

Letter from the Director

It seems that “infrastructure” and “importance” are terms that emerge in many of our conversations these days. This issue highlights two scientists whose work contributes to new knowledge about infrastructure, through deepening our understanding of important community infrastructure and building relationships as a form of infrastructure. One case involves improving life for our society within the rural communities of Nebraska. The other case involves advancing relationships as infrastructure amongst nationally active minority research investigators who are leading scientific efforts about health disparities and inequity funded by the NIH. Please enjoy reading about this meaningful work.

Warm regards,

Kimberly Galt, Pharm.D., Ph.D.
Director, CHRP

Coming Soon

Please watch the CHRP website and *Creighton Today* for information on upcoming “Meet the Researcher” Series events.

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Health Information in Rural Communities: Exploring Community Health Infrastructure

By Sue Crawford, Ph.D.

Improving patient-centered care and patient safety requires attention to the various ways in which patients and health care providers in rural communities share, access and manage information. However, little is known about how residents actually tackle these information tasks in their communities. This pilot project, funded by the Creighton Research Infrastructure Program to Achieve Sustainability grant sponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (R24-HS018625), examines how rural residents access, manage and use health information in their communities.

The concept of “community infrastructure” occurs primarily in public health literature and studies of chronic disease management. Typically, literature referring to community infrastructure describes the development of a collaborative public health intervention in a community, often facilitated by university research teams.¹⁻⁶ The literature generally describes the need for a collaborative solution to the public health problem, the creation of community infrastructure for a particular disease or health threat, and the positive consequences of the collaboration development. Other pieces report the health

challenges that exist in some communities due to the lack of a strong community infrastructure and call for more attention to the development of community infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.⁷⁻⁸ Few studies examine the health implications of existing community components referred to as “community infrastructure,” and these focus on a specific component of the community (e.g. food access)⁹ or perceived social support for a specific subpopulation.¹⁰

This pilot study examines ways in which existing community resources and interactions, understood as “community infrastructure,” improve or limit the ability of residents to make use of information for wellness, self-care, management of chronic conditions and effective interactions with health care providers. This community infrastructure includes elements such as community newspapers, gathering places where residents share information, connections between health systems and community partners, community events such as health fairs, churches and other organizations. The study has a particular focus on health information technology, examining how community infrastructure may shape use of internet resources and electronic records.

The Center for Health Services Research and Patient Safety research team for this study includes experts from pharmacy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, emergency medical services, political science and health administration. The research team includes: Kimberly Galt, Pharm.D., Ph.D.; Sue Crawford, Ph.D.; Shirley Blanchard, Ph.D., A.B.D.A., O.T.R./L., F.A.O.T.A.; Linda Ohri, Pharm.D., M.P.H.; Bill Raynovich, Ed.D, M.P.H., N.R.E.M.T.P.; and Karen Paschal, P.T., D.P.T., M.S.

Last year, interviews were conducted with consumers, health educators and health care providers in three rural communities. The current stage of the project focuses on identifying community infrastructure from a rural resident perspective. Interviews of residents in each community included several questions about where residents turned for information, how they decided what information to trust, how living in their community made getting information easier or more difficult, how they managed their personal health information and how they used health information. These interviews were analyzed to form a picture of how residents in each community obtain and use health information and the

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Creighton University Faculty Members Present at National Conference

By Shirley Blanchard, Ph.D., A.B.D.A., O.T.R./L., F.A.O.T.A., and Jamie Steemken

The Creighton University campus was the site of the Network of Minority Research Investigators (NMRI) Midwest Regional Workshop held Nov. 3-4. The two-day event was sponsored by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) NMRI. The NIDDK is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) under the Department of Health and Human Services.¹

The Office of Minority Health Research Coordination established the NMRI as a communication network for current and potential biomedical research investigators from traditionally underserved communities: African American, Hispanic American, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders. The major objective of the network is to facilitate participation of members of underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups in conducting biomedical research in the fields of diabetes, endocrinology, metabolism, digestive diseases, nutrition, kidney, urologic and hematologic diseases. A second objective is to encourage and enhance the potential of underrepresented minority



