

Issue #51

PBRN Week in Review | August 6, 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

- **Public Health Research and Health Reform.** The Public Health Leadership Society (PHLS) webinar series on leadership topics recently hosted "The Science Behind Health Reform: A Look at How Public Health Research Contributes to Health Transformation" featuring PBRN colleagues Debra Pérez (RWJF), Glen Mays (NCC), and Nancy Winterbauer (FL PH PBRN). Pérez discussed RWJF's investment in PHSSR and the potential for PBRNs to contribute research to several initiatives in the health reform legislation. Mays gave an overview of the distinguishing characteristics of practice-based research in public health and the importance of an evidence base to meet the increasing demands for performance measurement, efficiency, and new knowledge in an atmosphere of economic turbulence. He described the opportunities available for practice-based research through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA) and gave examples of studies examining variation in agency performance, spending, practice, and outcomes. Mays also emphasized the importance of practitioner-researcher collaboration in and explained the role of public health PBRNs as a structure for such partnership efforts. Winterbauer described the participants and research goals of the Florida Public Health PBRN, as well as the research environment of the academic health department that serves as the network lead agency. She gave examples of research including a comparative study of two models of case coordination and a QI study related to improving immunization rates. Winterbauer also discussed the research opportunities afforded by the PPACA, not only in terms of funding but also for studying systems change. When the webinar is archived, *PBRN Week in Review* will share the link.
- **Public Health PBRN Webinar August 17.** The National Coordinating Center (NCC) is pleased to host Dr. Robert Hood of the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) to address the topic of practice-based research and the IRB process at the upcoming quarterly webinar. In his role as Assistant Director of the Office of Public Health Research, Dr. Hood led FDOH to become the first public health department to receive full accreditation of its human research protection program in March 2008. Dr. Hood is a member of the Ethics Subcommittee of CDC's Advisory Committee to the Director and a site visitor for the Association for Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs. His research interests include public health ethics, research ethics, and environmental ethics.

Date and Time: Tuesday, August 17, 2:00-3:30 pm ET

Networks are welcome to invite their members to join the webinar. For information on how to register for the webinar, please send an [email](#) to the Coordinating Center.

Note: Dr. Hood has invited the audience to submit *in advance* any questions, concerns, issues, dilemmas, etc. related to practice-based research and the IRB. This will help him ensure that his presentation meets participants' needs. Please send those to the [NCC](#) to aggregate into one document by Wednesday, August 11.

Activities on the Horizon

- **RWJF Research Implementation Awards (RIA) for Round II PH PBRNs.** The RIA Request for Proposals is in the draft stage. Tentative timeline is for the RFP to be released to Round II PBRNs on Tuesday, September 7, and proposals due on Friday, October 15 for a February 1, 2011 start date. Applications will be submitted through the Foundation's new Application & Review (A&R) online system.
- **RWJF PHSSR Call for Proposals.** The CFP for investigator-initiated research in PHSSR is in the drafting phase, as well. Look for the CFP around November 30 with brief proposals due in early January. Preference is given to researchers new to the field.
- **Quick Strike Research Funds (QSRF).** *Time is running short to submit QSRF ideas!* The initial submission should be a one-page description of the proposed research. Send to publichealthpbrn@uams.edu. If the summary shows promise, the network will be invited to submit a 3-5 page proposal describing: (1) how the project will meet a current or emerging need for which quick (time-sensitive) research results will be useful for a larger practice or policy action; (2) the research questions of interest; (3) data and methods to be used; and (4) a brief budget with narrative.
- **Multi-State Learning Collaborative (MLC).** Public Health PBRN representatives **Nancy Winterbauer (FL)**, **Karen Hartfield (WA)** and **Angela Dearing (KY)** will present work in quality improvement at the MLC's 2010 Open Forum: A National Conference of Leaders in Public Health Quality Improvement. Slated for **September 15-17** in Washington DC, this is the MLC's final open forum culminating five years of work in QI and accreditation. Glen Mays will moderate.
- **Washington State Public Health Conference.** An abstract from the **Washington PH PBRN** was accepted for presentation at the state public health conference. **Karen Hartfield, Hanne Thiede, Betty Bekemeier, and Anthony Chen** will present the 90-minute session entitled "Practice-Based Research Networks: The Washington State Experience" on October 10, 2010.
- **American Public Health Association (APHA).** The following abstracts have been accepted for presentation at APHA:

New!

