PUBLIC HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

Friday, May 11, 2007
12:00 noon — 4:00 pm
1309 Health Sciences Learning Center
750 Highland Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin
SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

12:00 noon  Luncheon
Welcome & Introductions
Pat Remington, Director

1:00 pm    Story-telling as a Means of Increasing Smoking Cessation Among Low SES Smokers
Maureen Hill

1:20 pm    Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity in Wisconsin: Developing a Community Toolkit for Interventions by Coalitions in Local Communities
Stephen Randall

1:40 pm    Milwaukee Alliance for Sexual Health
Casey Schumann

2:00 pm    The Greater Johnsons Park Health Initiative: Field Notes on a Community-Driven Effort to Rebuild a Healthy Neighborhood
Jesse Tobin

2:20 pm    Monitoring Progress in Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes
Matthew Landis

2:40 pm    Addressing Cancer Disparities Via Navigation Outreach
DeAnnah Byrd

3:00 pm    Nutrition Education for Healthy Hmong
PaChia Vue

3:20 pm    Closing Remarks
Pat Remington, Director
Public Health in Practice

An Overview of the Master of Public Health and Wisconsin Population Health Fellowship Programs

The Master of Public Health Program, established in 2005, provides multidisciplinary graduate education and training in public health concepts and methods to health professionals and students through a focus in service learning. Close connections with the community, through the Wisconsin Division of Public Health, the City of Milwaukee Health Department, and other health care and not-for-profit agencies, enable students to apply their skills in a real world setting. The MPH program’s vision is to develop a workforce that is competent to advance the well-being of the citizens of Wisconsin and beyond. The Wisconsin Population Health Fellowship Program is an extension of the student’s public health service and training. The two-year fellowship program, targeted to those who have completed masters programs, preferably in public health and allied sciences, provides applicants with practical field assignments in community based, non-profit, governmental and health service organizations. The primary goal of the Wisconsin Population Health Fellowship Program is to develop the next generation of public health officials and administrators skilled in planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health programs. Fellows are currently located in public health departments in Milwaukee and La Crosse, the American Cancer Society, the state health department and small non-profit health organizations.

Special Thanks to...

Mentors
David Ahrens
Sheri Johnson

Preceptors
Marva Brooks
Marcia Caton Campbell
Patricia Guhleman
Murray Katcher
Amy Meinen
Carolyn Mesbah
James Vergeront

Program Faculty
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Jim Vergeront
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Javier Nieto
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Jennifer Spencer
Story-telling as a Means of Increasing Smoking Cessation Among Low SES Smokers

Maureen Hill

Preceptor: Marva Brooks, Divisional Contract Administrator Coordinator, Wisconsin Tobacco Poverty and Prevention Network-Salvation Army Divisional Headquarters

Mentor: David Ahrens, Coordinator, UW Population Health Fellowship Program, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Smokers of low socio-economic status have been less successfully reached by existing tobacco interventions. Identifying evaluation tools within the tobacco awareness and treatment projects is a current priority. Actual case studies that are re-constructed as “success stories” are a promising means of intervention. Stories of successful tobacco treatment in disparate populations are needed to increase recognition of the problem and reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among those living in poverty. Recipients of tobacco interventions at the five funded community service agencies were recruited through agency contacts. Stories were voice and video recorded and still photographs were taken. The stories were obtained through guided interviews. The stories were formatted using a one page format. The completed stories offer a glimpse into the lives and challenges of people living in poverty. More importantly, they reflect a consistent desire to reduce or quit smoking once given the opportunity to quit. Further, characteristics of the tobacco interventions that appear to be meaningful to the recipients include social support, education on alternative ways to manage stress, and information on both tobacco industry tactics and secondhand smoke. These stories will be used for marketing, advocacy, education and to assure ongoing funding to address the disparity of tobacco use in the low socioeconomic population.

Maureen Hill (MPH Student) has a previous masters degree in nutrition education and worked for 20 years as a Dietitian working with clients with eating disorders. Maureen returned to school for a MPH degree to expand her knowledge of issues impacting people on a larger scale. She completed her field experience with the Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Poverty Network where she plans to continue to work providing technical assistance to agencies addressing tobacco addiction among those of low socio-economic status.
Nutrition Education for Healthy Hmong

PaChia Vue

Preceptor: Linda Lee, La Crosse County Health Department, Nutrition Manager

PaChia Vue (Second Year Fellow) is a 2005 graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. She has been training at the La Crosse County Health Department’s Office of Nutrition Services. PaChia is coordinating a nutrition education program for the Hmong community that focuses on chronic disease prevention. She has also helped lead an initiative to institute water fluoridation in a rural La Crosse community. PaChia has also developed and implemented a project to promote healthy families and marriage in the Hmong community.

Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity in Wisconsin: Developing a Community Toolkit for Interventions by Coalitions in Local Communities

Stephen Randall

Preceptor: Amy Meinen, MPH, RD, CD, Nutrition Coordinator/Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Coordinator, Wisconsin Division of Public Health

There is an epidemic of obesity and overweight in Wisconsin with 61% of Wisconsin adults being overweight or obese, a rate of obesity that has doubled from 1990 to 2002. 24% of Wisconsin high school students are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight and the number is rising. In response to this epidemic, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, Division of Public Health has partnered with and received a capacity building grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Nutrition and Physical Activity Program to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases (NPAO). This grant supports the Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity Program in developing and implementing nutrition and physical activity interventions through population-based strategies. As part of the grant activities the Program has developed the Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity State Plan and has implemented and evaluated several interventions to prevent obesity and other chronic diseases including the Footprints to Health – Franklin Neighborhood Initiative, the Governor’s School Health Award, Got Dirt?, and the Healthier Wisconsin Worksite Project.

The Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity Program provides support to more than 35 local Physical Activity and Nutrition Coalitions throughout the state. The purpose of my project was to develop a Community Toolkit to provide local coalitions with evidence-based resources to guide them in developing interventions in their communities. The project began with a thorough review of the literature and resources available on coalitions, coalition function and development, community-based interventions, community assessment and capacity tools, and examples of successful programs and coalitions. We then conducted extensive formative assessment of our target audience, local coalitions in Wisconsin, through key stakeholder interviews with coalition leaders and through the 2006 Coalition Survey. This information will be utilized to understand the needs of Wisconsin coalitions and to design a Community Toolkit with the information and resources that will best fit the needs of the target audience. It will also assess the need for coalition training to accompany the Toolkit. This presentation will discuss the results of the formative assessment and the development to date of the Community Toolkit.

Stephen Randall (MPH Student) is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Stephen and his family will be moving to Iowa City, IA where he will be pursuing his pediatrics residency at the University of Iowa.
Addressing Cancer Disparities Via Navigation Outreach  
DeAnnah Byrd

Preceptor: Carolyn Mesbah, MPH, Director of Health Promotions,  
American Cancer Society—Midwest Division

A 2001 survey indicated the American Cancer Society (ACS) did not have a presence in the African American (AA) community in Milwaukee. Despite the fact that AAs have the highest mortality rates of any racial or ethnic group for all forms of cancer including most major cancers. Cancer services and programs have not been targeted to reach this population. Conduct focus groups to obtain feedback from African Americans within in Milwaukee County, to influence the development of culturally appropriate strategies to promote ACS’ Patient Navigation program within this underserved population. Recruitment methods included paid outreach workers and various media outlets to seek AA cancer patients and caregivers to participate in the focus groups. Inclusion criteria were: (1) self-identify as non-Hispanic AA, (2) have either a current diagnosis of cancer or a history of cancer diagnosis within the last 5 years, (3) age 40 or greater, (4) speak English and have the ability to give informed consent and (5) reside in Milwaukee County. Caregivers were anyone 18 years and older, who had acted as a helper to an AA cancer patient for at least 2-weeks. Using various recruitment methods 71 participants were enrolled. The final cohort consisted of (n=36) 23 caregivers and 13 patients, of whom only 28 % (10 people) had ever made contact with ACS for information and cancer related services, e.g. support groups and nutrition information. None of the participants, in either group, knew that ACS had a patient Navigation Program and most had not heard of ACS prior to the focus groups being conducted. Therefore, the full role of ACS and its’ cancer services were not fully understood by the majority of focus group participants. These preliminary findings emphasize the importance of using focus groups as a way to engage the AA community. A desired outcome is the adoption and implementation of study recommendations on a broad scale by ACS, in order to increase AAs’ access to and utilization of ACS services, resources and programs. The focus group findings are not new, yet the implications strongly suggest the need for ACS to improve its’ presence and to foster relationships within the African American community. ACS’ lack of presence within the AA community is not isolated to just Milwaukee, but is most likely an indicator of a more systemic problem in the AA population at large.

DeAnnah Byrd (Second Year Fellow) plans to continue her public health education with a concentration in maternal and child health. Long term, she would like to acquire the scientific knowledge, research skills and leadership abilities necessary to design effective public health programs and policies that eliminate health disparities. Ultimately, she would like to obtain a leadership position utilizing her research experience and public health knowledge to affect policy and positively impact underserved populations.

