QUARTERLY REPORT

April 1, 2002 – June 30, 2002

Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health

TS-0734

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Introduction

This report covers the third quarter of the Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project, April 1, 2002 through June 30, 2002.

Adherence and Progress Towards Achieving Goals and Objectives

1. We submitted the Continuation Application for the ATPM/CDC Cooperative Agreement for the 2002-2003 funding cycle on May 8, 2002.

2. We created a list of public health bibliographic databases available for free Internet access. The databases available for free access were selected from the list of public health bibliographic databases that we prepared earlier during the last quarter (Attachment 1).

3. In order to create an evidence-based tool appropriate to public health, it is necessary to define the knowledge domains of public health and to identify online and print literature associated with these knowledge domains. We created a chart to determine the knowledge domains of public health using the following public health sources: (1) public health accreditation criteria from the Council on Education for Public Health, (2) the public health reference book, Maxcy-Rosenau-Last Public Health & Preventive Medicine, (3) collection categories from the American Journal of Public Health, (4) The Public Health Work Force: Enumeration 2000, a report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (5) the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, (6) sections and interest groups of the American Public Health Association (APHA), (6) public health objectives from Healthy People 2010, (7) public health guidelines from The Guide to Community Preventive Services, and (8) the Essential Public Health Services developed by the Public Health Functions Working Group. In addition to public health sources, we examined Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and journal subject headings from the National Library of Medicine, and subject headings from the Library of Congress to determine how library indexes classify subjects related to the knowledge domains of public health (Attachments 2–4). This work relates to Objective 4: To identify a narrow subject area and pilot test it within the models (products) identified for applicability within public health.

4. We met with Dr. Roger Luckmann, Assistant Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, an expert advisor to the project, on April 10, 2002, April 24, 2002, May 15, 2002, and June 21, 2002. We discussed tasks related to the project and means to meet the project’s objectives. We worked on identifying and defining the knowledge domains of public health as described above. We discussed potential formats to present evidence-based public health information to public health practitioners. Dr. Luckmann is helping us prepare evaluative charts that will describe clinical evidence-based medicine models and their applicability to public health. Our work with Dr. Luckmann relates to the following objectives in the research plan: 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, and Objective 3: To evaluate the models/products for effectiveness; identify their pros and cons, strengths and weaknesses; scalability; usefulness; etc.
5. We met with Dr. Sharon Telleen, Research Associate Professor of Public Health and Visiting Research Associate Professor, Department of Sociology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, on April 15-16, 2002. Dr. Telleen is serving as an expert advisor for the project. We reviewed the project with Dr. Telleen and started to draft a paper related to our work on the knowledge domains of public health and the identification of a core collection of online and print resources relevant to public health (Attachment 5). Our work with Dr. Telleen to prepare a published paper relates to **Objective 6: To develop a set of “lessons learned” and recommendations for developing a “preferred” model (database, electronic publication and website).**

6. We started to create a website for the project. The website will describe the project and its objectives, cite ATPM/CDC support, present up-to-date findings of the project, link to the project’s quarterly reports, and list the project’s personnel. Our list of the Top 25 Public Health Journals by Impact Factor has been added to the website with online links to journals available through the Lamar Soutter Library (Attachments 6 and 7). The website is still under construction and not yet publicly available. Development of a project website relates to **Objective 6** as described above.

**Preliminary Plans for the Subsequent Quarter**

1. Identify online and print literature associated with the knowledge domains of public health. We will use the previously created list of public health journals that we prepared by combining the lists of top 25 public health journals by impact factor, the most frequently requested journals through the CDC Information Center’s Document Delivery Service, the most frequently cited journals from pre-formulated search strategies of the **Healthy People 2010 Information Access Project**, and the Core Public Health Journals Project. We will match each journal on the list with an identified knowledge domain of public health. This 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.**

2. Identify public health bibliographic databases associated with the knowledge domains of public health. We will match the previously identified public health databases with identified knowledge domains of public health. This relates to **Objective 1** as described above.

3. Determine what specific area or knowledge domain of public health we will focus on for the remainder of the project. After we have completed the above two tasks we will know what the available sources of public health information are for each identified knowledge domain of public health. We will use this information to choose a list of potential subject areas of public health for the project and to determine the information needs of public health practitioners within the potential areas of public health. We will solicit feedback/consensus from the CDC Advisory Group, our project experts, and other public health professionals in order to select the area on which to focus the rest of the project. We will finalize our selection based on this feedback. This aim relates to **Objective 4: To identify a narrow subject area and pilot test it within the models (products) identified for applicability with public health.**
4. Continue to work on the project’s website. The website will provide links to the previously identified online public health journals and databases. We will continue to update the website as our work continues. This relates to Objective 6: To develop a set of “lessons learned” and recommendations for developing a “preferred” model (database, electronic publication and website).

5. Identify online sources that provide evidence-based public health information and identify any existing evidence-based projects aimed at assessing the quality of public health literature. This relates to Objective 2: To identify any existing preliminary models or products for assessing the quality of public health literature.

6. Continue to identify models of evidence-based literature approaches to clinical medicine and review their applicability to the literature of public health. We will continue to prepare evaluative charts that describe the features of the identified models. We plan to use as a reference the book, Users’ Guides to the Medical Literature: a Manual for Evidence-Based Clinical Practice/ The Evidence-Based Medicine Working Group, based on a series published in JAMA, edited by Gordon Guyatt and Drummond Rennie, 2002. This 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.

7. Travel to the CDC Information Center in Atlanta, Georgia to meet with Jocelyn Rankin, the Technical Advisor to the project to review the project and its progress to date. We will also meet with members of the CDC Information Center Advisory Group to discuss the project and its objectives. We will solicit feedback/consensus from this group regarding the areas we have identified on knowledge domains for public health. We will also ask them for their advice regarding the pilot area of focus (see #3 above) for the evidence-based public health tool we wish to develop as an outcome of this project.

Problems, Risks, Questions, Concerns That Have Impacted Progress

Public Health is a multidisciplinary field ranging broadly across the health care spectrum. In order to develop an evidence-based tool appropriate to public health, it is necessary to identify the knowledge domains of public health and the public health literature and databases associated with each domain. These tasks were not part of the original research plan but are necessary to undertake in order to create an evidence-based tool appropriate to public health.

There is disagreement amongst public health experts, associations, accrediting bodies, etc. as to what the knowledge domains of public health should be. Coming to consensus amongst project advisors and constituents has been a difficult, labor-intensive task (taking longer than we anticipated). However, we feel we have made substantial progress in this endeavor and that it was worth the time and effort spent. The work we have put into this task will ultimately benefit the project outcome.