

Establishing Community-Based Participatory Research Partnerships: Facilitating Factors, Challenges and Recommendations

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Background and Overview:

Examining Community- Institutional Partnerships for Prevention Research

Project Objectives

- identify and synthesize lessons learned about developing successful community-institutional partnerships for prevention research (year 1)
- identify the key issues that emerge from what is known concerning factors that can facilitate and impede successful community-institutional partnerships and outcomes (year 1)
- develop a set of recommended strategies for building community and institutional capacity for participatory approaches to prevention research at national and local levels (year 1)
- implement and evaluate one or more of these strategies at national and local levels (year 2).

Partners Involved

- CDC Prevention Research Centers National Community Committee
- Community-Based Public Health Caucus of the American Public Health Association
- Community-Campus Partnerships for Health at the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine
- W.K.Kellogg Foundation Community Health Scholars Program
- Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center
- Harlem Health Promotion Center
- New York Urban Research Center
- Seattle Partners for Healthy Communities
- Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center

Ultimate Goal

Facilitate approaches for effectively translating community-based interventions in public health and prevention into widespread practice at the community level.

Definition of “community-institutional partnerships”

Collaborations between community members, grassroots organizations and/or community-based organizations and academic institutions, state and local public health agencies, health care institutions and/or funding agencies.

Year 2: Influencing Policy and Developing a Curriculum

Working with policy makers and funders to enhance understanding of and increase funding opportunities for community-based participatory research (CBPR)

Developing a curriculum on CBPR for new and developing community-institutional partnerships, and for existing partnerships wishing to adopt the CBPR model



Developing a CBPR Curriculum

Developing a working draft

Soliciting feedback on content

Piloting curriculum with new partnerships

Curriculum Content: Overview

Unit 1: What is CBPR and why should we do it?

Unit 2: Developing a CBPR partnership:
Getting started

Unit 3: Getting the work done

Unit 4: How to sustain a CBPR partnership



Unit 1: What is CBPR and why should we do it?

Definition

Key principles

Rationale

When is CBPR not for you?

Unit 2: Developing a CBPR partnership: Getting started

- Identifying and selecting partners
- Process for getting to know partners and establishing trust
- Addressing expectations/responsibilities/accountability/partnership roles
- Developing a mission statement and CBPR principles
- Process for decision-making and communication
- Process for setting priorities
- Establishing organizational structure/infrastructure

Unit 3: Getting the work done

Identifying funding sources and considering an RFA

Collaborative proposal writing

Implementing a CBPR project: Addressing ownership issues, fiscal concerns and management & staffing

Dissemination

Translating research into policy

Unit 4: How to sustain a CBPR partnership

Process for establishing ongoing evaluation

Weathering the change process/Conflict resolution

Appreciation and celebration

Timeline: How to negotiate short-term vs. long-term work

Definition of Community-Based Participatory Research

Community-based participatory research in public health is a partnership approach to research that equitably involves, for example, community members, organizational representatives, and researchers in all aspects of the research process; with all partners contributing their expertise and sharing responsibility and ownership to enhance understanding of a given phenomenon, and to integrate the knowledge gained with interventions to improve the health and well being of community members. (Israel)

Key Principles of CBPR

1. Emphasis on local relevance of public health problems and examination of the social, economic and cultural conditions that influence health status
2. Integrates knowledge generation and intervention for mutual benefit of all partners
3. Builds on strengths and resources and enhances the capacity of participants in the process
4. Promotes co-learning and empowering process in which all partners are involved in all major phases of the research process
5. Facilitates collaborative partnership

Key Principles of CBPR (continued)

6. Disseminates findings to all partners in clear language respectful to and that will benefit the community
7. Conducted according to norms of partnership (e.g., mutual respect, open communication)
8. Publications/presentations resulting from research involve and acknowledge all partners
9. Adheres to “human subjects” review process standards and procedures

Rationale/Advantages of CBPR

- Enhances relevance and use of data
- Joins partners with diverse expertise to address complex problems
- Improves quality and validity of research
- Enhances knowledge that can be used to inform teaching and contribute to community service, thereby integrating research, teaching and service
- Increases possibility of overcoming community's distrust of research

Rationale/Advantages of CBPR (continued)

- Knowledge benefits the community
- Has potential to “bridge cultural gaps” between partners
- Overcomes separation of individual from culture and context that often occurs with categorical approaches
- Provides resources for communities
- Aims to improve health and well-being of communities involved



When is CBPR not for you?

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Do the ethical considerations related to burden and benefits to the community outweigh potential research benefits?

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Are you as a researcher uncomfortable with changing your methods and/or approach to working with participants?

Do the ethical considerations related to burden and benefits to the community outweigh potential Research benefits?

What if you don't 'buy into' the CBPR principles?



Developing a CBPR partnership: Getting started

Identifying and selecting partners



Identifying and selecting partners

Develop a Diverse Membership



Identifying and selecting partners

Build on prior, positive working relationships

Questions to consider in identifying and maintaining partnership members

- Who belongs (e.g., is membership comprised of individuals from organizations or organizations represented by individuals)?
- How is “community” defined and who “represents” the community?
- Who decides who belongs?

Questions to consider in identifying and maintaining partnership members (continued)

- When partnership members are organizations, who decides which organizations are involved and how they are selected for membership?
- In the case of community-based organizations, who decides the extent to which they are able to represent the community in which they operate?

Questions to consider in identifying and maintaining partnership members (continued)

- When partnership members are individuals, who is able to represent whom?
- When and how do you decide whether or not to add new partners?
- How do you handle transitions when key members leave the partnership?

