



Research for Health Newsletter

October – December 2014

A periodic, informative bulletin reporting on the activities of research for health, KBR. 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

PAHO's Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR) renewed



PAHO's Director, Carissa Etienne, appointed 6 new members and a new President to the organization's Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR).

The renewed ACHR has 13 members, retaining 6 of its current members and welcoming 7 new

members: Jaime Miranda (President), Jorge Maia Barreto, Josefina Coloma, Fernando Munoz Porrás, Ana L Sanchez, Nelly Salgado de Snyder and Karl Theodore. The Committee will hold virtual consultations and plans to meet in 2015 to advise PAHO's Director on matters relating to research for health and more specifically on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of PAHO's Policy on Research for Health. The Committee will also discuss a Strategy and Plan of Action for the said Policy. PAHO recognizes the exiting members, John Lavis (former President), Moises Goldbaum, Fernando de la Hoz Restrepo, and Ernesto Medina Sandino for their contributions to the great progress achieved in the area of research in these past years. It was during this period that the Policy on Research for Health, among other things, was developed and approved. More about PAHO's ACHR [here](#).

RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

In the Countries

Argentina

2nd National Meeting of Public Health Research, Buenos Aires



The 2^o National meeting of Public Health Research took place in Buenos Aires on

27 – 28 November 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to announce the research findings of the studies financed by the Carrillo-Oñativia Fellowships 2013, of the National Commission of Health Research (Comisión Nacional Salud Investiga). Hosted at the Medical Confederation of the Argentine Republic (COMRA, *by its acronym in Spanish*), the participants that attended the presentations were from the Nation's Ministry of Health, the provincial research focal points, and national experts and researchers. The goal of this meeting was to help to reduce the gap between the available knowledge and its utilization in the sanitary and clinical decisions for the benefit of the population. See more in:

http://saludinvestiga.org.ar/encuentro_2014.asp

7th National Meeting of the Ministerial Network of Areas of Health Research in Argentina (REMINSAs), 28 November



The purpose of this meeting was to share and analyze the different management experiences in provincial and regional research, and plan new lines of work in order to strengthen the national research system. Participants included the

ministerial referents of Health Research of all the jurisdictions of the country. During the meeting, Ms. Myrna Marti, advisor on Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research of PAHO presented the project ProEthos developed by KBR and Bireme/OPS. See more in: http://saludinvestiga.org.ar/reminsa_general.asp

The Argentinean Journal of Public Health (RASP, by its acronym in Spanish), published by the Ministry of Health of the Nation, has recently been indexed in e-journals of the Superior Council of Scientific Research of Spain. See the last issue in: <http://saludinvestiga.org.ar/indice-msal.asp?id=45>

Bolivia

RIMAIS meets in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, 25-27 November 2014.



The VI General Assembly of National Focal Points (Enlaces) of the Ministerial Ibero-American Network of Learning and Health Research (RIMAIS) was the occasion at which report on achievements and the processes in operation of 2014 were presented to its members. During the meeting two presentations were delivered: one on the preparation and the management of indicators of health research that impact the quality of the work at the national and Ibero-American level; and the second on Innovation in Health. One of the most important agreements taken in the Assembly was that RIMAIS will promote transnational and collaborative studies on health inequities contributing scientific evidence in order to influence the problem. To achieve this goal a proposal of this project will be submitted to EU-LAC Health and researchers of the member countries of RIMAIS will be invited to submit proposals to CYTED or other institutions to finance an equity network. See more [here](#).

Colombia

PAHO's policy on Research for Health and PAHO Art for Research exhibit presented at Universidad Javeriana, Cali.



The [3rd International Congress on Health Systems](#) / 3rd National Conference of Public Health “Equity and quality in health systems and services”, took place on the 3rd of October 2014, at the Universidad Javeriana, in Cali, Colombia. PAHO

guest speakers included Dr. Gina Watson (PAHO/WHO Representative to Colombia), Dr. Armando Guemes, Dr. Milton Guzmán and Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo. Dr. Cuervo joined Dr. Paula Braveman, Dr. Pablo Simón Lorda and university leaders convened by the Dean, to discuss the curriculum for a graduate program in Family Medicine. Dr. Cuervo delivered a plenary session and met with delegates from every Colombian School of Public Health to discuss [PAHO's Policy on Research for Health](#) (CD49/10). He also illustrated strategies to advance the Policy on Research for Health with an emphasis on research governance, knowledge translation, and good practices. He opened the [Art for Research](#) exhibit that was featured at the event. The youth were given prominence at the Congress; Dr. Cuervo met with students and teachers from the public health schools to discuss his experience and internship opportunities at PAHO.

