



Research for Health Newsletter

July-September 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

Find this Newsletter in our [Research Portal](#)

HOT SPOT

OAS-PAHO Scholarships

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Argentina Bolivia Canada Chile Colombia Costa Rica Dominican Republic Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala 	 <p><small>OAS-PAHO agreement signed on February 12, 2014*</small></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Haiti Honduras Jamaica Mexico Nicaragua Panama Paraguay Peru United States Venezuela
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20
countries
benefit

82
scholarships
in 2015

130+
scholarships
in 2016

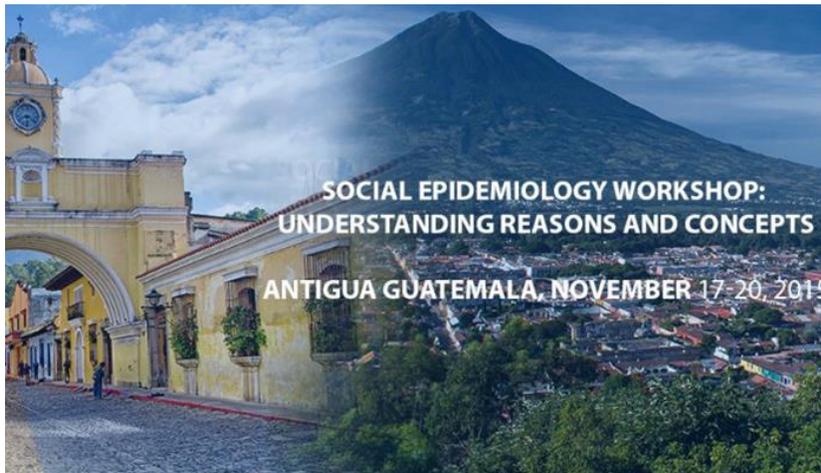
Health
graduate
degrees

In 2014, OAS and PAHO entered a [strategic alliance](#) to strengthen education and health resources in the region by providing scholarships to Master and Doctorate level studies in areas related to health. The selection committee is still reviewing applications for scholarships to Brazilian universities. Prior updates regarding this scholarship program can be found in previous [newsletters](#). The application period for scholarships for universities in Mexico has ended and applications will be reviewed shortly. [More information can be found here.](#)

RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

In the Region

Social Epidemiology Workshop – November 17th- 20th 2015, Guatemala



The Social Epidemiology Workshop aims to provide viable solutions to the challenges of public health and is being supported by PAHO/WHO, the International Epidemiological Association (IEA), and other public health actors. There will be over 50 attendees from 14 different countries. This event was organized in response to IEA's 4th International Course on

Epidemiological Methods in 2012. Invited speakers include top researchers and professors from the Netherlands, Colombia, USA, United Kingdom, Canada, Peru, and Brazil. It will bring together scientific communities and minds from all over the world and its main objectives are:

- To update theories and constructions of social epidemiology used to generate significant results in population research
- To disseminate lesson learned, when the focus of social epidemiology is used to provide training
- To effectively communicate research results to decision makers and participants
- To encourage knowledge translation and promote entrepreneurial and proactive behavior in participants
- To foster relationships between global, national and local public health systems in academic, health works, and communities to undertake appropriate research.

More information can be found at <http://sewag.org> and on their [Facebook group](#). (Photo: SEWAG)

In the Countries

Colombia

3rd National Meeting of Research Seedbeds, August 4th-6th 2015



The ENISI Network had its [3rd National Meeting of Research Seedbeds](#) at the Fundación Universitaria de Ciencias de la Salud. It was a great success with the presentation of over 350 research outputs (papers, posters, oral presentations) by 700 participants from 55 Colombian universities, much more than in previous years. It is reassuring to see higher education institutions putting PAHO's Policy on Research for Health front and center, and

supporting human resources involved in research through the creation and empowerment of groups of young researchers that are also getting acquainted with new tools, standards and best practices.