Milwaukee Alliance for Sexual Health  
Casey Schumann

Preceptor: James Vergeront, MD, AIDS/HIV Program Director,  
Wisconsin Division of Public Health

Rates of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among African American youth in Milwaukee are among the highest in the nation. Of the largest cities in the nation, Milwaukee ranked 44th and 41st in 2003 for teen births and repeat teen births, respectively, and 9th and 17th in 2004 for Chlamydia and gonorrhea case rates, respectively. In response to this crisis a group of community and academic partners committed to reducing the disproportionate impact of STDs and teen pregnancy on African American adolescents in Milwaukee launched a strategic planning initiative in 2006. The major product of the first phase of the initiative is a strategic plan, which outlines evidence-based strategies for increasing: a) use of protective behaviors or technologies by all youth; b) testing and treatment of youth for unprotected sex and sexually-transmitted diseases; c) the proportion of affected youth using effective contraception and completing satisfactory treatment of STDs; and d) the number of youth at highest-risk (e.g. known sexual contacts) for whom these outcomes are accomplished. The strategic plan was informed by earlier work, including an epidemiologic assessment of STDs and unintended pregnancies in Milwaukee, a community assessment of sexual health norms and behaviors in the target population, and an inventory of evidence-based practices related to improving sexual health. The second phase of the project, which will begin in July 2007, focuses on creating an alliance of healthcare professionals, schools, and community organizations to implement the strategies outlined in the strategic plan.

Casey Schumann (First Year Fellow) graduated from the U.W. Department of Population Health Sciences in 2006. Casey’s training is in the state Division of Public Health’s Bureau of Communicable Disease and Preparedness, both with the AIDS/HIV and Communicable Disease Epidemiology programs. She is currently working on the development of a Strategic Plan to reduce the high rates of STDs and unintended pregnancies among Milwaukee’s African American youth, and has recently completed a grant proposal for the Medical College of Wisconsin’s Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program.
The Greater Johnsons Park Health Initiative:<br>Field Notes on a Community-Driven Effort to Rebuild a Healthy Neighborhood<br>Jesse Tobin

Preceptor: Marcia Caton Campbell, PhD, Urban Open Space Foundation

The Greater Johnsons Park Health Initiative examines the connection between public green spaces and neighborhood health in a central city community of Milwaukee. In 2002, the Public Policy Forum published a study “Public Spaces, Public Priorities,” analyzing the condition of Milwaukee County Parks. Of the 52 parks surveyed, Johnsons Park ranked dead last in quality and quantity of amenities and services. Motivated by this finding and the underlying environmental justice issues it represents, a community-driven effort has developed to revitalize Johnsons Park to its full economic, social, and health-promoting potential and to address many of the health and safety concerns tied to the neighborhood’s lack of safe green space. This presentation addresses the environmental justice issues in the Greater Johnsons Park area, the health and safety issues connected to the neighborhood environment, and recent efforts by the Greater Johnsons Park Health Coalition to address these health and safety concerns.

Jessica Tobin (First Year Fellow) graduated two years ago from the University of Washington’s School of Public Health. She is training at the Milwaukee-based Urban Open Space Foundation and is working with Northside neighborhoods and Milwaukee City and County agencies on the development of a new park geared to enhance physical activity in the area. She is also working on nutrition initiatives in the area.

Monitoring Progress in Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes
Matthew Landis

Preceptors: Murray Katcher, Chief Medical Officer, DHFS, and Patricia Guhleman, Director, Bureau of Health Information and Policy, DHFS
Mentor: Sheri Johnson, Administrator & State Health Officer, DHFS

Elimination of health disparities constitutes an overarching goal of the state health plan, Healthiest Wisconsin 2010. Perhaps the most disturbing health disparity in Wisconsin is the persistent high death rate of infants born to African American women. Infants born to African American women in Wisconsin have been 3-4 times more likely to die before their first birthday than infants born to white women. Further, during the past 20 years, virtually no decline has occurred in Wisconsin’s African American infant mortality rate. Compared to white infant mortality, disparities also exist among American Indian, Laotian/Hmong, and Hispanic populations, although disparities are smaller than those of African Americans.

To address this problem the Department of Health and Family Services is strengthening efforts to improve the maternal and child health of Wisconsin’s racial/ethnic minority populations. In summer 2006 the Wisconsin Framework for Action was disseminated. This is a five-year strategic plan to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in birth outcomes identified four priority areas, one of which is data. Beginning with the data question “how will we know we are making a difference,” I have headed up a collaborative effort to define success address this question. Our intent is to propose a final list of key indicators this summer.

Matt Landis (Second Year Fellow) is training at the Wisconsin Division of Public Health’s Bureau of Health Policy and Information. He has led a number of projects including the development of an online database of county key health indicators. He is now leading a research group focused on improving healthy birth outcomes for Milwaukee. Most recently, Matt was selected as the Division’s representative to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Conference.