



Research for Health Newsletter

DECEMBER 2013

A periodic, informative bulletin reporting on the activities of research for health. Its purpose is to inform countries, partners, and PAHO managers and staff on the advances in the execution of PAHO's Policy on Research for Health. Please send questions and comments to villanue@paho.org.

HOT SPOT

Art for Research Artist, Featured in Science Magazine



Shelly Xie, the young medical student and artist who presented two stories using light and sand at the 52nd Directing Council, was featured in the November issue of [Scientific American](#) after she won the Communications Award of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) for her Hookworm story. This story, developed especially for PAHO's [Art for Research Project: transformation for development](#), illustrates how research can be a driver of social and economic development that pulls communities out of poverty. See the full story [here](#). To learn more about the Art for Research project see the video: [A better future for the new baby #Art4research](#).

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Inter-American Commission for Science and Technology (COMCYT), 14-15 Nov 2013, Washington DC, OAS



Luis Gabriel Cuervo, PAHO's Senior Advisor for Research Promotion and Development, represented PAHO at the 8th Ordinary Meeting of the COMCYT. During the opening ceremony he stressed the opportunity that research brings to address the determinants of health, engaging different sectors while promoting competitiveness and social and economic development. He shared with the audience that the 2nd [Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health](#) (hosted by Dr. Berrocal) allowed the sectors of Science & Technology and Health to work towards a common agenda and pointed out that the topics discussed at OAS were well aligned with the [PAHO's Policy on Research for Health](#) (CD49/10) thus offering an opportunity to build on the synergies and developments on research for health. The meeting recognized the [Panama Action Plan](#) and the contributions of its four working groups (Innovation; Human Resources Education and Training; Quality National Infrastructure; and Technological Development) towards cooperation between OAS Member States and strategic partners through joint projects, and the exchange of information, resources, and tools. [Link to press release](#).



RIMAIS, Iberoamerican Ministerial Network for Training and Research in Health, V Meeting, Bolivia, 25-27 November



The V General Assembly of national focal points of the RIMAIS Network took place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra in Bolivia. The Minister of Health of Costa Rica, Dr. Daisy Maria Corrales Diaz, president of the RIMAIS participated in the Meeting as a demonstration of her political backing to the Network. The V Assembly was co-financed by the PIFTE Program of the Spanish Cooperation together with the CYTED

Program. The V Assembly analyzed the operation of the Network and reviewed the progress of its Strategic Plan 2011-2014. The network tries to strengthen the cohesion and improve the coordination of the Ibero-American National Health Research Systems and aims to be a platform for the implementation of the PAHO Policy on Research for Health (CD49/10). See more on [RIMAIS](#).

EU-LAC Health. Roadmap of the EU and LAC, Mexico, October 2013



EU-LAC (European Union–Latin America and the Caribbean) held the first workshop for the creation of the Roadmap for cooperation in research for health between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. Among others, expert health researchers, managers of research programs and Members of the EU-LAC Health Advisory Committee participated in the workshop. The three dimensions that the roadmap will have were devised: scientific, governance, and financing. These dimensions will respond to issues

such as, “how can health cooperation of EU-LAC be financed efficiently?”, “what governmental structures can be needed?” and “what scientific areas will be enriched through biregional cooperation?” The launching of a pilot joint convocation in the area of research was discussed—this joint pilot would be an important milestone for a more institutionalized cooperation between EU-LAC. Luis Gabriel Cuervo, Senior Advisor in Research Promotion and Development participated in the meeting as a member of the **Advisory Committee**. See the meeting’s [press release](#).



COUNTRY NEWS

Argentina, *Salud Investiga* 2013 Awards



The “*Salud Investiga* 2013” (Health Investigates) awards which recognize researchers and institutions that work with a focus on the impact that their studies have in national public health were delivered. The awards ceremony took place during the National Public Health Research Meeting held in

Buenos Aires on 18 November 2013. The event was presided by the Under Secretary of Health Relations and Research of the Ministry of Health, Jaime Lazovski and Adriana Dawidowski, of the Secretariat of Planning and Policies of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation, and Alejandro Gherardi, PAHO/WHO focal point for Health Systems in Argentina. The three recognized institutions were the Interzonal Hospital Specializing in Acute and Chronic Diseases, Dr. A. Korn; the National Directorate of Maternity and Infancy of the Nation’s Ministry of Health, and the Healthy World Foundation. See more [here](#).



The Commission “*Salud Investiga*” is one of the institutions that were recognized by the University and Foundation ISALUD for its work and commitment towards health, environment, and economy and society, among other categories. See more [here](#).

Cuba

Acknowledgement, Maria Amparo Pascual

Maria Amparo Pascual, Director of the Cuban Registry of Clinical Trials (CENCEC) was acknowledged by the Inter-American Network of Academies of Science (IANAS) and featured by the BBC as one of the **10 leading female scientists from Latin America**. CENCEC became the first **WHO Primary Clinical Trial registry** with a Spanish interface. It offers free registration for clinical trials that feed into the open access **WHO ICTRP (International Clinical Trials Registry Platform) Registry Network**. This recognition underlines the WHO/PAHO’s ICTRP initiative started about 9 years ago, and has contributed to enhance transparency of clinical trials and advance PAHO’s Policy on Research for Health. Some assessments have shown a >17 fold increase on the registration of new clinical trials in Latin America and the Caribbean. Maria Amparo has worked closely with PAHO’s ICTRP team, coordinated by Ludovic Reveiz.



