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Improving Access to Public Health Information: A Study of Information Needs in a State Health Department

E. Hatheway Simpson
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Improving Access to Public Health Information: A Study of Information Needs in a State Health Department

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May 22, 2006

Medical Library Association Annual Meeting

Conducted by the University of Massachusetts Medical School Library
Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the
Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine; Project #TS-0734



Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project

- ❖ Evidence-based public health
 - Informed decisions for practice
- ❖ Information must be accessible
- ❖ What are the information needs and accessing preferences of the public health workforce?

Qualitative Study Methods

Study Sample:

19 Professionals at the Massachusetts
Department of Public Health

- 12 - Bureau of Communicable Disease Control
- 7 – Division of Community Health Promotion

Data Collection & Analysis

- Tape/transcribed key informant interviews & focus groups
- Thematic analysis of data; comparison across groups

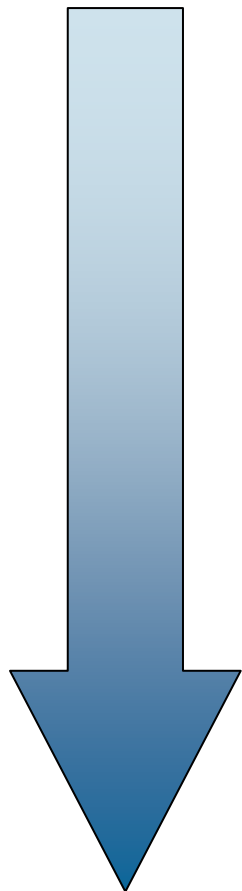
Questions Asked

- ❖ Type of work tasks performed requiring access to information?
- ❖ Information sources currently used?
- ❖ Current limitations to information access?
- ❖ Preferred format and features for information access?

Evidence-based Information Continuum

Different information sources for different needs

Minimum



Maximum

1. Early alerts & reports	➤ Email, news media
2. Emerging & promising practices	➤ Conferences, listservs, informal networks
3. Evaluated practices & interventions	➤ Reports, websites, conferences
4. Reference Information	➤ Books, websites
5. Published research & systematic reviews	➤ PubMed, journals, article summaries
6. Evidence-based guidelines	➤ AHRQ, Institute of Medicine



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Data & Statistics



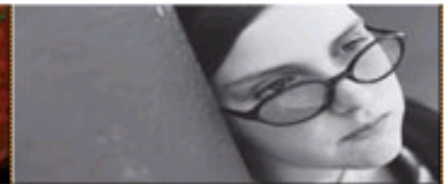
Raising Healthy Kids

Public Health - See what CDC is doing to promote healthy communities...
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Pandemic Flu

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Child Abuse

Child abuse and neglect can lead to health problems throughout life...
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A new portal with information and resources for CDC's partners ...[more](#)

[Spring Break Guide to Staying Safe and Healthy](#)

Make your spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy. [more](#)

Programs & Campaigns

[National Diabetes Education Program](#)

Partners work together to improve the treatment and outcomes of diabetes.

[Family History Initiative](#)

This evaluates how family history can assess common diseases risk and influence early detection and prevention strategies.

Challenges & limitations to public health information access

Strategies to meet the **needs** of the public health workforce



Challenge:

- ❖ Too many sources to search efficiently
- ❖ Too much irrelevant information



Need:

- ❖ One portal access to PH information
- ❖ Mediated searching & article retrieval services
- ❖ Training on accessing and selecting PH resources



Partners

in Information Access for
the Public Health Workforce

A collaboration of U.S. government agencies, public health organizations and health sciences libraries

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Our Mission

Helping the public health workforce find and use information effectively to improve and protect the public's health

Main Topics:

- ▶ [Health Promotion and Health Education](#)
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Research

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a click away...



Resource Guide

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Preparedness

Role of Information Services for
Emergency Preparedness and
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MLA'05: CE 800

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ASTHO Executive Director](#)

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Disease in Young Infants
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Partners:

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Diabetes

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Click the  button to run the search in PubMed.



[Link to the complete Healthy People 2010 Chapter.](#)



Prevent Diabetes. ([Objective 05-02](#))



Increase the proportion of adults with diabetes whose condition has been diagnosed. ([Objective 05-04](#))



Reduce diabetes-related deaths among persons with diabetes. ([Objective 05-06](#))



Decrease the proportion of pregnant women with gestational diabetes. ([Objective 05-08](#))



Reduce the frequency of foot ulcers in persons with diabetes. ([Objective 05-09](#))



Increase the proportion of adults with diabetes who perform self-blood-glucose-monitoring at least once daily. ([Objective 05-17](#))

Related Resources

- [Guide to Community Preventive Services. TOPICS: Diabetes and Physical Activity](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetes](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetes and Pregnancy](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetic Diet](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetic Foot](#)
- [Screening for Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. Guide to Clinical Preventive Services, 3rd ed.](#)

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randomized controlled trials.

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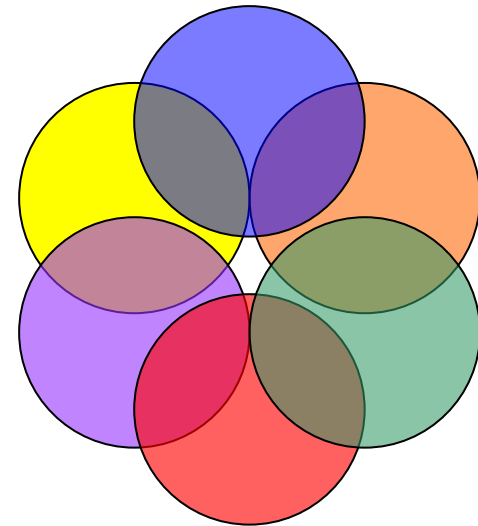
ostinence in Louisiana.