- ◆ "Local Public Health Leadership and Community Efforts to Obtain ARRA Stimulus Funding" **Bill Livingood (FL PH PBRN)**

- ◆ "Formative Evaluation Results for a Local Public Health QI initiative to Improve Immunization Rates" **Bill Livingood (FL PH PBRN)**
- ◆ "A Participatory Approach to Planning for Regional Public Health Services in Massachusetts" **Justeen Hyde (MA PH PBRN)**
- ◆ "Changes in Public Health Programs over Time...and How They Relate to Disparities in Mortality" **Betty Bekemeier (WA PH PBRN)** and colleagues
- ◆ "An Innovative Service Learning Program for MPH Students: Applying Problem-Based Learning in Community Settings" **Karen Hartfield (WA PH PBRN)**
- ◆ "Closing the Quality Chasm in Public Health: Lessons from Practice-Based Research Networks" (**National Coordinating Center**)
- ◆ "Accelerating Evidence-based Management in Public Health: Results from the First Two Years of PBRN Research"(**National Coordinating Center**)

Research Dissemination Opportunities

- **Call for Abstracts: Preparedness Summit.** The 2011 Public Health Preparedness Summit Planning Committee is accepting abstracts for the February meeting. Presentations of models and tools demonstrating results "in building and sustaining public health preparedness at the local, state, tribal, or national level" are of special interest. Abstracts are due August 16, 2010 by 11:59 ET. [Further detail and submission form.](#)
- **Call for Abstracts: Modeling for Public Health Action.** CDC's Preparedness Modeling Unit invites abstracts for 20-minute presentations at its 2010 Conference on Modeling for Public Health Action. The conference is designed to "promote the exchange of information and ideas about modeling uses to shape public health action" to an audience of public health practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. **Abstracts are due September 15, 2010.** [More about the conference and Call for Abstracts.](#)
- **Request for Papers: Community-University Partnerships.** *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement* is planning a Spring 2011 special edition on the topic of "Sustaining Community-University Partnerships." Papers co-authored by a community member and academic researcher will be given preference. Submissions are due by Thursday, **October 14** at 7:00 pm ET. Full details are included in the [call for papers.](#)

New Resources and Activities in Research and Practice

WEBINARS

- **Social Determinants of Health.** A record audience of over 3,000 participants registered for last week's webinar on effective communication about social determinants of health. Hosted by RWJF and Grantmakers in Health, presenters shared highlights of four years of research

and best practices in choosing words, using data, and understanding how various audiences “hear” social determinants messages. The recorded webinar, presentation slides and messaging guide for *A New Way to Talk about the Social Determinants of Health* are available at this [link](#). (Of interest... the term "social determinants" did not resonate with any audience in the study!)

CONFERENCES

- **Training in Social Network Analysis.** A [workshop](#) focusing on the tools and techniques of social network analysis is scheduled for September 23-24 in Sacramento. Hosted by the UC Davis Clinical and Translational Science Center, the event will include both instruction and research presentations. Space is limited for this no-fee workshop, so priority will be given to participants from CTSA institutions. Register before September 9.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- **Getting Larger Faster.** New data from CDC show that nine states had an obesity rate of 30% or higher in 2009, compared to three states in 2007 and no states at that rate in 2000. Not a single state met the *Healthy People 2010* goal of lowering its obesity rate to 15%. Costs, disparities, recommendations and more are discussed in the CDC Vital Signs report entitled "[State-Specific Obesity Prevalence Among Adults – United States, 2009](#)."
- **RWJF Obesity Report.** RWJF and Trust for America's Health have released the 2010 edition of their report [F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future](#).
- **Balancing Public Health Funding Priorities.** Note this coverage in [The New York Times](#) regarding funding allocations among public health issues such as obesity and tobacco use. Federal and foundation resources are discussed, including RWJF.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

- **National Health Security Strategy, Biennial Implementation Plan.** Earlier this year, *PBRN Week in Review* noted work on the nation's first health security strategy. A draft implementation plan for coordinating the various participants' activities and resources over the next two years is available for [public comment](#) until Wednesday, August 25.