Dominican Republic International Research Day



In the framework of Research Day, the technical meeting on Knowledge Management: “Building a National Agenda for Research for Health” was conducted where the need for prioritizing the development of public policies on research and innovation were highlighted. The Minister of Health expressed the need that national research for health be prioritized based on the health needs of the population within the framework of renewed primary health care and with a view to universal health coverage. Dr. Emilia Guzmán pointed out the development of new forms of conducting research and dissemination of health information that makes it possible for the population to obtain quality and timely services. See more [here](#).

Paraguay



The study “Characterization of the first level of care in the V Health Region of Caaguazú within the framework of primary health care strategy of Paraguay 2013-2014” is being developed in Paraguay. It is part of the Ñanduti Project that seeks to strengthen Primary Health Care and is linked the generation of evidence for decision-making and designing health interventions. Paraguay was one of the first countries that established an EVIPNet team. See more [here](#).

RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Partnerships

Cochrane Canada



The 2013-2014 webinar series of Cochrane Canada: “**Different Evidence, Different Synthesis**” was launched on 27 November. This series is offered as part of the Collaboration between PAHO/Research and Cochrane Canada. See the first webinar Qualitative evidence synthesis and Cochrane Reviews [here](#).

TDR: for Research on Diseases of Poverty



Grantees of TDR’s new impact grants program are announced. In total there were 16 grantees from over the world. In the Americas one was a previous recipient of the 2010 PAHO-Cochrane Award and the other a center

that has been collaborating with CIDEIM in Colombia to participate and facilitate Effective Project Planning and Evaluation (EPPE) methodology workshops. These two grantees are:



From Argentina: Meta-analysis/systematic review of the treatment of *Trypanosome cruzi* infection. Principal investigator: Dr. Yanina Sguassero, CREP Cochrane Centre of the Iberoamerican Cochrane Network, Rosario, Argentina.

From Honduras: Research for health capacity strengthening through the institutional review board. Research Team: Jorge García, Iván Espinoza, Manuel Sierra, Astarte Alegría, Eleonora Espinoza, Denis Padgett, Mario Rush, Elizabeth Paguada, School of Medicine, University of Honduras.

TDR New Grant Applications for 2014

Advanced postdoctoral research and/or training grants in implementation research for advanced postdoctoral research and/or training grants from individuals who are nationals of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Submission deadline 7 February 2014. [Read more about this call and application process.](#)

TDR postgraduate training grants in implementation research for postgraduate training grants leading to MSc and PhD degrees focused on disciplines relevant to implementation research (such as, but not limited to, epidemiology, social sciences, biostatistics, health economics, health/medical education, health information systems, community and environmental health). Submission deadline 7 February 2014. [Read more about this call and application process.](#)

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Declaration of Helsinki Updated. The new version includes two items that refer to research reporting, the first one is that “every research study involving human subjects must be registered in a publicly accessible database before recruitment of the first subject” and the second one calls for researchers, authors, sponsors, editors and publishers to adhere to accepted guidelines for ethical reporting. See more [here](#).

Prospero, the international prospective register of systematic reviews in health and social care is now registering automatically new Cochrane Protocols of Systematic Reviews. Prospective publishing protocols in publicly accessible databases are crucial to avoid duplicating systematic reviews. See more [here](#).



Evidence Aid searchable resources page (www.evidenceaid.org/resources) has been updated by adding 13 new free access Cochrane Reviews—the resources include short evidence summaries and links to the full Cochrane Reviews, available free of charge. The Special Collections freely available via the homepage of The Cochrane Library (www.thecochranelibrary.com) have also been updated.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Campbell Collaboration issues call for proposals for 2014, deadline is 20 December



The **Campbell Collaboration** invites proposals for presentations during its annual Colloquium to be held June 16-19, 2014 in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Proposals for posters and oral presentations on research related to interventions for improving the well-being of society or individuals in any of the key Campbell areas which include among others, research synthesis methods (or with implications for synthesis) and knowledge translation and implementation. It is also accepting proposals for oral paper presentations on any topic relevant to the development and application of systematic review methods and topics related to the iterative cycle of evidence gathering and decision-making about social interventions. Proposals must be submitted electronically to managing.editor.ecg@c2admin.org by late February 14.

Funding opportunities: Health Systems Research Initiative



The Health Systems Research Initiative, a new collaboration between the Wellcome Trust, the UK Department for International Development, the UK Medical Research Council and the UK Economic and Social Research Council, will dedicate £15 million over three years to support research that will strengthen health systems in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The aim of the scheme is to fund rigorous, high-quality research that will inform the delivery of evidence-based interventions or structural changes, and provide evidence that is of direct relevance to decision makers and users in the field. The total funds will be allocated through three annual calls for proposals of £5 million each. The first submission deadline is Tuesday 14 January 2014. [Read more about the Initiative and application process.](#)