



Research for Health Newsletter

July – September 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.

Twitter: [@PAHOresearch](https://twitter.com/PAHOresearch)

Hot spot

First joint convocation of fellowships PAHO–OAS closes, August 2014



As of 2014, the field of health has been incorporated in the fellowship program of the OAS. This incorporation was made possible by the [Collaboration Agreement](#) signed between the OAS and PAHO at the beginning of 2014. August 20 was the final day to submit applications for the fellowships of [PAHO and OAS](#) in collaboration with [Group Coimbra of Brazilian Universities \(GCUB\)](#) to study in Brazil. In its first call for studies at the master and PhD level in the health sector, with emphasis on research, 570 applications from 30 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were received. The majority of applications were received from Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico, and most applicants (65%) were women. The selection of fellows will be made in November.

PAHO's ACHR welcomes new president, Dr. Jaime Miranda



Dr. Jaime Miranda has been appointed as the new president of PAHO's Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR). He succeeds Dr. John N. Lavis, who held the presidency for the past 7 years—during which great progress was made in the area of research, for the Organization and the member countries.

Amongst these advances is the PAHO *Policy on Research for Health (CD49/10)* which was approved by all the Ministers of Health in 2009. As ACHR president, Dr. Miranda takes the lead to guide the PAHO Director on a multitude of research matters with emphasis on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the aforementioned policy. To read more about Jaime Miranda's background and ACHR [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

Call for papers: Special issue, Pan American Journal of Public Health. Deadline January 2015



The [Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública/Pan American Journal of Public Health](#) has issued a call for papers for a special issue on **Strengthening of Regulatory Systems for Medicines and other Technologies in the Region of the Americas**. The special issue is a collaboration with the US [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) and is scheduled to be published by the end of 2015. Accepted contributions are due in January 2015 and will include original research papers, systematic reviews, opinion and analysis, special reports or brief communications on the subject. Papers will be accepted in Spanish, English or Portuguese. Authors should follow the [Instructions](#) to submit their papers. The manuscript selection process will follow the journal's peer review procedures. See more in www.paho.org/journal. Twitter: [@pahowho_journal](#)

International meetings

NIH, CARPHA, St. George's University and PAHO collaborate in the Caribbean, 17-19 September 2014



A [Grant Writing and Peer Review Workshop](#) organized by NIH with the collaboration of the three above-mentioned institutions took place in St. George's, Grenada the days 17-19 September. The workshop was hosted by St. George's University and CARPHA, with PAHO being an important contributor throughout its preparation and delivery. It was geared towards young Caribbean researchers interested in pursuing research grants. For PAHO, this activity advances the implementation of the '*Policy on Research for Health*' and falls within a broader strategy of research building capacity which began a few years ago (see Caribbean Region below). Sixty four applications were received and following a thorough, rigorous and competitive selection process, 24 were awarded a grant to participate. In total there were 52 participants from 10 different countries.

22nd Colloquium Cochrane, Hyderabad, India. 21-26 September 2014.



The [22nd. Cochrane Colloquium](#) whose main theme was: "*Evidence-Informed Public Health: Opportunities and Challenges*" took place in the International Conventions Center of Hyderabad in India. The Department of Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research ([KBR](#)) is exhibiting a poster on the "[Adherence to reporting guidelines in biomedical journals of Latin America](#)" which will present the results of a study that evaluated the awareness and knowledge of journal editors, indexed in LILACS, with regards to research reporting guidelines. The colloquium provides the host-country and host-region the unique opportunity to have a significant impact on sanitary decision-making at the national and regional levels as they will help to

promote the use of the evidence which will improve health of the local and global populations.

Third world symposium on Health Systems Research, Cape Town, 30 September-3 October 2014.



[The Third World in Health Systems Research](#) has as a main theme: *'The science and practice of people-centred health systems'*. Pre-symposium sessions were held on the 29-30 September. The subject matter of the Symposium was selected so that the attendees could participate in the expert-led sessions during which the prevailing concerns across countries in different parts of the world will be addressed. During the sessions, participants will have the opportunity to work alongside researchers, policy makers, economists, funders, implementers and other interested parties from all the regions and socio-economic levels, in order to ameliorate the responsiveness of health systems to the needs of individuals, families and communities. Among the satellite sessions, one that focused on the development of a tool to evaluate and facilitate a structured guideline following the standards defined in themes of public health systems was organized.