Recent Literature and Exemplary Studies of Interest

With the quarterly webinar focus on IRB, Sharla Smith (NCC) calls attention to related literature.

- **IRB Review in Practice-Based Research.** A 2005 article in the [Annals of Family Medicine](#) by Leslie Wolfe, Janice Ferrara Walden and Bernard Lo explored the challenges that practice-based research networks (PBRNs) face with respect to the IRB process and protecting human subjects in research. Using regulatory and literature review, their previous research involving PBRN researchers, and their own experiences, the authors found three main challenges for PBRN research: 1) ensuring compliance across practices where practitioners vary in degree of familiarity and organizations vary in requirements; 2) identifying "human subjects," consent and confidentiality in practice settings; and 3) respecting participants' wishes while sharing multiple electronic databases across practices. The investigators emphasize the importance of addressing these challenges to maintain public trust in and support of primary care PBRN research.

- ✦ **IRB Challenges in Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR).** A July 2010 article in [Environmental Health](#) by Phil Brown and colleagues reports on the challenges of obtaining IRB approval for community participatory research. The authors draw on their experiences guiding a multi-partner CBPR project, colleagues written accounts, conference presentations and discussions, and interviews with CBPR researchers. The authors found that IRBs often are not familiar with CBPR, are reluctant to oversee community partners and may be resistant to on-going research-participant interaction. This report recommends that IRBs and funders work together to develop clear, routine review guidelines that respect the unique qualities of CBPR. This strategy can better protect research participants from the harm of unnecessary delays and exclusion from the research process, while facilitating the ethical communication of study results to participants and communities.
- ✦ **A Framework for Improving Public Health Preparedness System.** In a recent article in [Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness](#), McCabe and colleagues propose a solution to one critical obstacle to achieving preparedness for high-quality, system-based emergency response: the absence of a universal framework and common language. The investigators propose that constructs associated with the familiar term "ready, willing, and able" may be used for a standardized approach among the widely varying participants in the public health emergency preparedness system. Steps also are outlined for advancing the discussion of development of quality standards, measures, guidance, and even a national accreditation program.
- ✦ **Primary Care PBRNs.** The July-August issue of the [Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine](#) contains its annual emphasis on PBRNs. Articles include research results from networks, an examination of PBRN evaluation tools, an exploration of motivating factors and benefits of network participation, and more. Though some characteristics of various professions' PBRNs do not translate easily among one another, all can benefit from the collective work.

Funding Opportunities and Announcements

The Coordinating Center maintains a [list of funding opportunities](#) for and grant awards to Public Health PBRNs. Grant opportunities with recurring deadlines are tracked and updated. PH PBRNs are asked to help keep the awards list up to date by notifying the Coordinating Center of funding received.

NEW IN THIS COLUMN...

- ✦ **OppNet Funding.** The NIH Basic Behavioral and Social Science Opportunity Network (OppNet) is a multi-institute initiative aimed at building a collective body of knowledge in behavioral and social systems and processes. OppNet has announced the availability of funding titled Effects of the Social Environment on Health: Measurement, Methods and Mechanisms "to investigate structural, behavioral, sociocultural, environmental, cognitive, emotional, and/or biological mechanisms through which the social environment affects health outcomes." Proposed research studies should enhance understanding of which aspects of social environments affect health outcomes in different stages of lifecourse and in different sub-populations, the mechanisms by which social environments have these effects,

and/or contribute to/improve the measurement and analytic methods used to study social environments and health. For this FOA, "social environment" is defined broadly and includes policies and regulations, institutional characteristics, social networks, systems delivery components, and a host of other research interests for public health PBRNs. See the [Full Announcement](#) for more information. Optional **Letter of Interest due** December 6, 2010. **Application deadline:** Jan 6, 2011

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED IN THIS COLUMN...