Participants agreed on the importance of this event for the development of scientific knowledge, sharing experiences and further advancing the translation of knowledge and strengthening of human capital in research for health in Latin America with an interest in advancing science and its practical applications. A plenary session focused on PAHO's Policy on Research for Health and how researchers can build on it to promote good research standards and knowledge translation. National press and media highlighted the event through interviews and press releases, complementing the videos posted by the organizer. More information can be found here: <http://fundacionredcolsi.org/web/>. (Photos: FUCS)



Trudo Lemmens on Clinical Trials Transparency at the 5th Ibero-American Congress on Health Law

Professor Trudo Lemmens, member of PAHO's Advisory Committee on Health Research, gave a lecture on October 8th, 2015 on clinical trials transparency at the [5^o Congreso Iberoamericano de Derecho Sanitario](#), organized in Bogota by the National University of Colombia. In his lecture, Dr. Lemmens, the Scholl Chair in Health Law and Policy at the University of Toronto, emphasized that PAHO's Policy on Research for Health mandates that Member States implement adequate transparency measures. He argued that data integrity is an essential tool for the realization of the right to health. PAHO's Advisory Committee for Health Research has actively promoted clinical trials registration and results reporting in

the region. The interdisciplinary conference brought together international scholars, judges, and policy makers, to discuss the judicial enforcement of the right to health, the role of law in dealing with social determinants of health, risk regulation, the challenges created by new technologies, and the financing of health systems. Other speakers included former Advisory Committee member Dr. Fernando Pío de la Hoz of the Faculty of Medicine of the National University of Colombia.



Dr. Trudo Lemmens

Earlier in the year, in August, Trudo Lemmens also lectured on the same topic at a [Conference on Health and Human Rights](#) at the Torcuato Di Tella School of Law in Buenos Aires, where he was a visiting professor. The conference in Buenos Aires was organized in collaboration with Harvard University's [Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights](#) and the [O'Neill Institute for National & Global Health Law](#) of Georgetown University.

Suriname

Effective Project Planning and Evaluation Workshop, October 6th-9th 2015

In line with PAHO's Policy on Research for Health, an Effective Project Planning and Evaluation (EPPE) workshop was organized by PAHO Headquarters, PAHO Suriname, the Suriname Ministry of Health (MoH) and Bureau of Public Health (BoG) in Paramaribo, Suriname from October 6th to 9th, 2015. The objectives of this workshop were to provide a roadmap on how to develop and enhance strategic capacities and to advance Biomedical and Health Research in Suriname by empowering research teams. During the four days of hands-on training, eight teams of local researchers (four members per team) worked on strengthening their various research proposals and improving their skills on the planning, management and presentation of their research and ultimately improved the quality and competitiveness of their proposals. The 32 participants represented the Suriname MoH, BoG and Regional Health Service, Medical Missions, Anton De Kom University and the Suriname Public Health Association.



EPPE Participants. Photo: LG Cuervo

This workshop is part of a *train-the-trainers* scheme that TDR/WHO and PAHO/WHO have implemented throughout the region with special support from WHO-Collaborating Center CIDEIM and through which hundreds of research teams have been trained. Jackeline Alger, one of the workshop facilitators, is also a member of PAHO's Advisory Committee on Health Research.

For more information on the Effective Project Planning and Evaluation training, visit the link: http://www.who.int/tdr/publications/topics/project_planning_training/en/.

Mexico

24th National Forum on Health Research, November 10th-13th, 2015

The Directorate of Medical Services of the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) and the Unit for Education, Research and Health Policy, along with the Coordination of Health Research (CIS) are hosting the [24th National Forum on Health Research](http://www.foronacionaldeinvestigacion.org) in Centro Vacacional Oaxtepec, Morelos, Mexico. The theme of this year's forum is "Institutional Research Favored by International Cooperation". The forum is not open to the public and is solely intended for active researchers in Mexico who are registered with the IMSS, students and postgraduate fellows. More information can be found here: <http://www.foronacionaldeinvestigacion.org>.