Participants at the Midwest Regional Workshop

investigators in choosing a biomedical research career. An important component of this network is promotion of two-way communications (mentorship) between network members and the NIDDK. A final objective of NMRI is to advance scientific knowledge and contribute to the reduction and eventual elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities.²

Shirley Blanchard, Ph.D., A.B.D.A., O.T.R./L., F.A.O.T.A., associate professor, Creighton School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, Occupational Therapy, and member of the Center for Health Services Research and Patient Safety, coordinated the event. Blanchard serves as chair of the NMRI Oversight Committee, is a member of the NMRI Program Planning Committee, and serves as chair of the Midwest Regional Workshop.

The Midwest Regional Workshop hosted researchers from across the nation, as well as Creighton faculty. Blanchard, Lawrence Agodoa, M.D., director, Office of Minority Health Research Coordination, NIDDK, and Gail Jensen, Ph.D., P.T., F.A.P.T.A., dean of the Creighton Graduate School and associate vice president for faculty development in the Office of Academic Affairs, welcomed participants to the workshop.

The first day of the workshop focused on the importance of mentorship, with several local and national speakers providing information about how it contributes to

achieving success in a research career. NMRI mentorship research opportunities in areas such as diabetes, grants management, networking, obesity and endocrinology were discussed. Phyllis Nsiah-Kumi, M.D., assistant professor, University of Nebraska, Medical Center discussed her own mentorship experiences and how they have shaped and continue to shape her career in her presentation, "Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: How Mentoring Can Take You to New Heights."

Scientific presentations were also provided by junior and senior investigators, including many from Creighton faculty members.

Invited scientific presentations by junior investigators included:

- Laura Armas, M.D., assistant professor, Osteoporosis Research Center, Creighton University School of Medicine
- D. Roselyn Cerutis, B.S., Ph.D., associate professor, Oral Biology and Pharmacology, Department of Oral Biology, Creighton School of Dentistry

Invited scientific presentations by senior investigators included:

- Devendra Agrawal, Ph.D., M.B.A., director of translational research, Creighton School of Medicine
- Robert Heaney, M.D., professor, Osteoporosis Research



Shirley Blanchard, Ph.D., A.B.D.A., O.T.R./L., F.A.O.T.A.

- Orhan Öz, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Creighton School of Medicine

Closing the events of the first day of the workshop was Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, M.D., associate vice president for Health Sciences, Multicultural and Community Affairs, Creighton School of Medicine, presenting her reflections entitled "Achieving Success as a Leader: My Perspective."

Participants were welcomed the second day of the workshop by J. Chris Bradberry, Pharm.D., dean, Creighton School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, and Kimberly Galt, Pharm.D., Ph.D., associate dean for Research, Creighton School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, and director, Center for Health Services Research and Patient Safety.

During the second day of the workshop, participants

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way that these tasks relate residents to the community. These community cases will then be further analyzed to identify important lessons about the nature of health information in rural community infrastructures.▲

1. Baquet CR, Mack KM, Bramble J, et al. Maryland's Special Populations Cancer Network: cancer health

disparities reduction model. *J Health Care Poor Underserved*. 2005; 16: 192-206.

2. Chen AM, Wismer BA, Lew R, et al. "Health is strength": a research collaboration involving Korean Americans in Alameda County. *Am J Prev Med*. 1997; 13 (6 Suppl): 93-100.

3. Goodrow B, Meyers PL. The Del Rio project: a case for community-campus partnership. *Educ Health*. 2000; 13: 213-20.

4. Pothukuchi, K. Building community infrastructure for healthy communities: evaluating action research components of an urban health research program. *Plann Pract Res*. 2005; 20: 127-146.

