

Issue #40

PBRN Week in Review | Mar 5 & 12, 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

- **Evaluation Activity.** The Public Health PBRN social network analysis survey was sent to 88 participants in Round I networks. As of Friday, March 12, the survey had been completed by 63 respondents. A software repair has been made that will allow those with partially completed surveys to access and finish their work. Only five participants did not attempt the survey. Kudos to the **Colorado PBRN** for a 100% response rate!

Mar 9-15	Data cleaning by NCC staff
Mar 15-30	Preliminary data analysis by NCC staff
April 1	Customized reports and cleaned raw data sent to Round I grantees

Data collected in this phase of the social network analysis process will serve as baseline measures as we track changes in the structure and function over time of the program's PBRNs.

- **Round I March Conference Call** focused on next steps for the social network analysis survey as described above, the Keeneland Conference scientific session panel, and a follow up to the technical assistance survey.
 - ◆ **The Keeneland Conference scientific session on public health PBRNs** presented in panel format by Round I networks is scheduled for Wednesday, April 21, 10:15-11:45 am. Each panelist should prepare up to a ten minute presentation (10-12 slides) and allow at least five minutes for audience questions and discussion.
 - ◆ **A technical assistance survey** was fielded about this time last year asking Round I networks to identify content areas where additional expertise was needed and where capability to assist other networks existed. A follow-up survey will be sent in late March, after a respite from the network analysis questionnaires but with time to compile the results for review at the Annual Grantee Meeting, to examine the status and progress of TA needs and capacity.
- **Round II March Conference Call** is scheduled for Thursday, March 18, at 1:00 pm ET. Major topic areas for the call include the Keeneland roundtable session, the technical assistance baseline survey, and updates from the networks.

- ◆ **The Keeneland Conference *second* scientific session on public health PBRNs** is a roundtable discussion format designed to engage the audience, an important element for the time slot immediately following lunch! Moderator Glen Mays will pose questions to the Round II network representatives for response based on early experiences in developing research networks. Draft questions will be available for review and discussion during the March conference call. The session is slated for 1:45 to 2:45 pm on Wednesday, April 21.

Activities on the Horizon

**Note
Date**

- **Methods Courses.** The Public Health PBRN Program is working with AcademyHealth to pilot test a new group registration process for their HSR methods webinars. The next course will focus on advanced uses of [multilevel modeling](#) on March 25 from 1:00 to 2:30 pm ET. PBRN participants may read more about the HSR methods training [here](#). To enroll, send an email to [Elaine Wootten](#) in the PBRN Coordinating Center **by Friday, March 19**. *PBRN participants should not register online at AcademyHealth!* Remember, PBRN participants are pilot testing a new process...if something can go wrong, the pilot test phase is the ideal time. The webinars are archived for 90 days, so participants can catch the course later if a problem occurs during the live webcast.
- **Texas Public Health Association Annual Conference**– April 21, 2010. Glen Mays will give a teleconference presentation on public health systems and services research, including practice-based research, as part of a panel presentation on the future of public health.
- **Ohio Public Health Combined Conference** in Columbus – May 12, 2010. Glen Mays will lead a session on the development and future of public health PBRNs at this annual meeting of the state’s public health professionals’ organizations. The **Ohio PBRN** will take advantage of this opportunity to showcase practice-based research and continue developing statewide participation in the network.

Related Research and Practice Activities

WEBINARS/WEB CASTS

- **H1N1: Lessons Learned.** On Wednesday, March 24 at 7 pm ET, the American College of Preventive Medicine will host the one-hour web cast “H1N1: Lessons Learned for Clinical and Public Health Practitioners.” Registration information is available at [this link](#).
- **How Healthy Could a State Be?** In its continuing “Meet the Author!” web cast series, *Public Health Reports* will host David Kindig presenting “How Healthy Could a State Be?” and Daniel Fox with follow-up discussion on Monday, March 22 at 1 p.m. (ET). Kindig’s same-titled article and Fox’s commentary appear in the March/April 2010 journal issue. Read their work and get more information about the web cast at this [link](#).

NEW REPORTS

- **Research at the Local Level.** Check out this [recent article](#) in the *Los Angeles Times* on local variation and disparities in H1N1 vaccination distribution for an excellent example of an applied PHSSR study conducted by a local health department.
- **Public Health Spending and Jobs Down.** A report released earlier this month from Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) indicated that federal

spending for public health has remained flat for nearly five years, and states' cuts of about \$392 million in the past year are expected to continue this year. *Shortchanging America's Health*, including state-by-state health data and funding information, is available on both the [TFAH](#) and [RWJF](#) Web sites.

In addition to funding decreases, the public health workforce also shrank by about 15% or 23,000 jobs over the past two years, according to [new data](#) reported by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The NACCHO and RWJF/TFAH reports agree that dissipating public health resources of all types will impact the population in ways that range from the loss of day-to-day preventive services to response capability for large-scale emergencies and disease outbreaks.