Challenge:

- ❖ Gaps in public health information
- ❖ Difficulty accessing information beyond biomedical field – beyond PubMed

Need:

- ❖ Access to information from multiple disciplines



Challenge - limited access to:

- ❖ Full-text journals
- ❖ Unpublished research
- ❖ Systematic reviews and summaries with practice recommendations

Need access to:

- ❖ **Free** full-text journals
- ❖ Grey literature & conference proceedings
- ❖ Systematic reviews and evidence-based guidelines related to public health

GUIDE TO

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In The Spotlight:

The Guide to Community Preventive Services is now available in book form.

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The Community Guide [at a Glance](#)

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▶ Most Popular References...

- ▶ [Q15783 - Day care for pre-school children](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q15782 - The health and welfare effects of day-care: A systematic review of randomized controlled trials](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q15329 - Interventions for preventing obesity in children](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q15345 - Effectiveness of community-based interventions to increase fruit and vegetable consumption](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q16121 - Effectiveness of physical activity enhancement and obesity prevention programs in children and youth](#) modified: 6/2/2011

▶ Latest Additions...

- ▶ [Q16153 - Intervention programs for arthritis and other rheumatic diseases](#) modified: 8/24/2011
- ▶ [Q15457 - The efficacy of influenza vaccine in elderly persons: A meta-analysis and review of the literature](#) modified: 8/24/2011
- ▶ [Q15513 - Is dental health education effective? A systematic](#) modified: 8/24/2011

Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project Web Site:

<http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph>



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Evidence-
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Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project

Overview

There are numerous clinically based models for finding the "best evidence" for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. This process is called **Evidence-based Medicine** or **EBM**, which has been defined as "the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients. The practice of evidence-based medicine means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research" (Sackett DL, Rosenberg WMC, Gray JAM, Haynes RB, Richardson WS. Evidence based medicine: what it is and what is isn't. BMJ 1996; 312: 71-2). Within the EBM models, there is no or little attention paid to the "best practices" for population-based (public) health. The purpose of this project is to **examine the clinical EBM models and assess their effectiveness to the public health literature**. The project will also identify any existing evidence-based projects in public health and assess their effectiveness. The outcomes of the project will be:

1. An Evidence-based Public Health website;
2. An electronic publication or database based on the preferred models(s);
3. A training program for public health practitioners introducing them to evidence-based public health practice and literature retrieval methods.

Funding

The Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project is funded by an award from the [Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine / Centers of Disease Control and Prevention](#) Cooperative Agreement to the [Lamar Soutter Library](#) at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Objectives

- Identify the knowledge domains of public health and their corresponding literature.
- Identify at least three models of evidence-based literature approaches to clinical medicine and review their applicability to the literature of public

EBPPH Project Web Site:

<http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph>

Evidence-Based Resources for Public Health Practice Available for Free Online Access

Evidence-based Guidelines

- United States
 - [CDC Recommends: The Prevention Guidelines System](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
 - [Guide to Clinical Preventive Services](#) (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force)
 - [Guide to Community Preventive Services](#) (Task Force on Community Preventive Services)
 - [MMWR Recommendations and Reports](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
 - [National Guideline Clearinghouse](#) (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality)

Systematic Reviews

- United States
 - [PubMed Systematic Reviews](#) (National Library of Medicine)
 - [Healthy Aging Initiative - Evidence Reports](#) (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services)
- International
 - [Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, Abstracts](#) (Cochrane Collaboration)
 - [Cochrane Reviews of Relevance to Health Promotion and Public Health](#) (Cochrane Health Promotion and Public Health Field)
 - [DARE \(Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects\)](#) (Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, University of York, UK)
 - [The Effective Public Health Practice Project](#) (Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the City of Hamilton, Public Health and Community Services)
 - [EPPI \(Evidence for Practice and Policy Information\) Centre](#) (Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, UK)
 - [Evidence Based Health Promotion](#) (Victorian State Government, Department of Human Services, Australia)
 - [Health Development Agency Evidence Base](#) (Health Development Agency, UK)
 - [Health Evidence Bulletins Wales](#) (Duthie Library, University of Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff, UK)
 - [Health-Evidence.ca](#) (Canadian Institutes of Health Research)

Pre-formulated and Filtered Searches of Published Research Studies

- United States
 - [Healthy People 2010 Information Access Project](#) (National Library of Medicine and the Public Health Foundation)
 - [PubMed Clinical Queries](#) (National Library of Medicine)
 - [PubMed Health Services Research \(HSR\) Queries](#) (National Library of Medicine)

Best Practices (Experience-Based)

- United States

Responding to the Need

- ❖ Expert searching and article retrieval services
- ❖ One portal access to:
 - Free public health journals
 - Free public health bibliographic databases
 - Evidence-based public health resources
- ❖ Training on finding resources for EBPH

Contact

Hathy.Simpson@umassmed.edu

Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health

<http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph>

Published Paper:

Lapelle NR, Luckmann R, Simpson EH, Martin ER. Identifying strategies to improve access to credible and relevant information for public health professionals: a qualitative study. *BMC Public Health*. 2006 Apr 5;6(1):89.