



Research for Health Newsletter

April – June 2015

A periodic, informative bulletin reporting on the activities of research for health from the office of Knowledge, Bioethics and Research 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 cuervolu@paho.org.

Twitter: @PAHOresearch

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HOT SPOT **Scholarships for Health**



Mexico, through CONACYT and AMEXCID, has allocated the first scholarships for postgraduate studies in health disciplines, as a result of the [OAS-PAHO agreement](#) signed in 2014 to facilitate the advancement of the Policy on Research for Health. With the opening of health and agriculture, applications grew substantially (increase of about 350%); 21 professionals applied (10% of the total scholarships); 8 will benefit

from health related scholarships mainly for Doctorate and Masters or specializations. The successful applicants were from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, United States and Panamá. In 2014 Brazil offered 75 scholarships for postgraduate health programs to applicants from 18 OAS Member States through Grupo Coimbra of Brazilian Universities. The program has been expanded for 2015 and 115 scholarships will be offered; the deadline for applications is 15 July, 2015 and the call is open to students from OAS Member States. Stop press...check the dates in the web, the deadline may be extended.

For more information, visit the OAS section of www.paho.org/researchportal/partnerships.

RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

In the Region

INCLEN revamps its networking

INCLEN meets after a long gap

The International Clinical Epidemiology Network (INCLEN) organized the 21st Global Meeting in February 2015 as part of their new strategic plan to rejuvenate the network and initiate collaborative multicentric studies. The meeting was held at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg-South Africa and the theme focused on using **“Collaborative Research for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals”**. Members of Board of Trustees and Regional Advisory Boards joined 53 other participants and called for funding and strategies to attract bright young researchers to sustain the organization.

Education

TDR postgraduate training program



Seven universities (3 in Africa, 2 in Asia, 1 in Latin America, and 1 in the Middle East) from low- and middle-income countries [have been selected to host the TDR international postgraduate training program](#), which will integrate implementation research in order to improve health throughout their respective

regions. As a result, over 200 Masters and Doctoral degrees will be awarded to students of low- and middle-income countries over the next four years. The first round of grants will begin during this academic year; however, each university will involve its own application process. For the Americas the coordination of this project will be done through the Universidad de Antioquia, in Medellin, Colombia.

In the Countries

Chile

PAHO Art for Research exhibit now displayed in Chile



The [Art for Research exhibitions](#) are to be displayed at the Ministry of Health's Unit for Cultural Heritage. The exhibit opened on May 28, 2015, for one year, and will be complemented with rotating exhibits throughout the country. This exhibits show how research for health as a driver of human development and illustrate the role of research in innovation, finding solutions to complex problems, and

leading to progress and returns that reach society through other sectors of government and economy. Photography works from talented artists Jane Dempster (Australia), Theo Chalmers (United Kingdom), and Shelly Xie (United States) are featured. You are invited to visit and share the collections on www.paho.org/artforresearch and [social media](#).

Peru

PAHO's Advisory Committee on Health Research chair, Dr. Jaime Miranda, awarded honorary Doctorate



Doctor Juan Jaime Miranda Montero received an honorary doctorate from Antenor Orrego Private University (UPAO) on May 18, 2014. Dr. Miranda Montero is a distinguished Peruvian academic and medical doctor. He has a Doctorate in Epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, is a member of the Faculty of Public Health of the Royal College of Physicians (UK) a Professor at the Cayetano Heredia University, and a prolific scientist and writer. Congratulations on this phenomenal accomplishment!

United States

Congratulations to featured artist on PAHO's Art for Research Shelly Xie on awards



Ms. Shelly Xie, a medical student at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center who fusions art and science by painting with sand on a light box. She uses compelling stories that illustrates the systemic interactions touching on environmental issues, prevention and health care to convey the role of research for health as a driver of transformation for development. She is a contributor to PAHO's Research for Health exhibitions that has been now in multiple countries of the Americas, in Europe and Africa. In 2014 Shelly was awarded the New England Biolabs Passion in Science Award for her use of art to convey the experiences of a mother and

daughter suffering of schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease. In March 2015, she delivered the 55th Annual Bailey K. Ashford Lecture at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine including her sand animation. She is now partnering with WHO entities and other organizations to expand her collections and develop an app or website for learning about worldwide health issues through art. Congratulations Shelly! Her PAHO contributions can be found at (www.paho.org/transformationfordevelopment)

