



Research for Health Newsletter

SPRING 2014

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

PAHO and OAS offer new scholarships



Call for applications for PAHO-OAS health scholarships in Brazil is underway. Students seeking master's or PhD degrees in health including research for health may apply through 6 August 2014. This call comes as a result of a **strategic alliance** to strengthen health education in the Americas signed earlier this year between the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Organization of American States (OAS). The scholarships in Brazil are sponsored by the Group Coimbra in Brazil. See more [here](#). The application deadline is 6 August 2014.

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

PAHO Research participated in ESSENCE GROUP's workshop, OTTAWA, 2-3 May 2014



The ESSENCE (Enhancing Support for Strengthening the Effectiveness of National Capacity Efforts) on Research group hosted a workshop on "Perspectives on Evaluating Global Health Research for Development" in Ottawa. The workshop's objective was to gather perspectives from researchers, funders and evaluation experts involved in evaluations of global health research for development in order to inform the production of a good practice document by ESSENCE on Health. Invited by TDR and ESSENCE Lic. Eleana C Villanueva, Research Advisor, participated in the meeting providing the Americas' perspective on Global Health. TDR is a member of ESSENCE's Executive Steering Committee. Read more about ESSENCE, its members and activities [here](#).



NIH, CARPHA, St. Georges University and PAHO to offer a Grant writing workshop in Grenada, September 2014. Applications due 11 July.



NIH, CARPHA, St. Georges University and PAHO join forces to offer a [grant writing workshop](#) to encourage Caribbean researchers to address public health issues through research. PAHO is contributing inputs to the workshop which will take place at St. Georges University in Grenada. The three-day workshop, 17-19 September, will feature sessions to train researchers on topics such as conducting scientific writing, developing and presenting ideas and identifying funding opportunities. Selection of participants is on a strict merit base. The workshop is open to Participants will have the opportunity to engage in valuable one-on-one mentorship sessions with an expert in the field so that they can become more competitive for research grants and enhance research in the region.

PAHO Research makes presentation at NIH, May 21, 2014.



Invited by the network of social workers of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo, Senior Research Advisor, gave a presentation on [Research for Health](#). In attendance were NIH Social Workers from various focuses which allowed for an interactive and open discussion on the importance of research for health. A key aspect of the presentation was to distinguish between the term “*Health Research*” and the emerging concept of “*Research for Health*”. Other topics of discussion to enhance the move towards this new idea of research for health included the [Art for Research Project](#). For more information on this inspiring exhibit click [here](#).



European Union Latin American Health (EU-LAC) meets in Madrid, February 2014.



The second **EU-LAC** Health Roadmapping Workshop: *Defining a Roadmap for Cooperative Health Research between the EU and Latin America-Caribbean countries, a Policy Oriented Approach* took place in Madrid on the **26-27th of February**.

The EU-LAC Health consortium invited the EC Policy Officer, Advisory Board members, scientific experts and policy makers to this roadmapping workshop where the main topics focused on the elaboration of how to best utilize the current political scenario, the exploitation of synergies with ongoing existing initiatives and the improvement of the main policy document to be produced by the project. Great feedback and enthusiasm dominated this workshop; the next EU-LAC Health workshop will take place in October 2014.

COUNTRY NEWS

Costa Rica: Regulatory law on biomedical research is approved

After 4 years of moratorium on new research, on April 5th Costa Rica joins the countries that have an approved a Regulatory Law for Biomedical Research. The law aims at regulating biomedical research with human subjects in the private and public sectors. This law is a great step towards developing research, especially after all clinical investigation on humans was suspended by the Constitutional Court in 2010. A period of public consultation is underway and will be followed by other meetings to increase the inputs of different stakeholders. See the Regulatory law [here](#) (see page 6).

Dominican Republic: International Women's Day, March 7, 2014



In commemoration of the International Day of Women, thirteen women from the Dominican Republic were recognized for their achievements in different disciplines, as well as, their contributions to the Dominican Republic's society. One of these women, Dr. Emilia Guzmán de Mercedes, who is the National Director of Research for Health, was recognized in the discipline of Women in Science. Dr. Guzmán de

Mercedes is a close collaborator of PAHO's Department of Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research.



RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Partnerships

James Lind Library

James Lind Library, Testing Treatments, second edition



The **James Lind Library** was created to provide people with resources to explain the elements, as well as, the importance of well conducted research in health. Through PAHO's **partnership** with the James Lind Library, these materials have been translated into the official languages of the region: Spanish, French, and Portuguese. Of special interest is the book, Testing Treatments, book written for any person concerned about his/her or a family member's health or the politics surrounding health. The book is an easy to read guide for better research with key points at the end of each chapter. In its second edition the book has an **interactive site**. The Spanish version of the second edition is forthcoming.

THE EQUATOR Network

Resource: If you are an author, peer reviewed, or journal editor click [here](#) to know how you can improve research reporting.

STROBE webinar, FEB 2014



As part of its ongoing collaboration PAHO and the EQUATOR Network joined efforts with the initiative STROBE to offer a webinar to support researchers, epidemiologists, methodologists, statisticians and journal editors when doing Observational Studies in Epidemiology. The webinar was presented by Dr Erik Von Elm, a senior epidemiologist with interest in the methodology of interventional and observational studies in clinical epidemiology and public health as well as issues related to reporting research and reporting guidelines. See the webinar recording [here](#).

EQUATOR network Annual Meeting, Paris, 16 April 2014.

On the 16th may 2014, the French Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM) Sorbonne - Paris Cite Epidemiology and Statistics Research Center together with EQUATOR Network hosted a scientific meeting to discuss strategies about how to decrease waste in research so its reporting is **improved**. See more [here](#).

This meeting also hosted the EQUATOR 6th Annual Lecture *When something gets up your nose, sneeze. How to improve the medical literature while getting educated by your friends*, presented by Dr. Drummond Rennie, founder member of STROBE, CONSORT and related



initiatives. To see more information about EQUATOR”s meeting see [here](#).

Collaborative initiative among rehabilitation and disability journals

Collaboration among 28 rehabilitation and disability journals was launched to improve the use of reporting guidelines when reporting research. It requires authors to adopt guidelines when submitting manuscripts for journals, as well as prompting reviewers to use these guidelines, so that quality and transparency of research improves. Learn more about this initiative [here](#).

COCHRANE COLLABORATION



The Cochrane Library published by the Cochrane Collaboration has renewed and re-defined its partnership with John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. so that there is open access to some publications (green open access).

Authors and funders will also have the option of immediate access upon publication (gold open access). Authors from many low- and middle- income countries will be eligible to have their publication fees waived. Click here to further [information](#).

Guidelines for guideline development

Developing Evidence informed guidelines with GRADE: Virtual Course, ongoing 2014



This virtual course is part of PAHO efforts to building capacities in the development of evidence- informed guidelines based on GRADE methodology aligned with PAHO/WHO standards. Addressed to technical staff and other stakeholders involved in the development of National Guidelines the course is in third cohort with more than 90 registered participants from four

countries. The course is hosted in the [Virtual Campus for Public Health](#) of the Pan American Health Organization and lasts for five weeks with a workload of about 30 hours. It incorporates methodology experts in the development of guidelines as well as tutors during the training process. This course is by invitation only. For information on future offering of the course, please contact Dr. Ludovic Reveiz at: reveizl@paho.org



EVIPNET, 2010-2012 activities in Revista Médica Hondureña



The Evidence Based Policy Network (EVIPNET) is a mechanism designed to promote the systematic use of high quality health research findings in policymaking in low and middle income countries. The EVIPNet, launched in the Americas in 2007, has been fully embraced in many countries and there are many initiatives underway. The 2010-2012 activities done while the initiative was under the coordination of Dra. Evelina Chapman, included 8 capacity building workshops with an enrolment of 277 participants from 16 countries, and are summarized in an [article](#) published in the Revista Médica Hondureña. Read more about this initiative [here](#).

INFORMATION RESOURCES

Health Systems Evidence (HSE) McMaster Health FORUM



The Health Systems Evidence database is a wonderful resource to obtain research evidence about governance, financial and delivery arrangements within health systems, and about the implementation strategies that can support change in health systems. All of these helpful resources are available in many different languages creating a broad audience of users to the website. Of special interest in the last edition for health systems is Effects of physician-nurse substitution on clinical parameters: a systematic review and *meta-analysis*, which discusses physicians' shortage in many countries and demands of high-quality and affordable care make physician-nurse substitution an appealing workforce strategy. See this article and more than other 2000 in the [HSE database](#).