Characteristics of effective CBPR partners

- Willing and committed
- Mission and culture in alignment
- History of engagement in the community
- CBO staff/volunteer capacity and willingness
- Engaged, competent researchers
- Support and involvement from CBO's top leadership

Characteristics of effective CBPR partners (continued)

- Strong leadership abilities
- Ability to adopt multiple roles,
- Good negotiation, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills
- Ability to obtain resources
- High degree of political knowledge
- Ability to foster collaboration among members, and
- Access to decision-makers within the community.

Further thoughts about identifying new partnership members

- Organizational-based membership, rather than individual-based
- Start with a small number of diverse partner organizations
- Early, tangible successes

Getting to know partners and establishing trust

- Successful community-institutional partnerships for prevention research are characterized by trusting relationships among partners.

What hinders trust-building in CBPR partnerships?

- The history that partners bring with them
- The intimidation factor related to research
- The characteristics of the researchers
- Competitive and/or short-timeline funding environments
- Not understanding and/or adhering to the principles of CBPR

Establishing Trust

- Successful community-institutional partnerships for prevention research are characterized by jointly developed processes and procedures that pay particular attention to issues of equity, shared influence and control over decision making

Establishing Trust

- Recognize that all partners bring knowledge, skills, and expertise to the table
- Be inclusive at the start of the partnership
- Ensure community partners are involved with the initiation and start-up phase of a CBPR project
- Engage in a collaborative process of developing a set of “Operating Norms” for the partnership

Establishing Trust

- Elevate the importance of research priorities in which community members are invested over those that are pre-determined by external interests
- Ensure the involvement of community representatives in all aspects of a research project – including interpretation and dissemination of results and translating results into policy
- Understand that trust is a dynamic factor



Roles and Responsibilities: Addressing Expectations

- accountability to funders
- availability of time to commit
- finding the right balance between process and action

Roles and Responsibilities: Addressing Expectations

- Researchers need to pay maximum attention to the research needs of community groups. Community groups may wish to focus on (from Narciso & Patten, 2002)
 - ◆ solving a problem
 - ◆ identifying contexts affecting quality of life
 - ◆ demonstrating inequities and injustices
 - ◆ identifying gaps through comparison
 - ◆ ensuring cultural survival
 - ◆ accessing resources
 - ◆ improving services
 - ◆ building bridges across socio-cultural and political barriers

Roles and Responsibilities: Addressing Expectations

- Community members should also be aware that academics have different needs from research as well and will include:
 - ◆ faculty advancement
 - ◆ institutional recognition
 - ◆ graduate student support
 - ◆ institutional income
 - ◆ publications
 - ◆ attraction of students
 - ◆ knowledge generation
 - ◆ policy formulation
 - ◆ intervention science
 - ◆ building partnerships

Addressing Expectations: Tangible Benefits

- Successful community-institutional partnerships for prevention research demonstrate tangible benefits to all of the partners involved

Addressing Expectations: Tangible Benefits

- Enhanced knowledge and skills of partners to work collaboratively and in more participatory ways
- Enhanced ability to gain a more complex understanding of each other's strengths and limitations
- Enhanced relationships and support for each other's work as well as the establishment of new collaborative efforts
(Maciak, 2002; Schulz et al., 2001; Spencer, 2002).

Addressing Expectations: Tangible Benefits

- Researchers may
 - learn more about local resources and services and
 - reconsider the appropriateness of their measures and techniques in light of new community perspectives

Addressing Expectations: Tangible Benefits

- Community-based partners not familiar with research techniques or concepts may
 - learn new ways of thinking about their own work and
 - see evidence of how their experiences can improve the research process
 - see resulting benefits to the community

Addressing Expectations: Tangible Benefits

Enhanced ability of community partners and researchers to learn from and influence one another.

Enhanced ability and willingness to serve as primary resources for one another

Enhanced understanding (by researchers) of community history, culture and dynamics and how interventions in other communities may or may not apply to local circumstances

Addressing Expectations: Tangible Benefits

Enhanced understanding (by community partners) of institutional history, culture and dynamics

Enhanced understanding about how certain decisions about research design could impact the credibility of the results

Opportunities to gain or enhance needed competencies for professional development

Roles and Responsibilities

Based on three factors:

- knowledge bases of respective partners
- skill sets of respective partners
- capacity-building needs of respective partners

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles can include: (modified from Stoeker, 2003)

- initiator
- advisor
- consultant/expert (more in-depth than advisor)
- collaborator/decision-maker (increases trust and sense of ownership)
- principal investigator and co-investigators

Roles and Responsibilities

- Roles and responsibilities will differ among Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators, staff, community partners, volunteers and students based on principles of equity, empowerment, capacity building, and collective ownership of the project.

Skills and characteristics for researchers and staff

- Interpersonal and facilitation skills
- Technical skills
- Connections to the community
- Commitment to the partnership process and the substantive issues being addressed by the partnership
- Capacity-building skills

Evaluation Results from the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center: Facilitating Factors, Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Conducting CBPR

- Jointly develop operating norms and CBPR principles
- Create a balance between time spent on process issues and tasks/products
- Select mutually defined priority issues, goals and objectives
- Focus on community strengths as well as problems

Evaluation Results: Facilitating Factors, Lessons Learned and Recommendations (continued)

- Researcher orientation and commitment
- Methodological flexibility and different criteria for judging effectiveness
- Establish and maintain infrastructure
- Reach a balance in the distribution of benefits and resources
- Conduct ongoing evaluation consistent with CBPR principles
- Promote policy changes consistent with and supportive of CBPR

Evaluation Results: Facilitating Factors, Lessons Learned and Recommendations (continued)

- Start small, involving a few highly regarded CBOs within communities of identity
- Obtain support and involve top leadership from partner organizations
- Use informal democratic processes and consensus decision-making
- Build on prior history of positive working relationships