In the Secretariat

Strategic Partnerships

WHO's use of research evidence in nutrition guidelines

To improve the competencies and support for human resources involved in research for health, the Department of Nutrition for Health and Development of the World Health Organization (WHO) through its coordination for Evidence and Programme Guidance is collaborating with PAHO's Office of Knowledge Bioethics and Research. WHO, the Micronutrient Initiative and the Latin American Society of Nutrition are training a group of professionals to strength core professional skills and advance the Policy on Research for Health. Trainees acquire hands-on expertise and use scientific tools tailored to the contemporary global environment in nutrition global policy for sustainable health and development. The selected participants come from Ecuador/Brazil (Diana Estevez), Mexico (Mónica Flores Urrutia) and Barbados (Brian Payne). They are working at WHO for 4 months and will later join the Micronutrient

Initiative Headquarters in Canada and visit the WHO regional office for the Eastern Mediterranean for 3 months. PAHO is supporting a seminar with them to familiarize them with specific tools to advance the Policy on Research for Health, facilitate knowledge translation and better research governance, and their integration with regional and local initiatives and networks. Participants of this multidisciplinary training programme will also receive courses on search for literature, public speaking, policy implementation and equity, Cochrane systematic reviews of biomedical literature and evidence summaries to inform policy at Cornell University. Finally they will participate in the symposium of the Latin American Society of Nutrition, in the Dominican Republic, in November 2015.



EQUATOR Network presents at 4th World Conference on Research Integrity in Rio de Janeiro

The EQUATOR Network, one of PAHO's strategic partners promoting transparency in research, research integrity and better reporting of research, had a prominent role at the 4th World Conference on Research Integrity in Rio de Janeiro, May 31 to June 3, 2015. To access the presentations and press release, visit the [EQUATOR Network website](#). The event gathered over 600 delegates from 55 countries. Results of the EQUATOR-PAHO partnership were also presented at the event, as well as proposals for journal editors and authors to enhance research reporting, as recommended in PAHO's Policy on Research for Health.

Research Interest Group

Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw



Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw, Co-Chair of the Cochrane Collaboration, Director of Cochrane Canada, Senior Scientist at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, and Full Professor at the University of Ottawa, Department of Medicine spoke at the Research Interest Group on April 8, 2015. Research Interest Groups are hosted by the Department of Knowledge Management, Bioethics, and Research

involving an informal 20 minute presentation followed by a 40 min dialogue. Dr. Grimshaw focused on opening access to research and research involvement, discussing how an emergent and inclusive collaboration has inspired thousands of volunteers sharing common values and goals, to grow from the periphery, innovate, transform and lead on strategic developments that are bringing better production

and use of research for health. The meeting was organized by Drs. Rita Lechuga and Julia Rodriguez, interns at PAHO.

Dr. Carolyn Simpkins



Dr. Carolyn Wong Simpkins, Clinical Director and General Manager of the North America BMJ Publishing Group, Global Lead for BMJ Outcomes, and board-certified Duke and Johns Hopkins trained internist, spoke at the Research Interest Group on May 21, 2015. This discussion focused on BMJ outcomes, which aim to improve the value of healthcare interventions by accelerating the development and use of outcomes measures that matter to patients. Interns Rita Lechuga and Julia Rodriguez organized this discussion.

Ms. Hilda Bastian

Ms. Hilda Bastian, an academic editor at the open access journal PLOS Medicine, member of Wikipedia's WikiProject Medicine, and member of the PLOS One Human Research Ethics Advisory Group. She also works at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) at the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) in the National Library of Medicine (NLM) spoke at the Research Interest Group on June 4, 2015. This discussion was focused on the history of research communication, consumer advocacy, analyzing evidence, and working to make evidence more widely accessible.



Drs. Rita Lechuga and Julia Rodriguez organized this discussion.

The PAHO Research Interest Group Welcomes Dr. Tracey Koehlmoos of the US Marine Corps on July 13th

The Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research department is excited to welcome Dr. Tracey Koehlmoos who serves as the Special Assistant to the Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. As a health systems and policy scientist specializing in leading complex tasks, program development and capacity building, Dr. Koehlmoos has lived and worked in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Indonesia for more than 20 years. She is an adjunct professor at George Mason University and is a former Army Air Defense Artillery officer.