- **How Healthy is Your County?** Perhaps boosted by national discussions of health and health care, the recent release of the [County Health Rankings](#) reports have received much attention. Though state rankings of health are nothing new, RWJF and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute have provided the first ranking of indicators of overall health of every county in every state in the US. The data are intended “to provide public health and community leaders, policy-makers, consumers and others to see how healthy their county is, compare it with others within their state and find ways to improve the health of their community.” PBRNS are well situated to study whether and how the information is utilized and any impact that may be realized. View Project Director Patrick Remington and RWJF President Risa Lavisso-Mourey discussing the County Health Rankings at this [link](#). The UW Population Health Institute is a partner in the **Wisconsin PBRN**.
- **Population-Based Policy and Systems-Level Approach to Hypertension.** At the behest of CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, an Institute of Medicine committee has identified prioritized recommendations for the Division's work to speed progress in reducing and controlling hypertension. The report's title, *A Population-Based Policy and Systems Change Approach to Prevent and Control Hypertension* hints at its overall theme – a call to focus on interventions aimed at population-based policy and system improvements. Read the brief and full report versions and more about the study [here](#). The IOM Committee was chaired by David Fleming, director and health officer of Public Health-Seattle King County and co-PI of the **Washington PBRN**.

NEW LITERATURE

- **Forthcoming:** The 2010 *Annual Review of Public Health* is expected to be available online March 17. Among the articles will be [“Recent Advances in Public Health Systems Research in the United States”](#) by Tim Van Wave (CDC), Douglas Scutchfield (UK), and Peggy Honoré (HHS).
- **Better to Stay Home?** Although avoidance of public places was one of the common responses during the H1N1 outbreak of summer 2009, forecasting models used by public health officials did not account for avoidance behavior. In this [working paper](#) published at the National Bureau of Economic Research, authors construct a model that considers avoidance behavior and forecasts the 2010 epidemic.
- **How Much Hard Work is Good for Us?** Also published at NBER, another paper examines whether the economic downturn and the associated changes in wages and hours may impact health

behaviors. Read the interesting findings related to cigarette smoking, physical activity, and doctor visits as hours and wages vary in [The Business Cycle and Health Behaviors](#).

Funding Opportunities

- **Communities Putting Prevention to Work.** The HHS Office of Public Health and Science recently announced another component of the ARRA Prevention and Wellness Fund's Communities Putting Prevention to Work strategy. In addition to previous FOAs for community, state and media initiatives, the latest opportunity is aimed at national organizations for working in partnership with the funded communities to assist in achieving the overall project goals. [Follow this link](#) to more information. **A Letter of Intent is required** and due by March 30.
- **AHRQ Comparative Effectiveness Research (CER).** AHRQ recently announced the availability of ARRA funds supporting CER. R01 applications are invited "from investigators seeking to conduct rigorous comparative evaluations of alternative system designs, change strategies, and interventions that have already been implemented in healthcare and are likely to improve quality and other outcomes." PBRNs interested in looking at the delivery of prevention-oriented services may also want to consider ways to integrate health IT, use of EMR data or other novel clinical data sources, use of quality improvement techniques, team-based care models, or other AHRQ interest area. The [funding announcement](#) includes important definitions and other details. Deadline: **Applications due March 31, 2010.**
- **RWJF Public Health Law Research (PHLR).** PHLR has issued its second [call for proposals](#) "for studies that will examine the public health impacts of a broad range of laws and legal practices, including innovative legal approaches and laws and regulations developed at the city or county level." While the primary focus should be on the influence of law or policy on public health, a multidisciplinary approach is welcome. Several resources for strengthening proposals are available at the [program website](#). Brief proposals are due April 14, 2010.
- **Best Policy and Practice Funding.** CDC has announced the availability of funding "to test the effectiveness of major population-wide, targeted health policies that strengthen health promotion and preventive care, thereby reducing the risk of diabetes, diabetes complications, and health inequalities across broad segments of the population." [Natural Experiments and Effectiveness Studies to Identify the Best Policy and System Level Practices to Prevent Diabetes and Its Complications](#) (U58) will fund up to seven centers. In addition to their own studies, the sites will collaborate as a multi-center network. PBRNs with research interests in this topic area may want to investigate opportunities to participate if in an application is being submitted from your state. Application closing date: April 15, 2010.
- **Obesity Prevention Research.** RWJF's *Active Living Research* (ALR) program has released calls for proposals aimed at preventing obesity in children and youth through policy and environmental strategies that increase physical activity and decrease sedentary behaviors. This round emphasizes strategies to reach children at greatest risk for obesity and those living in lower-income and under-resourced communities. *New Connections* grants, administered by the ALR program, are a part of the CFP. Details linked [here](#). Proposal deadline: April 14, 2010.

**New
Closing
Date!**

Upcoming Key Dates

- March 18:** Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 1:00-2:30 ET
- April 13:** Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 11:30-12:30 ET
- April 15:** Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call | 1:00-2:30 ET

Annual Grantee and NAC Meetings/Keeneland Conference Schedules

Sunday, April 18		Grantees travel to Lexington
Monday, April 19	8:15 am- 5:00 pm 6:00 pm	Grantee Meeting Dinner
Tuesday, April 20	8:30 am-12:00 pm 12:00 pm- 4:00 pm 7:00 pm	NAC/Grantee Meetings (independently) NAC/Grantee Lunch & Meeting (combined) Keeneland Conference Opening Dinner
Wednesday, April 21	10:15am-11:45 am 1:45am- 2:45 pm	PBRN Round I Session (panel format) PBRN Round II (roundtable format)

Next Issue: Week of March 19, 2010