agencies is required. The [2010 announcement](#) is available online, and the application deadline is **January 31, 2010**. Glen Mays is on the academic advisory board for this fellowship and can answer questions.
- **Dissemination and Implementation of Evidence-based HIV Prevention.** NIH invites research to enhance the science of technology transfer, dissemination, implementation, and operational research for evidence-based HIV-prevention interventions in the United States. More information is [here](#). The next application due date is **February 5, 2010**.

PHSSR and PBRN Colleagues in the News

- ✦ On Saturday, November 27, *The New York Times* published an article on the dramatic decline in infant mortality rates in Dane County Wisconsin and subsequent research to determine the causes. Among those quoted in the story were Karen Timberlake, Secretary of the Department of Health Services (DHS), and Thomas Schlenker, Director of Public Health - Madison and Dane County. The DHS Division of Public Health is the lead organization of the **Round II Wisconsin PBRN** and Schlenker is an active network member. Here is the [online article](#).

Upcoming Key Dates

December 8:	Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call
December 10:	Round II PBRN Orientation Conference Call
January 12:	PBRN Monthly Conference Call
January 14:	AcademyHealth Abstracts Deadline
January 30:	Round I PBRNs' Annual Progress Reports to RWJF
February 1-5:	APHA Abstracts Deadline
February 9:	PBRN Monthly Conference Call
February 15:	AcademyHealth Interest Groups' Abstracts Deadline

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