Please join our special brown bag lunch event to discuss "Knowledge translation and the how-to's of policy advising" at the PAHO HQs Delegates Lounge Centre Room. Please RVSP by Thursday, July 9th if you are coming from outside PAHO. Any inquiries can be directed to Claudia Frankfurter within the Health Research Promotion and Development Department at frankfucla@paho.org.

Grants for Health Programs Implementation



The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research (AHP SR) - World Health Organization (WHO) developed a country-focused program to support the implementation of technical cooperation projects in the region of the Americas. The objective of the initiative is to facilitate improvements in program implementation through implementation research that is embedded within existing processes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

During the first week of June, a workshop was held in Rosario, Santa Fe where subsidies grantees had the opportunity to do a follow up on their programs results. Different representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico and Peru gave a presentation of their results. Dr. Ludovic Reveiz from the office of Knowledge Bioethics and Research at PAHO was the lead for this 2nd workshop that gives continuity to the grants initiative. To learn more about this program watch [this video](#) or [click here](#).

Advancing the Policy on Research for Health in Suriname

PAHO/WHO is supporting the authorities of Suriname in guiding the implementation of PAHO'S Policy on Research for Health and the development of its National Health Research System, including the establishment of baseline information to identify what is available, what needs to be strengthened, and what capacities and resources need to be developed.

In order to advance this process, Denis Ako-Arrey (PhD candidate) is working in the PAHO office's country office as a focal point for research policy implementation. He will conduct a mapping exercise and assessment of Suriname's National Health Research System to guide a needs assessment. He will organize policy recommendations based on PAHO'S Policy on Research for Health and support technical cooperation and training activities working with academia, research institutes, government sector, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders to enhance the availability, accessibility and quality of research as well as health research knowledge translation activities. His findings will feed into [Suriname's HRWeb page](#).

Interns in Research Promotion work summary

Chloe Adler

Chloe is currently working with PAHO's Sustainable Development and Health Equity team as well as its Department of Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research to propose a research agenda to address the UN's post-2015 Sustainable Development goals. She is an undergraduate student at the University of California, Los Angeles, where she is earning a dual degree in Human Biology and Society and International Development Studies. She is originally from San Francisco, California.

Denis Ako-Arrey

Denis Ako-Arrey is a MPH and a PhD candidate in Public Health Policy from McMaster University, working as a consultant in Suriname to support the advancement of the Policy on Research for Health, and the organization of capacity building activities on Effective Project Planning and Evaluation (in coordination with Suriname's BOG, the University of West Indies, the Universidad Autónoma de Honduras, WHO-Collaborating Center CIDEIM, TDR/WHO and PAHO).

Alejandra Aponte

Alejandra is assessing the research for health needs and capacities for indigenous communities in Guatemala, an internship in coordination with the Unit of Gender and Cultural Diversity. Alejandra is a second-year graduate student at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy where she is pursuing a degree in International Development Policy. She is focusing her studies on exploring strategies for using data/evaluation to improve the design and implementation of social programs. Before joining McCourt, Alejandra received a degree in Economics-Political Science from Columbia University in New York City.

Claudia Frankfurter

Claudia is currently working to develop a scorecard to assess the implementation of PAHO's Policy on Research for Health (CD49/10) in addition to drafting a roll-out plan with recommendations for its institutionalization and operationalization within PAHO and its Member States. Claudia is presently pursuing her doctorate of medicine within the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto in Canada. She completed her Bachelor of Health Sciences at McMaster University and has emerging interests in health policy, health systems, non-communicable diseases, and disaster management.

Michele Gilbert

During her internship Michele is supporting the PAHO-OAS scholarship program and using her knowledge of research methods and intervention design to develop an evaluation of the scholarships program and the related capacity building to advance the Policy on Research for Health. Michele is a

Master of Public Health candidate studying Health Promotion at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. She graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with a double major in Psychology and German Studies and is from New York City.

Alexandria Kristensen-Cabrera

Alexandria is mapping and analyzing the utilization of select PAHO/WHO strategies and policies (Policy on Research for Health and Strategy and Plan of Action on eHealth) by member states and relevant stakeholders. Alexandria is a senior at the University of Notre Dame studying Science-Business and International Development Studies.