COUNTRY NEWS

Argentina: EVIPNET Workshop on Evidence-Informed Policy Network, 7-9 April 2014



An EVIPNet (Evidence-Informed Policy Network) workshop which was organized by the Ministry of Health of the province of Buenos Aires, UNICEF, and the Pan-American Health Organization took place in the National Academy of Medicine. The three-day workshop's goals were to implement an EVIPNet in the city and to create a provincial network of stakeholders and researchers that will promote the use of scientific evidence in the development of public

health policies. The first day's activities focused on highlighting the benefits of using scientific evidence in public health policies. Over the following days the participants were divided into three groups that debated potential strategies and policies for reducing infant mortality, fostering physical activity and the improvement of cardiovascular function and prevention and reduction of the consumption of illegal psychoactive substances. Read more [here](#) (Spanish only)

Caribbean Region: Technical cooperation of PAHO for the continuing education of researchers in the Region



For some years PAHO has been working jointly with strategic partners to achieve a critical mass of researchers who support public health in the Caribbean Region. This capacity development is offered within the framework of the Policy on Research for Health (CDS 49/10) addressing the objective of improving the competence of human resources in research. Below we report the progress to date.

- The Department of Knowledge Management, Bioethics, and Research is currently collaborating with the department of non-communicable diseases (Dr. Silvana Luciani as focal point), and the National Cancer Institute (NIH/NCI), to develop a map of the cancer research system to identify among others, the research networks and registries, the researchers, cancer institutes as well as funders of cancer studies, what topics are being investigated and what topics need to be investigated.
- One hundred and seventy three (173) professionals from [ten countries of the Caribbean](#) have been trained in Effective Project Planning and Evaluation of Biomedical Research Projects.
- A Caribbean branch of the [US Cochrane center](#) was created in the University of the West Indies (UWI), Jamaica, to support the sub-region's training and development of researchers in knowledge translation. The establishment of this branch was supported by PAHO, and the US and Canadian Cochrane Centers.

- University of West Indies became part of the `International Clinical Epidemiology Network` [INCLEN](#) in 2009, in order to support the training and development of epidemiologists in the Caribbean.
- The [WHO Collaborating Center](#)(CC) in Ethics and Global Health Policy of the University of Miami has also been a CC for the Caribbean since 2008.

Honduras: Initiative Planning for Success, Tegucigalpa, 22-31 July, 2014



With the support of [CIDEIM](#) and PAHO, the city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras hosted two workshops on *Effective Project Planning and Evaluation of Biomedical Research* (EPPE) that involved other Central American countries, including El Salvador, Costa Rica and

Guatemala. These workshops are part of the initiative *Planning for success* — developed by UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, WHO and the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) with the aim to strengthen the skills of biomedical researchers in developing countries in the organization and management of research projects so as to achieve effective implementation and successful collaboration.

The two workshops were supported by the Unidad de Investigación Científica (UIC), Facultad de Ciencias Médicas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (FCM UNAH), in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The first one, held July 22-25, was a skill building course (SBC) and the second, held 28-31 July, was a train the trainer course. See more on the activity in Honduras [here](#) and on the EPPE, TDR course [here](#).

RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

PARTNERSHIPS

Cochrane Canada: Webinar series continues



Cochrane Canada, its funding partners and PAHO's Research Promotion and Development, supported the webinar '*Systematic reviews of preclinical animal research: who are the potential knowledge users?*' in which Marc T. Avey, a CIHR post-doctoral fellow talked about how researchers use what they know and apply it into their practice. The webinar focused on the actual users of systematic reviews answering two of five key questions: to whom should the knowledge be transferred? And what knowledge should be transferred? To listen to webinar click [here](#). To access the complete playlist of webinars click [here](#).

EQUATOR Network:

The Global Health network



The EQUATOR Network has partnered with the Global Health Network to improve the conduct and reporting of health-related research worldwide. This new collaboration will aid in advancing education and training in low- and middle-income countries by building on the Global Health Network's (GHN) excellent online eLearning presence to create new accessible online certified training courses. With shared goals of capacity building with The EQUATOR Network, PAHO presents this new collaboration. [GHN's](#) resources will complement the tools and resources that are currently available on the [EQUATOR website](#).

World Conferences on Research Integrity: the Montreal Statement now available in Spanish.

Research regulations and accepted research practices vary significantly from country to country and among professional organizations. The World Conferences on Research Integrity (WCRI) were organized in 2007 to promote exchange of information, further discussion of ways to promote research integrity and harmonize efforts to foster responsible research practices. At the 3rd WCRI, May 2013, the [Montréal statement](#) was produced as a global guide to the responsible conduct of research. This statement is now available in Spanish [here](#). The next WCRI will be held in Rio de Janeiro, May 31-June 3 2015. For more information on the upcoming conference and details on how to submit a proposal, click [here](#).

