ORAL PRESENTATION – Saturday May 10 ,2003-- 11:00-11:30am

Developing and sustaining community-university research partnerships: Infrastructure requirements. Nancy Shore, Stacy L. Holmes, and Sarena D. Seifer; Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, Seattle, Washington, United States

Although there is a growing literature about community-university research partnerships, questions remain about the infrastructure required to develop and sustain these partnerships. For example what community or university policies and processes are required to conduct such research? What faculty, staff and volunteer roles, expertise and experience are required? The answers to these questions add to our understanding of how policy and procedures relate to infrastructure, and support community-university research partnerships.

Our findings and recommendations are based on a review of recently published literature and an analysis of thirty structured telephone interviews with principal investigators, project managers, community partners and funding agency program officers involved in community-university research partnerships. Study participants identified nine critical issues that affect the infrastructure required for community-university research partnerships and, consequently, the future of the field. Several of these issues relate to the policies and implementation procedures that support research partnerships through staffing mechanisms, funding mechanisms, grants and contracts, and relationship building processes. In addition, broad recommendations emerged, including several that would affect policy development in the field of community-university research partnerships.

Some of these recommendations include:
1)Providing support for planning, relationship-building and partnership development as an essential part of the methodology of community-based research;
2)Investing in ongoing training and professional development for all partners; and
3) Prioritizing a research partnership's infrastructure, sustainability, and power imbalances when allocating funding or making funding decisions.

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