Context: Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a "collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community, has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change to improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities." (WK Kellogg Foundation Community Health Scholars Program). CBPR partnerships between communities and academic institutions are central to the prevention research agenda in the U.S.

Objectives: The presentation:

- describes the critical issues which affect CBPR partnerships at the local level and nationally and the elements required to develop and sustain CBPR partnerships.
- Disseminates a set of recommendations for engaging in CBPR partnerships
- shares knowledge gained from CBPR partnerships to those in education, training, and health care delivery.

Design: Review of recent U.S.-based literature and analysis of thirty structured telephone interviews with principal investigators, project managers, community partners and funding agency program officers involved in CBPR.

Main Outcomes: Nine critical issues that affect CBPR partnerships were identified including: CBPR is often viewed by the academic community as inferior to other forms of research; funding mechanisms, policies and procedures are often biased against CBPR partnerships; more barriers than incentives exist for community-based organizations to engage in CBPR; and conducting CBPR requires a team with a unique set of competencies.

Conclusions: Recommendations include: 1) Support planning, relationship-building and partnership development as an essential part of the methodology of CBPR; 2) Invest in ongoing training and professional development for all partners; and 3) Facilitate the ability of community-based organizations to be the lead applicant and fiscal agent for CBPR grants.