Haiti

Article accepted for publication in PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases

In June 25, 2015, "[Control of dog mediated human rabies in Haiti: no time to spare](#)" was published in the open access journal PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases. Due to Haiti's recent history and PAHO's goal to "eliminate dog-mediated rabies in the American region by 2015", a mission was started in 2013 to assess the capabilities and impact of rabies surveillance and control programs in Haiti utilizing technical support by PAHO and resource support from Brazil in controlling this endemic disease. The study also assessed coordinating efforts from national and international partners such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Public Health and Population in Haiti, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This article is a crucial step in evaluating the current status of rabies and thus making informed recommendations for the future. The attached photo depicts the need for a consistent electrical supply to ensure vaccines stay at the proper temperature which is an obstacle in Haiti.



Solar panels. (Photo: Co-authors/ PLOS)

Full reference: Millien, Max F., Jocelyne B. Pierre-Louis, Ryan Wallace, Eduardo Caldas, Jean M. Rwangabgoba, Jean L. Poncelet, Ottorino Cosivi, und Victor J. Del Rio Vilas. "Control of Dog Mediated Human Rabies in Haiti: No Time to Spare". Herausgegeben von Charles E Rupprecht. PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases 9, Nr. 6 (25. June 2015): e0003806. Doi:10.1371/journal.pntd.0003806

Brazil

Expert Group on Monitoring and Evaluation of Mais Médicos

From September 16th -17th 2015, a group of experts gathered at PAHO's Brazil office in Brasilia to discuss the monitoring and evaluation of "Mais Médicos", an initiative that brings Cuban doctors to municipalities in Brazil that are lacking health personnel. The Expert Group was assembled in order to accumulate and disseminate knowledge (data and studies) about this program, and make recommendations for its immediate improvement and future



Photo: PAHO

implementation. This is one installation in a series of meetings to openly discuss all facets of this program that seeks to alleviate health inequity and catalyze collaboration among leading experts to properly analyze and strengthen Mais Médicos. Participants from Brazil's Ministry of Health, and PAHO's offices in Brazil and Washington DC were in attendance. As a follow up to this meeting, a Mais Médicos research seminar will be held in partnership with ABRASCO on November 18th and 19th at the PAHO office in Brasilia. More information can be found [here](#).

In the Secretariat

1st Meeting between PAHO's Director Dr. Carissa Etienne and ACHR President Dr. Jaime Miranda



From left, PAHO Assistant Director Dr. Francisco Becerra, PAHO Director Dr. Carissa Etienne, ACHR President Dr. Jaime Miranda and ACHR Secretary Dr Luis Gabriel Cuervo.
Photo: LG Cuervo

On September 4th, 2015, Dr. Jaime Miranda and Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo of the Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR/CAIS) met with Dr. Carissa Etienne and Dr. Francisco Becerra, Director and Assistant Director of PAHO. This marked the first in-person meeting since Dr. Miranda's appointment as President of ACHR/CAIS. During the meeting, the Director emphasized that she wants PAHO to be a leading knowledge-based organization, with a strong emphasis on the use of research evidence to inform decisions, and support for the strategic implementation of the Policy on Research for Health in the Americas.

PAHO's ACHR/CAIS is comprised of experts from throughout the Americas who make recommendations to PAHO leadership in order to better respond to health needs in the Americas. This committee has spearheaded multiple innovative projects over the past 50 years to coordinate and support health research in the region. To learn more about ACHR/CAIS, [click here](#).

Joint Program of Work with Cochrane Collaboration

On July 7, 2015, PAHO and senior delegates from the Cochrane Collaboration met at PAHO HQ to discuss a joint program of work for the coming year. Among the visitors were Dr. Lisa Bero (co-chair at Cochrane), Jordi Pardo (Canadian Cochrane Centre), Bobby Scherer (US Cochrane Center), and Sylvia DeHaan, who has been appointed by Cochrane as the liaison officer with WHO. The coordination at PAHO was led by Dr. Ludovic



Reveiz. The Cochrane Collaboration is an NGO in official relations with WHO.