HRWeb: A tool to increase research governance in Latin America and the Caribbean



With the permission of Cadernos de Saúde Pública this article, that explains why the HRWeb is a tool improve governance in the Americas, was translated into Spanish and published in the Revista Médica Hondureña in consideration of its informational nature and the broad base of Spanish reading audience who can benefit from it. Read the article [here](#)

How to enhance the value of your research and decrease waste

It is estimated that 85% of research is wasted due to poor design, not being published or it was poor reported. A [series of articles](#) were launched by the Lancet to help you improving the value of your research and reduce waste, as well as proposals to help stakeholders monitoring the implementation of recommendations.



The researchwaste.net is a platform created to achieve better quality in research. Based on the Lancet publications mentioned, it is a place to share and exchange documentation, information, and resources on how to increase the value of both basic and applied research and reduce or avoid wasting research.

How Can Journals Respond to Threats of Libel Litigation?

Many journal editors feel threatened when a study is not accepted for publication. This can impact the quality of studies published as well as journals'. To support editors, the study *How can journals respond to threats of libel litigation?*, looks at how they can respond to litigation threats when a study is not accepted for publication. It was wrote by Nav Persaud (NP), Thom Ringer (TR) and Trudo Lemmens (TL), the formers being faced with editorial decisions that resulted either in a rejection of an article (NP), in a request for revision based on concerns about litigation (NP/TL), or removal of a section of an article prior to publication and without permission of author (TL). Read a periodistic summary of the article in Portuguese [here](#) and the full article [here](#).

INTERNSHIPS

At PAHO the help of young professionals is vital to work done in the research portal. Displayed below are various case studies and presentations written and organized by interns. See other history and work of previous and current PAHO interns [here](#).

CASE STUDIES

Written by interns, they highlight the fact that investment in research for health enables socio-economic development and reduces inequalities across all sectors. This month three case studies have been uploaded to the Research Portal:

- [The birth of cancer chemotherapy: accident and research](#)
- [Enabling gender equality, economic growth and sustainable development through research for health: The case of the oral contraceptive pill](#)
- [Building research capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean through international collaborations: The Magpie Trial](#)

RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP BBLs

An intern ran activity, sponsored by KBR, the Research Interest Group is an informal meeting where a seasoned professional is invited to present a research topic of interest. PAHO staff, interns and guests from surrounding institutions meet with the presenter to openly debate on relevant issues of the research topic presented.

May 9, 2014, EVIDENCE AID

Claire Allen, Knowledge Manager at [Evidence Aid](#), made a presentation of EVIDENCE AID in a Research Interest Group. On this occasion the RIG was a joint activity of the Research and Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief programs. Evidence Aid is an international initiative based in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland that provides timely access to reliable and up-



to-date knowledge from systematic reviews of relevance to natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies. The meeting was attended by interested individuals from almost all PAHO technical departments. We also welcomed several external guests from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and Georgetown University faculty. Further collaboration between PAHO and Evidence Aid is being explored. RIG organized by Rachel Hutchinson, intern.



April 7th, Health Inequalities in France

Dr. Olivier Grimaud, a public health physician and Deputy Director of the Epidemiology Department at the National School of Public Health in France was a guest speaker in April. He opened his discussion with a presentation of his current research on health inequalities regarding stroke onset and care and it was followed by a deliberation on the global challenge of tackling health inequalities with a specific focus on chronic disease management. Participants were glad of the opportunity to learn about the French Public Health System. RIG organized by Natalia Godoy, intern.



April 4, Award winning paper on cash transfers

Dr. Frederico Guanais, a health specialist at the Inter-American Development Bank presented his award winning paper, "The combined effects of the expansion of primary health care and conditional cash transfers on infant mortality in Brazil 1998-2010". His 15 minutes presentation was followed by a 45 minutes debate, where the importance of multi-sectorial public health approaches and the mechanisms to advance towards effective universal health coverage were discussed. This RIG was organized by Jose Miguel Uribe, intern.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Erasmus Summer Programme

The Erasmus Summer Programme is a three-week program specially designed to provide research training in health sciences to health professionals, students and researchers. Applications for 2014 are already in place. Find further information [here](#).