Information resources

Second edition of 'Testing Treatments' available now in Spanish: **Cómo se prueban los tratamientos: una mejor investigación para una mejor atención de salud, 2ª edición.**

COMO SE PRUEBAN LOS TRATAMIENTOS



This new title , published by PAHO with rights granted by the authors, attempts to answer questions such as: [Why do we need fair tests of treatments?](#) and [How can patients help to improve tests of treatments?](#)

Written by a journalist, a researcher and a health practitioner, the book is a tool to enable readers to better

understand how to critically analyze: the research conditions in which

treatments should be tested; the fairness and reliability of research; and the benefits and relevance of health treatments to their condition. The authors hope that an increased understanding of the conditions required for fair tests of treatments will improve healthcare, prevent unnecessary errors and promote public trust and engagement (as stressed by PAHO's Policy on Research for Health). The first edition of the book was published by the British Library and the rights to the Spanish version were granted to PAHO as have been for this second edition. The second edition also has an [interactive site](#) and the book can be downloaded freely [here](#). We anticipate that improving the knowledge of researchers, policy makers and the general public will vastly improve the quality of healthcare across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Article: The epidemic of chronic kidney disease in Central America, The Lancet Global Health, Volume 2, Issue 8

THE LANCET **Global Health** Chronic kidney disease in Central America has a high incidence and mortality rate, making it paramount to take coordinated action to address the current situation. It is known that researchers do not know the causes or determinants of the epidemic. However, it has been hypothesized that the unregulated use of pesticides could be a causative factor. Health services need to have adequate infrastructure and trained personnel in order to treat patients with this pathology. Additionally, public health bodies need to measure environmental and occupational health factors. To see the full article click [here](#).

Report: Perspectives on Evaluating Global Health Research for Development



As funding agencies are increasing in number and scope, it is hard for them to keep track of the impact that their funding has on global health research for development (GHR4D). To address this issue ESSENCE commissioned a study which was undertaken by the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research ([CCGHR](#)) to identify the current approaches, practices and challenges faced by the funding agencies and funded researchers to assess impact of their research. The aim of this study, presented and discussed at a meeting hosted by Essence and IDRC back in May, was to find a working definition of the key concepts of research, of global health research in particular, and of evaluation. Read the full report [here](#).

Global Health Research Process Map



[Process Map](#) is a comprehensive and interactive resource that provides eLearning resources including questions and answers, expert guidance, links and tools. It is free and open access, and enables high quality ethical research. Process map is the first digital toolkit designed to enable researchers anywhere in the world to initiate rigorous global health research studies. The aim is to provide step-by-step guidance for each stage that needs to be considered when planning a new study. By providing an overview of what needs to be done, and then providing tools, resources, guidance and support for each task, this resource should speed up the study set-up process and help you run a robust and high quality study.

The Lancet series on 'Research: increasing value, reducing waste'

This series was launched by The Lancet in 2014 to point out the important issues regarding biomedical research prioritization, research design,

regulation and management of research, data accessibility and research reporting. The fifth paper examines research reports and highlights the work of the [EQUATOR Network](#) in trying to achieve this goal. To see the papers click [here](#).

ECRAN, multilingual information tools on clinical trials for patients and citizens



The European Commission funded the European Communication on Research Awareness Needs ([ECRAN](#)) [project](#) to improve the EU citizens' knowledge of medical research, and to support their participation in clinical trials. The ECRAN project contains a wealth of useful information including animated films in 23 languages and books and materials of interest like the Second edition of *Testing Treatments* featured under Information Resources in this newsletter. You can see films in the next [link](#) and the book [here](#).

INTERNSHIP ACTIVITIES

Two new case studies, one on NCDs and the other on Cancer Prevention were added to our collection of case studies that aim to illustrate the value of research.

Promoting Health in All Policies: Learning from Finland. Written by intern Joana Santos.

Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and their consequences are preventable. This case study shows that by approaching the risk factors and working with other sectors, Finland was able to prevent the spread of NCDs. The findings of the study are of special interest to Latin America and the Caribbean where NCD-related morbidity and mortality is increasing rapidly. It is of the utmost importance to work with different sectors in order to ensure that health is

considered in all public policies. It is important to assure engagement, achievable through participatory processes. See the full case study [here](#).

Cervical Cancer Screening: Yesterday and Today.

Written by intern Harpreet Kaur

This case study offers a brief history on cervical cancer screening tests. It discusses how various cervical cancer tools were discovered and how research has been able to bring down the cervical cancer mortality rate around the world. It presents the current situation of cervical cancer in Latin America and discusses the various factors that have prevented a decrease in mortality rates in the LAC countries. To read the full text, click [here](#).

RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP: Academy Health Research and Knowledge Translation



Interns, Joana Santos and Alanna Berdanier, organized a Research Interest Group (RIG) held on June 24th, 2014. The speaker, Lisa Simpson and fellow colleagues Gerry Fairbrother and Michael Gluck from the [Academy Health Research](#) presented on AHR's knowledge translation activities. Academy

Health is an organization that was established in 2000 and is working to advance the fields of health services research and health policy through the transfer of relevant information across the research and policy arenas. RIGs are offered to all PAHO staff and interns interested in learning about specific research. This particular RIG focused on how to have successful and efficient knowledge translation.