- Deadline!*
- ✦ **Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure.** CDC is accepting applications to its "Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure for Improved Health Outcomes" five-year cooperative agreement program. The program includes a non-competitive base funding component and a competitive "enhanced" funding component. Applicants must be state health departments and others designated as eligible in the [Funding Announcement](#). Public Health PBRNs may want to discuss opportunities for partnership with appropriate applicant organizations. **Application Deadline: August 9, 2010.** [Link to recorded technical assistance information sessions.](#)

 - ✦ **PHSSR Research Opportunity.** The Center for Public Health Systems and Services Research has issued a [Call for Proposals](#) from junior investigators who are interested in working on the development of topical white papers that will help the field's funders craft a research agenda for the next five years. The four areas of interest are (1) quality improvement, (2) structure and organization of health departments, (3) methodology, and (4) workforce issues. A one-page description of the applicant's qualifications, proposed timeline and approach to the work as outlined in the CFP is due **Wednesday, August 11.**

 - ✦ **Pilot Research in Preparedness Systems.** The University of Minnesota: Simulations and Exercises for Educational Effectiveness (U-SEEE) has issued its annual call for proposals for innovative pilot projects in public health preparedness systems research that includes simulations and exercises as educational or training methods. Eligibility is quite broad, although new researchers receive preference. Three projects are selected for the one-year, \$15,000 awards. Details, including a video on developing a proposal, are [linked here](#). **Application deadline: September 14, 2010.**

 - ✦ **Health Disparities Research.** NIH is accepting R01 applications for funding of innovative research addressing health disparities. The approaches and aims are quite broad, although the [announcement](#) states, "the research should take into account the characteristics of health systems and health seeking behaviors that propagate disparities." The research focus may include racial/ethnic minorities, low income, rural and other health disparity populations. **Application deadline: September 29, 2010.**

 - ✦ **Scholars in Health Policy Research.** RWJF is accepting applications to its *Scholars in Health Policy Research* program. Applicants should have earned a doctoral degree in economics, political science or sociology after January 1, 2006 or have completed degree requirements by July 15, 2011. Preference is given to applicants who have not worked extensively in health or health policy research. Up to nine individuals are selected each year for two-year fellowships at one of three universities to develop creative thinkers in health

policy who will make important research contributions to the field. **Application deadline: October 13, 2010.** [More information](#)

- ◆ **RWJF Rapid-Response Call for Proposals.** [Active Living Research](#) is an RWJF national program supporting research to inform policy and environmental strategies for increasing physical activity and preventing obesity in children and adolescents, particularly among those at highest risk. With characteristics similar to the Public Health PBRN Quick Strike Research Fund (QSRF), this CFP seeks proposals for "opportunistic, time-sensitive studies on emerging or anticipated changes in physical activity-related policies or environments. Rapid-response grants are expected to accelerate progress toward policy and environmental strategies to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. For maximum impact, studies should be completed in as short a time frame as realistically possible, and results disseminated using methods designed to reach local, state or national decision-makers in time to help inform key policy decisions." **Deadline:** Awards made on a **rolling basis**. A Letter of Intent is required and will be accepted until July 1, 2011.

Upcoming Key Dates

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| Aug 10: | Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET |
| New Date! ➔ Aug 17: | Public Health PBRN Quarterly Webinar 2:00-3:30 ET |
| Aug 19: | Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 ET |
| Sep 8: | National Advisory Committee Conference Call 1:00–2:00 ET |
| Sep 14: | Round I PBRN Monthly Conference Call 11:30-12:30 ET |
| Sep 16: | Round II PBRN Monthly Conference Call 1:00-2:30 ET |
| Nov 6-10: | 2011 APHA Annual Meeting in Denver |

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