Research Interest Group

Dr. Anne S. Douds



On August 27, the Office of Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research welcomed Dr. Anne S. Douds to PAHO's headquarters to speak about research translation in the field of criminal justice. Dr. Douds, who worked for 20 years as a trial lawyer in Pennsylvania, now specializes in the practical application of empirical data to develop and improve policy and practices within courts and prisons. Her work in this capacity has included consulting on the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice's vaccination policies, and serving as principal investigator for the evaluation of Pennsylvania's Veterans' Courts. Dr. Douds spoke to the group about the need for health research and its translation within the context of the justice system, based on experiences from her own work with those involved in the system. This event was organized by PAHO interns Chloe Adler and Michele Gilbert.

Meet the Newest Team Members

Alicia Lightbourne

Alicia Lightbourne is currently writing a historical review of the recent years of the advisory committee for health research. She also supports various programs that promote PAHO's Policy on Research for Health throughout the Americas, including clinical trial transparency and capacity building.



Alicia recently graduated with a Master of Public Health from Tulane University and holds a BA in Human Evolutionary Biology from Harvard. She is from the Bahamas.

Louisa Stuwe



Louisa Theresa Stuwe is a multilingual health systems practitioner experienced in social and health policy monitoring, project management and strategy development both within the public and the private sector. Before working as a consultant for PAHO's Office of Knowledge, Bioethics and Research, she was a technical officer with the Research and Innovation Department of the French Ministry of Health and a consultant for the World Health Organization Europe Office on immunization policies in the Balkan and Caucasus regions. Some of her prior assignments include the position of Public Affairs and Strategic Monitoring Project Manager for GlaxoSmithKline and Consultant for the World Bank Group, assisting in strategic planning, organization and documentation of regional high-level multi-stakeholder events. Louisa holds a Master of Public Administration from Sciences Po Paris and a Master of Public Health from the EHESP French School of Public Health.

PARTNERSHIPS

EQUATOR Network website launched in Spanish

As highlighted in their [most recent newsletter](#), the EQUATOR Network has developed a condensed Spanish version that has been launched within the EQUATOR website. Developed in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization, the Spanish resources pages aim to make it easier for Spanish-speaking users to locate relevant information on research reporting standards and to access a growing number of resources that are available in Spanish.

The Spanish pages can be found at: <http://www.equator-network.org/library/spanish-resources-recursos-en-espanol/>

Cochrane Collaboration Launch of EvidenceMap.org

The Cochrane Collaboration launched EvidenceMap.org, an online hub for gathering and disseminating systematic reviews. It provides a searchable database of systematic reviews ordered by specialty area. It includes CRISP (Cochrane Reviews Identified and Summarised for Policy) with summaries of Cochrane Reviews that are relevant to health policy. More information at <http://policymakers.evidencemap.org/>



MoU with Canadian Cochrane to extend partnerships for 5 more years



PAHO/WHO and the [Canadian Cochrane Centre](#) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding extending their partnership for 5 more years. This partnership focuses on improving the use of health research in policy and practice and will help to develop capacities to better integrate research results with policies, health care and prevention, and to address equity issues through research. It will also help strengthen the work with the Cochrane Collaboration throughout the region and support the Pan American Sanitary Bureau to better use systematic reviews and other research outputs in its technical cooperation. The ongoing collaboration between PAHO/WHO and the Canadian Cochrane Centre has been beneficial not just to Canadians but to many in the region. The Center has produced 65 live webinars with over 2600 connections (rooms and individual participants). The recorded webinars are used as reference materials and have had over 40,000 downloads. Topics have been selected considering the objectives of Policy on Research for Health for the Americas.