Honduras

Initiative Planning for Success continues, two EPPE workshops offered in November and December, 2014.



Two new courses in Effective Planning and Evaluation Projects (EPPE) were offered in Honduras on 4-8 November and 1-5 December, 2014. Thirty-six students of the master's program participated in the course and each worked on a research protocol. Read more [here](#).

Suriname

Authorities vow to use research to improve health and development, October 2014

Surinamese authorities and leaders from UN agencies working towards promoting and using research for health and development attended a workshop geared towards advancing the implementation of the [PAHO's Policy on Research for Health](#)

(CD49/10). The workshop was led by Dr. Deborah Stijnberg (MoH) and Drs. Luis Gabriel Cuervo and Françoise Barten (PAHO), with the support from local authorities and PAHO's Country Representative, Dr. Guillermo Troya. The workshop encouraged cross sectorial cooperation to achieve health and development goals for health. In addition, Dr. Cuervo met different stakeholders and visited research centers in Paramaribo. During his visit, he conducted one-on-one conversations and demonstrated key tools such as the [Health Research Web \(HRWeb\)](#), the [International Clinical Trials Registry Platform \(ICTRP\)](#), [Testing Treatments](#), the [Evidence Portal](#), and the [EQUATOR Network](#). A proposal was made to document the process with the Ministry of Health.

In the Secretariat

Strategic Partnerships

Organization of the American States (OAS): Strengthening Human Resources involved in Research



In October 2014, PAHO–OAS and The Coimbra Group granted [75 scholarships](#) to Latin American and Caribbean students to pursue postgraduate studies in health. This new initiative has resulted from the recently signed agreement between PAHO and The OAS. As per this agreement, the OAS and [The Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities \(GCUB\)](#) expanded their scholarship

program in 2014 to include masters and doctoral level studies for programs related to health. This new initiative will advance the research for health policy, by advancing competencies of, and support for, human resources involved in research. Over 1,910 applicants from 18 OAS member countries applied to this new program, which is funded by GCUB, to study at Brazilian universities. See [press release](#).

The EQUATOR Network publishes *Guidelines for Reporting Health Research: A user's manual*.



A new publication written and edited by senior members of the EQUATOR Network and other prominent researchers has recently been published. The book provides a comprehensive guide to all those who are concerned with improving the conduct and quality of health research reporting. It places an emphasis on the importance of transparent and comprehensive health research reporting, the role that reporting guidelines play in facilitating this, and the characteristics of a good reporting guideline. Packed with practical advice and guidance, it is an important tool to help researchers make their studies complete, transparent, useful and publishable. It describes, in a clear and easy to understand format, over a dozen internationally approved guidelines such as, CONSORT, STROBE and PRISMA. Furthermore, this book will act as an important reference for Journal editors and peer-reviewers. The book is exclusively on sale [here](#).

Cochrane Centre Canada: Research Webinars Live!



The Canadian Cochrane Centre continues to offer a rich program of webinars in support of PAHO's Policy on Research for Health, with an emphasis on research transparency and governance, knowledge translation, and research standards. The latest webinars include topics such as "the establishment of a rapid response mechanism for evidence informed policies", "selective outcome reporting", systematic reviews and animal studies, and using health systems evidence. To access the recorded webinars or subscribe to live webinars (free), visit <https://ccnc.cochrane.org/cochrane-canada-live-webinars>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

EU-LAC Health Project meeting in Madrid.



The [EU-LAC Health Project](#) met in Madrid in October to further advance the alignment and collaboration in research for health between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean. In a [Roadmap Validation and Consultation meeting](#), attendees discussed the cross EU-LAC funding coordination and the alignment of proposals with the regional policies. Additionally, the creation of a coordinating body to implement the roadmap for cooperation between the regions was discussed. Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo participated and delivered a presentation outlining the regional policies in public health, how they are related to every EU-LAC Health priority topic, and highlighted the strategic importance of engaging North American partners.