Dr. Rita Lechuga

Dr. Rita is working to support the development and implementation of baseline and progress assessments relevant to the advancement of PAHO's Policy on Research for Health and in addition to updating information about national health research systems. She is currently completing her Master's degree in Public Health at George Washington University. She graduated from Medical School in Mexico City. Her research interests include epidemiology and Global Health focusing on Latin America. She plans on starting a medical residency program in Internal Medicine.

Mary Rocío Mensa Franco

Throughout her time at PAHO Mary Rocío will be preparing a roadmap proposal for the development of an indigenous health research system in Colombia. Mary Rocío is from Cauca, Colombia and is an indigenous of the Nasa nation. She's doing her MPH at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali, Colombia. Her internship is done in coordination with the unit of Gender and Cultural Diversity

Dr. Julia Rodriguez

Dr. Julia Rodriguez is conducting an assessment of the research internship program using qualitative and quantitative methods as well as supporting the expansion of the Art for Research project. She is a medical doctor from the Dominican Republic and has recently completed her Master's degree in Public Health from University of Wolverhampton, UK. Her research interests include public policy, global health and epidemiology.



Some of PAHO's Research Promotion and Development Interns, from left to right: Alexandria Kristensen Cabrera, Michele Gilbert, Dr. Rita Lechuga and Alejandra Aponte at PAHO Headquarters in Washington, DC, USA.

PARTNERSHIPS

#saveCochraneCanada



Through its partnership with PAHO/WHO, the Canadian Cochrane Centre has been an asset to its citizens by providing high-quality information about how to produce and use meaningful research, and was accessed by people globally, especially from the Americas. With PAHO, the Center has produced [65 webinars reaching over 2600 connections](#) (to rooms and individual participants) since 2012. Recordings have been used as reference materials over 40,000 times; webinars began in 2009 so the influence is even larger. The selection of the topics has considered the objectives of Policy on Research for Health issued in 2009. Support the Canadian Cochrane Centre to secure its funding by September 2015 by joining the social media #saveCochraneCanada campaign.

During the month of April, Cochrane Canada Director, Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw separately visited PAHO HQ in Washington DC. Conversations were held to explore how to continue and which new approaches can be done through the partnerships with PAHO. Cochrane Canada live webinars continue to be supported by PAHO and their recordings are available [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Global Forum 2015 Manila, Philippines



As world leaders shift their focus to the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals, a firm understanding of the impact of research and innovation on health is critical; they have transformed health outcomes, and also national economic growth and sustainable development. This Forum offers a space for those in low- and middle-income countries to assume a primary role in defining the global health research agenda through the presentation of solutions and the creation of effective partnerships.

The Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED) organizes [this forum](#) through a partnership with the Philippines; this will provide a unique global platform where the global health research and innovation agenda can be set collaboratively while keeping the ultimate outcome of improving health, equity, and socioeconomic development in focus. This is made possible thanks to the enthusiastic support of the Philippines' Department of Science and Technology, Department of Health, and the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development.

REWARD/EQUATOR Conference 2015 in Edinburgh, UK from 28-30 September 2015



REWARD

REduce research **WA**ste and **R**eward **D**iligence

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Registration opened for the [REWARD/EQUATOR Conference](#) and the call for abstracts is available. The conference will be of great interest to health research scientists and

clinicians, journal editors and peer reviewers, publishers, regulators, research funders and other professionals involved in research education, research governance and the publication of medical research. Featured at the conference will be a combination of EQUATOR and REWARD topics, a review of *The Lancet* Research Waste series, discussion surrounding improvement of research quality and efficiency, and derivation of a consensus statement and action plan for making progress against Research Waste series. Keynote speakers include Sir Iain Chalmers, Prof Doug Altman, and Prof Rustam Al-Shahi Salman, along with the Annual Equator Lecture presented by Dr Luis Gabriel Cuervo (PAHO). The [conference programme](#) will also feature an expert practical session for journal editors on reducing the number of unusable research articles.