Directing Council Exhibit on PAHO Collaborations

During the 54th Directing Council in September 2015, PAHO took the opportunity to highlight WHO collaborating centres (WHOCC) and partnerships with other organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS). Of particular note, three collaborating centers actively contribute to the implementation of the Policy on Research for Health; achievements made possible through each collaboration are noted below:

- **WHOCC for Evidence-Informed Policy, McMaster University**- Integration of scientific research with health policy, prevention and health care delivery; development of standards and guidelines to assess scientific evidence; access to indexed evidence summaries, strategic documents on health systems research issues; development of a single entry point to evidence summaries for health care, policy and prevention; contributions towards the updates of the WHO Handbook for Guideline Development
- **WHOCC for Complexity Science for Health Systems, Centre for Disease Control, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia** - Advances knowledge of complex issues and the use of methodologies to address them such as the rate of spread of infectious diseases, HIV treatment optimization, scaling up cost-effective strategies, network analysis of bibliometric health systems data, and understanding organizational complexity networks
- **WHOCC for Knowledge Translation and Health Technology Assessment in Health Equity, Institute of Population Health, Centre for Global Health, University of Ottawa** – Literature review informed development of synthetic key thematic elements for “Older adults in Health Equity Impact Assessment Guidance Tool”; hosted Canadian Conference on Global Health; development of patient decision aids; exploration of equity effectiveness at Summit on Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH).

Plenaries of 23rd Annual Cochrane Colloquium now available online

The 2015 Cochrane Colloquium took place in Vienna, Austria from October 3rd to 7th, 2015. Recordings of the plenaries are now available from a playlist on Cochrane's YouTube channel: <http://t.co/YIZnPcSjkQ>



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

2015 REWARD/EQUATOR Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland



From September 28th to 30th, Research Waste (REWARD) and the EQUATOR Network held a joint conference to address the common topic of increasing the value of research and reducing research waste (REWARD and EQUATOR). There is evidence that substantial amounts of research end up having no impact because it has flaws or is not delivered in ways that make it useful. The initial series of

articles on research waste can be found here <http://www.thelancet.com/series/research>, and a more recent article that was published the week of the event can be found [here](#).

Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo, Senior Advisor for Research Promotion and Development at PAHO/WHO, delivered the 2015 EQUATOR Annual Lecture on addressing issues such as research waste and research reporting standards through a systems approach. Although the series focused on basic and clinical research, Dr. Cuervo illustrated aspects in public health, implementation, and health systems research where it is critical to use research evidence to inform sound decisions. In attendance were over 230 delegates from 28 countries including editors from many top peer-review journals (such as BMJ, Lancet, BMC and PLoS) and members of international health research agencies from the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, France and the United Kingdom. More information on the conference can be found at

<http://researchwaste.net/research-wasteequator-conference/>. Additional commentary of the event can be found on Twitter, using the hashtag #researchwaste15.

PAHO has a formal and strategic agreement with the EQUATOR Network. The partnership has allowed enhancing access to the top collection of research reporting standards for biomedical research including developing an interface in Spanish and a new one in Portuguese is in the works; this is the resource that leading journals around the world use to guide peer-review, editing, and reporting of research for health.

Referenced articles:

Chalmers, I., & Glasziou, P. (July 2009). Avoidable Waste in the Production and Reporting of Research Evidence. *The Lancet*, 374, 86–89. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60329-9.

Moher, D., Glasziou, P., Chalmers, I., Nasser, M., Bossuyt, P.M., Korevaar, D.A., Graham, I.D., Ravaut, P., & Boutron, I. (September 2015) Increasing Value and Reducing Waste in Biomedical Research: Who's Listening? *The Lancet*, doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(15)00307-4.