INFORMATION PRODUCTS

New Article: Adherence to research reporting guidelines in biomedical journals in Latin America and the Caribbean,

This article, authored by Demián Glujovsky, Eleana Villanueva, Ludovic Reveiz and Renato Murasaki, reports on a study that evaluated the knowledge that the editors of LILACS-indexed journals have concerning the promotion and use of research reporting guidelines available in the website of the EQUATOR Network (Enhancing Quality and Transparency of Health Research). The article also revealed the journals' requirements for use of the guidelines in their publications, and the editors' opinions of the guidelines and of their limited use. Read more in: [Rev Panam Salud Pública](#). 2014; 36(4):232-7.

Letter to the Editor: Addressing violence following televised sports events—a need for reliable data

This letter highlights the importance of obtaining reliable data to avoid misconceptions and to prepare, deliver and evaluate public health interventions that reduce violence related to sports broadcasting, such as death rates, injuries, and assaults. It also refers to UK studies that show how collecting accurate data and identifying indicators and algorithms to establish causality have started with consensus on a definition. Read the letter, published in [Rev Panam Salud Pública 36\(3\), 2014](#).

Journals reunite for reproducibility.



A rigorous and transparent approach to research shines a light on reproducibility that facilitates the independent verification of research methodology, data and findings which lead to the advancement of science. The four cornerstones of the scientific method, rigor, transparency, reproducibility and independent verification are upheld by the use of a common set of principles and guidelines that will aid the design and reporting of scientific research.

With this goal in mind, journal editors (representing 30 major journals), representatives from funding agencies and scientific leaders convened in June 2014 at the American Association for the Advancement of Science headquarters, where they addressed the magnitude of the problem of reproducibility. The resounding message from the meeting was that transparency and reproducibility are important. The outcome of this meeting was the formation of a common set of [principles and guidelines in reporting Pre-Clinical Research](#) that will promote transparency and reproducibility. See more [here](#).

Journals and industry collaborate on new authorship framework to improve transparency of industry-sponsored research



A recently published article in the Biomed Central Medicine elucidates on a Five-step Authorship Framework to Improve Transparency in

Disclosing Contributors to Industry-sponsored Trial Publications. The article describes a research project directed by the Medical Publishing Insights and Practices Initiative (MPIP), in collaboration with academic researchers that aims to enhance the transparency when assigning authorship for clinical trials publications. Authorship issues can result from ambiguous definitions and guidelines which lead to a lack of transparency with regards to the intellectual contributions of authors. By providing readers with a structured five-step framework, MPIP and its collaborators will increase the consistency and clarity of authorship-decisions for clinical trials publications. The Five-step Authorship Framework are: 1. Identify a representative group to establish authorship criteria early in the trial; 2. Reach consensus among all trial contributors concerning these criteria; 3. Document trial contributions; 4. Objectively determine who should be invited to participate in the manuscript development process; 5. Ensure authors meet all authorship criteria. See the full article [here](#).

Thinking before liking

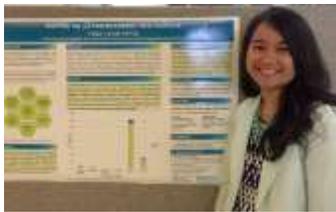


A website, [Comparte con cuidado](#) [Share with care], where readers can get advice on how to critically access the source and content of the health information they read has been launched. The increasing use of social media (Facebook, Google & YouTube to name a few) has transformed the way in which Health information can be disseminated. Whilst health information can be shared with a wider network of people, the phenomenon of a 'filter bubble' is undermining the positive influence that social media can play on the translation of health information. A filter bubble refers to the phenomenon whereby the information viewed by an individual is influenced by their past behaviors, and confirmation bias, on social media. Giordano Perez-Gaxiola conducted a study to establish the effects of a filter bubble on contentious health

topics such as vaccine use. The findings on this phenomenon were [presented](#) by at the [22nd Cochrane Colloquium](#) and this led to the launching of the site: [Comparte con Cuidado](#).