5. Richter J, Livet M, Stewart J, Feigley CE, Scott G, Richter DL. Coastal terrorism: using tabletop discussions to enhance coastal community infrastructure through relationship building. *J Public Health Manag Pract*. 2005; Suppl: S45-49.

6. Jenkins S. Community wellness: a group empowerment model for rural America. *J Health Care Poor Underserved*. 1991; 1: 388-404.

7. Lambert D, Gale JA, Hartley D. Substance abuse by youth and young adults in rural America. *J Rural Health*. 2008; 24: 221-228.

8. Scrivens L, Summers AD. Home too soon? A comment on the early

discharge of women from hospital after childbirth. *Aust J Midwifery*. 2001; 14: 28-31.

9. Moreland, K., Wing, S. & Roux, A. D. The contextual effect of the local food environment on residents' diets: The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study. *Am J Public Health*. 2002; 92: 1761-1768.

10. Rosser BR, Horvath KJ. AIDS and behavior predictors of success in implementing HIV prevention in rural America: a state-level structural factor analysis of HIV prevention targeting men who have sex with men. *AIDS Behav*. 2008; 12: 159-168.

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Creighton University Faculty Members Present at National Conference

were given the opportunity to participate in select breakout sessions including:

- Tenure and Promotion presented by Victor Padron, Ph.D., associate professor, Pharmacy Sciences, Creighton School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
- Community Engagement, Research and Research Scientists presented by Beth Furlong, Ph.D., J.D., R.N., associate professor, Creighton Center for

Health Policy and Ethics

- Black Family Health and Wellness: How to Organize an Annual Community-based Wellness Program presented by Wayne Houston, M.P.H., North Omaha community liaison, Center for Reducing Health Disparities, University of Nebraska Medical Center, and Ira Combs, R.N., B.S., community liaison nurse coordinator, University of Nebraska Medical Center
- Education/Faculty Development and Student Assessment presented by Eddie Greene, M.D., associate professor, Mayo Medical School
- Managing a Research Lab/How to Write Your First Grant presented by

Carlos Isales, M.D., professor, Medical College of Georgia

Blanchard and Luis Cubano, Ph.D., associate dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Universidad Central del Caribe, Puerto Rico, sponsored an NIDDK review of paid summer research internships for underrepresented minority high school, undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students. These students are mentored by scientists at the NIH. Students were excited to discuss careers in medicine, occupational and physical therapy, optometry, pharmacy and research.

Additional information about the workshop will be posted to <http://nmri.niddk.nih.gov/workshops/>.▲

1. <http://www2.niddk.nih.gov/Footer/faq>. Accessed 10/31/11.

2. <http://nmri.niddk.nih.gov/>. Accessed 10/31/11.

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The Creighton University Center for Health Services Research and Patient Safety was founded to coordinate and support research and training efforts among faculty within an interdisciplinary and collaborative research environment. Faculty and staff serve the research interests of governmental agencies, health care facilities, employers, health care industry companies and educators.

Mission Statement: The Center for Health Services Research and Patient Safety conducts health services research to improve quality, safety and efficiency of patient care through the discovery, translation and dissemination of new knowledge.

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Recognition

- The Academic Development and Technology Center announced that CHRP member Karen Paschal, P.T., D.P.T., M.S., was appointed as a new eFellow member for the 2011-2012 academic year.
- Bill Raynovich, Ed.D., M.P.H., N.R.E.M.T.P., has been reappointed to serve as senior editor for the National Association of EMS Educators Editorial Board for a three-year term.
- Amy Abbott, Ph.D., R.N., has been appointed to serve on the editorial review board for the *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*.
- J. Chris Bradberry, Pharm.D. was enrolled as a fellow in the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions at their annual meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz., in October.

Dissemination

- Galt KA, Costanzo C, Fuji KT, Abbott AA, Huggett K, Hansen T, and Hercinger M. Poster presentation "Interprofessional Patient Safety Day for Health Professions Students" at the Nebraska League for Nursing Third Annual Excellence in Nursing Education Show Case, Omaha, Nov. 3, 2011.

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