QUARTERLY REPORT

July 1, 2005 – September 29, 2005

Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health

TS-0734

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Introduction

This report covers the fourth quarter of Year 4 of the Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project, TS-0734, July 1 through September 29, 2005.

Adherence and Progress towards Achieving Goals and Objectives

We have successfully achieved Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 of the research plan. With respect to Objective 5, we were invited to work with librarians at the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to develop public health search filters for PubMed to retrieve published public health literature and to continue to serve as advisors to this NLM project.

Achievements this Quarter

1. Dr. Elaine Martin, Principal Investigator, and Hathy Simpson, Project Coordinator, met with Dr. Roger Luckmann and Dr. Nancy La Pelle who are serving as expert consultants for the project in July and September 2005. We worked on preparing a manuscript for publication based on the findings of the informant interviews and focus groups with public health professionals from the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and the Division of Community Health Promotion, Bureau of Family and Community Health, at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The paper will present our findings on how public health professionals currently access information and provide recommendations for the development of an information systems model that would address the information needs of the public health workforce. Based on the findings of the study, we compiled a list of recommended strategies to improve access to credible and relevant information (Attachment 1). A draft of the manuscript for publication is attached (Attachment 2). This work relates to Objective 1: To identify at least three models of evidence-based literature approaches to clinical medicine and review their applicability to the literature of public health; Objective 2: To identify any existing preliminary models or products for assessing the quality of public health literature; Objective 3: To evaluate the models/products for effectiveness; identify their pros and cons, strengths and weaknesses; scalability; usefulness; and Objective 4: To identify a narrow subject area and pilot test it within the models (products) identified for applicability with public health.

2. The project has received interest from the public health community in the U.S. and abroad. We received and responded to inquiries about the project this quarter from the Boston University School of Social Work; the Public Health Agency of Canada; the College of Public Health, University of South Florida; and the Cochrane Health Promotion and Public Health Field, Australia.

3. We updated the alphabetical list of public health journals (Attachment 3). Online access to public health journals is available from the project’s website at http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph/journallist.cfm. This work relates to Objectives 1 and 2 as described above.

4. We updated the webpage, “Evidence-Based Resources for Public Health Practice Available for Free Online Access,” http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph/ebresources.cfm (Attachment
4). The project’s website, http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph, had 2170 visitor sessions in July, 2679 visitor sessions in August, and 2894 visitor sessions in September 2005 (Attachment 5, Usage Statistics Chart for the Project’s Web Site). This work relates to Objective 6: To develop a set of “lessons learned” and recommendations for developing a “preferred” model (database, electronic publication and website).

5. Dr. Elaine Martin and Ms. Simpson were part of a plenary session panel at the North Atlantic Health Sciences Libraries (NAHSL) Annual Meeting on September 27, 2005 (Attachment 6). The session was entitled: Providing Evidence-Based Public Health Resources: The Librarian’s Role. This work relates to Objectives 7 as described above.

Future Plans

The Lamar Soutter Library is committed to maintaining the project website and portal access to evidence-based public health resources at the conclusion of the project. We are in the process of looking for continuation funding from other sources to continue and expand the research-related aspects of this project. We have submitted inquiries to the National Library of Medicine and to the Robert Wood Foundation.

We will be presenting the finding of this project at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting: La Pelle, NR, Simpson EH, Luckmann R, Martin ER. Enhancing evidence-based information access to inform public health practice. Abstract 108127, Session 5134. Philadelphia, PA, Dec. 14, 2005.

Hathy Simpson, Project Coordinator, has been invited to be a presenter with Dr. Sharon Telleen, Project Consultant, at the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) 2006 Annual Conference. They will deliver a Skills Building Session, Identifying Evidence-Based Practices in Public Health, March 5, 2005 in Washington, DC.

Ms. Simpson has been selected to be an invited speaker at the Medical Library Association 2006 Annual Meeting for the Public Health/Health Administration Section Program “Evidence-Based Public Health Librarianship.” She will present an oral paper, Improving Access to Public Health Information: A Study of Information Needs in a State Health Department in May 2006 in Phoenix, Arizona.

We are in the process of writing a manuscript for publication about the findings of the informant interviews and focus groups from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for publication in the journal, BMC Public Health: La Pelle NR, Luckmann RL, Simpson EH, Martin ER. Identifying Strategies to Improve Access to Credible and Relevant Information for Public Health Professionals: A Qualitative Study. A draft of the manuscript is attached (Attachment 2).

Appendix

Attachment 1: Recommended Strategies to Improve Access to Credible and Relevant Public Health Information

Attachment 2: Draft Manuscript to be submitted to the journal, BMC Public Health: La Pelle NR, Luckmann RL, Simpson EH, Martin ER. Identifying Strategies to Improve
Access to Credible and Relevant Information for Public Health Professionals: A Qualitative Study

Attachment 3: List of Public Health Journals by Title

Attachment 4: Project webpage: Evidence-Based Resources for Public Health Practice Available for Free Online Access, http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph/ebresources.cfm

Attachment 5: Usage Statistics Chart for the Project’s Website: http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph, July, August, and September 2005