INFORMATION PRODUCTS

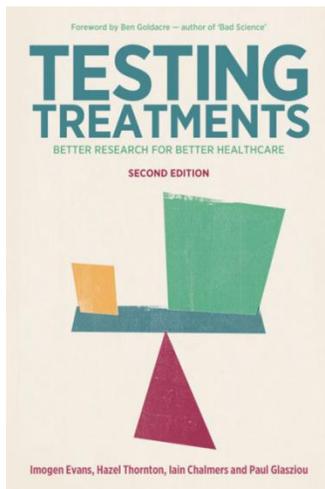
SPiRiT officially translated in Spanish



The Spanish translation of the SPiRiT guidelines has been approved and will be published soon. SPiRiT guidelines define standard protocol for clinical trials and can be found here <http://www.spirit-statement.org/> or through the [EQUATOR Network](#).

The Spanish translation of the SPiRiT guidelines has been approved and will be published soon. SPiRiT guidelines

Testing Treatments translated into Portuguese



Testing Treatments: Better Research for Better Healthcare is a book written for the public that demands more transparency in health and medicine. It is written by Imogen Evans, Hazel Thornton, Iain Chalmers, and Paul Glasziou, and for the first time, the [full text](#) and [interactive website](#) are available online in Portuguese. Other languages, including Spanish, French, and Dutch, can be found at <http://www.testingtreatments.org/>. Also, a printed version of *Testing Treatments* (as photographed with Dr. Iain Chalmers) is now available in Spanish from PAHO.



PRISMA Extension and Elaboration

New guidance has been issued to address equity in the production and reporting of systematic reviews. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) is a 27-item checklist intended to improve transparency and reporting of systematic reviews. The equity extension for PRISMA (PRISMA-E 2012) helps systematic reviewers to identify, extract, and synthesize evidence on equity in systematic reviews. Improved reporting can lead to better judgment of applicability by policy makers which may result in more appropriate policies and programs and may contribute to reductions in health inequities. The article can be accessed at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26348799>.

CONSORT Equity Extension and Protocol

An article on the [Protocol for the development of a CONSORT-equity guideline to improve reporting of health equity in randomized trials](#) has been published on implementationscience.com. CONSORT (Consolidated Standards for Reporting Trials) is a 25-item evidence-based guideline that encourages research transparency; this extension seeks to identify and promote equity-relevant trials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. María Isabel Rodríguez, Public Health Hero of the Americas



PAHO Director Dr. Carissa Etienne (left) and Dr. María Isabel Rodríguez (right). Photo: PAHO

Dr. Maria Isabel Rodriguez was presented with the “Public Health Hero of the Americas” award during the opening of the 54th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization on September 28, 2015. This was in recognition of her valuable sustained contributions to public health and health equity in the region, and for being a tremendous leader and role model who advanced the participation of women in public health and education. Congratulations, Dr. Rodriguez – an honor well deserved! Dr. Rodriguez

contributed to the [Art for Research](#) project highlighting her leadership in using research to support the development of human resources for health. More information can be found [here](#).

Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw

Dr. Jeremy Grimshaw, former co-chair of the Cochrane Collaboration and a guest speaker at PAHO's Research Interest Group, has been appointed as Co-Chair of the Campbell Collaboration, a group that produces evidence summaries on social issues and education. [More information here.](#)



Photo: Campbell Collaboration

IN MEMORIAM

Elizabeth Waters



Photo: University of Melbourne

Elizabeth (Liz) Waters passed away on September 22nd, 2015. She was the Jack Brockhoff Chair of Public Health and Director of the Brockhoff Child Health and Wellbeing Program at the University of Melbourne. Professor Waters also heavily involved in the Cochrane Collaboration as she held the position of Coordinator Editor of Cochrane Public Health and was the lead author of one of the most widely cited Cochrane Reviews, and was co-author on many others. She also had ties

with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, governments of Australia and other nations, and research, community and not for profit organizations. She was a tireless advocate for evidence in interventions, especially in child health. Our thoughts and condolences are with her family, friends and peers during this time. Information regarding a memorial service, an online memory book, or donations can be found [here](#).

This newsletter was made possible thanks to contributions by the Member States and the Office of Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research. It was compiled by the Office of Research Promotion and Development; Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo, Alicia Lightbourne, Mary Rocío Mensa Franco, and Louisa Stuwe.