Research for Health Interns

Mapping the LAC Cancer Research Health System



Bridget Lee is conducting a scoping review of cancer research health systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. This project describes clinical trials and research according to most common cancer types in this region and the type of studies, e.g., treatment, prevention, and survivorship. This project builds on cancer clinical trials registration and enrolment. Bridget presented her report at the University of Saskatchewan, where she is doing her MPH.

Research interest Group (RIG): Collaborative Research, 17 November 2014

For this Research Interest Group, interns Nick Hart and Pablo Rodríguez invited Dr. Stephane Berghmans, Vice President of Academic & Research Relations for the European Union at Elsevier, to speak on the issue of research cooperation between countries. Dr. Berghmans presented an intriguing array of data on how these connections between countries manifest themselves. A key take away message is that often, countries follow linguistic or cultural patterns in deciding the nations with which to cooperate in generating impactful research. The issue of open access data in research was touched on, and Dr. Berghmans responded to attendee's questions about generating impactful research and the path to a career in research.

Research interest Group (RIG): Consumer and patient influence on research, 8th December 2014.



Pauline Obale hosted the RIG that featured Mr. William Vaughan as a guest speaker. He spoke about the influence consumers and patients can have on research and research priorities, so as to improve healthcare. Mr. Vaughan, who is currently a volunteer for

Consumers United for Evidence-Based Healthcare (CUE), of the Cochrane Collaboration, and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, drew on his current experience of over 50 years, to provide a fascinating and stimulating presentation that was thought-provoking. Attendees were fully engaged during the talk and ensuing Q&A session.

KBR interns got Talent

Internships at PAHO are not “all work and no play”. Over the course of their internships, interns will be presented with a host of opportunities to demonstrate their creative abilities.



During “Wellness week” 2014, PAHO challenged interns to come up with a catchphrase that could encompass the environmental impact to be had by drinking from a reusable travel mug. The competition was won by Belen Altieri whose slogan “Change is in your hands” is now printed on PAHO travel mugs. The goal is that by using these reusable 16 oz. double wall stainless steel tumbler, PAHO staff and interns will be more environmentally-friendly.

PAHO's Got Talent



PAHO hosted its first ever talent competition to showcase staff's talents in all sorts of areas such as singing, dancing, and comedy, among others. Pauline Obale (pictured) an intern with the Research Promotion and Development team, represented Knowledge Management Bioethics and Research (KBR). Her beautiful rendition of the popular British song "A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square", a song covered by Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and Rod Stewart amongst others, moved members of the audience to tears, earning her a standing ovation and the first prize. Watch her performance [here](#) and view [pictures](#) from the entire talent show.

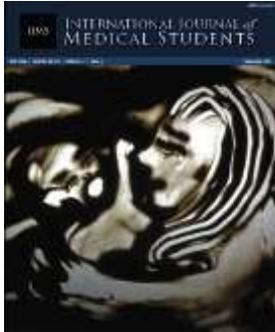
To read more about our past interns, click [here](#).

RECOGNITIONS

New degree for former KBR staff

Our former colleague, Dr. Evelina Chapman, recently obtained her PhD in public health and research methodology from the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (UAB)—graduating with the highest score at UAB. We congratulate Evelina on her achievement. Over the 4 years she spent as the coordinator of the EVIPNet Americas, Dr. Chapman was instrumental in advancing the EVIPNet Americas and knowledge translation at PAHO. Dr. Chapman is now at PAHO Brazil working in the *Mais Medicos* Project.

Art for Research artist featured by the International Journal of Medical Students



Shelly Xie, who contributed to PAHO's Art for Research project "[Transformation for Development](#)" was featured for her work in Vol. 2, Number 3 of *The International Journal of Medical Students*. Shelly's sand animation art which depicted two stories, one on hookworm disease, "[Creating opportunities for the Silva's](#)" and another on Chagas "[A better future for the new baby](#)" was presented at the 52nd Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization with much success. Shelly is a medical student at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and has also presented her sand animations at TEDx, the American Society of Tropical of Medicine and Hygiene and in Brazil.