Research for health seedbeds Colombia



The Society of Surgery of Bogotá and the Foundation of Health Sciences welcome students, teachers and researchers to the Third National Meeting of Research Seedbeds, on August 4-6, 2015 with the participation of Health Sciences Faculty of Colombia. There will be a pre-conference presentation of research workshops in the categories of oral presentation, poster and electronic poster. This is an opportunity to share experiences in research for health and to network

with students, teachers and researchers from the faculties of health sciences in the country. More information at <http://semilleros.fucsalud.edu.co/>

Meeting of WHO Regional Research leaders to follow on the observatory of research on innovation for health



Research advisors from WHO regional offices and Headquarters meet to retake the dialogue of coordination and harmonization that conducted to efficiency and that potentiated projects relevant to the Research for Health Policy. Focal points from six regional offices met under coordination of the Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research, this kind of meetings used to be done with the WHO

Advisory Committee of Research for Health but stopped in 2010. The re-establishment of this dynamic under WHO's leadership is an opportunity to re-establish the team work and dynamics that brought harmonization and coordination to trans-regional initiatives of high impact, such as [EVIPNet](#), regional support to WHO's Guideline Review Committee, the [International Clinical Trial Registry Platform](#), the Strategy on Research for Health, and other strategic developments.

INFORMATION PRODUCTS

Pan American Journal of Public Health



Workshop on writing scientific papers and scientific literature search in Argentina, 2015

As PAHO's scientific journal, the mission of the [Pan American Journal of Public Health](#) is to publish scientific evidence pertinent to the Organization Plan of Action and relevant to the countries. In this context, at the country level there is a need to strengthen the scientific writing skills and scientific literature search skills of researchers and authors.

In the last two years the Journal team along with the country counterparts has provided workshops on *How to write scientific papers* and *How to search scientific literature*. Examples include workshops in Peru (to researchers working on drug policies), Argentina/ Brazil/ Paraguay (to author's writing papers on leishmaniasis), the

Dominican Republic (authors, editors and researchers) and Argentina (same target audience). Initiatives are underway to further disseminate and share these workshops and related materials through virtual meetings and written methodologies.

In memoriam

Dr. David Sackett



Widely recognized as the “father of evidence based medicine”, Dr. David Sackett passed away on May 13, 2015 at the age of 80. Sackett grew up in a Chicago suburb and completed his medical training at the University of Illinois. Throughout his time with the US Public Health Service, he came across some epidemiologists, became fascinated with the interaction of epidemiology and clinical medicine, and soon came to derive the discipline today referred to

as “clinical epidemiology”. In 1967, he joined the inaugural medical faculty at McMaster University’s medical school as a professor. It was during this time he compiled a book entitled “Clinical Epidemiology: a Basic Science for Clinical Medicine”, which has been guiding evidence-based medicine ever since. In 1994, he became the director of the Center for Evidence-Based Medicine at Oxford University, and soon after, the first chair of the Cochrane Collaboration. He retired in Canada in his last years of life, and is survived by his wife, four sons, and eight grandchildren.

Dr. Arturo Morillo

We are remembering [Professor Arturo Morillo MD](#) who passed away in April 2015 at the age of 90. A neurophysiologist by training, he served as a leader in many settings, including as a faculty member and Dean of Medicine at Universidad Javeriana in Colombia. He became the Executive Director of the International Clinical Epidemiology Network (INCLIN) from 1991 to 1996 and led its expansion in low and middle income countries increasing the influence of clinical epidemiology and laying the grounds and human resources support that facilitated the expansion of evidence-informed health care and the growth of the Cochrane Collaboration. He is survived by his wife and children, three of whom are also researchers and who continue his legacy of leadership in research for health.”

Good to know

Want to maximize the impact of your research?

Check these short clips and learn about a leading edge resource to have the best impact and enhance the usefulness and visibility of your research [click here](#).

WHO calls for trial registration

<http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1001819>

Research for Health in the Americas

<https://youtu.be/ZT663dtKlw?list=PL453DD53E93169678>

This newsletter has been compiled by Dr. Julia Rodríguez Abreu with support from Luis Gabriel Cuervo and Claudia Frankfurter, and contributions from PAHO Research interns (Dr. Rita Lechuga, Michele Gilbert, Alexandria Kristensen-Cabrera), staff from PAHO's Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research office, and focal points in Member States. Thanks to all who contributed.