

Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center Update

Linking Our Community and Academic Partners

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The University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, Denver, CO

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What's Working for Low Income Colorado Students: A Rural-Urban Approach to Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity

The Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center (RMPRC) heard some GREAT news in May! We received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to study school-level policy and environmental features related to healthy eating among elementary school students in low-income rural and urban areas of Colorado. Our project is part of a new RWJF program called "Healthy Eating Research", directed by Dr. Mary Story at the University of Minnesota.

The "What's Working" project has two main goals: 1) to identify school-level environmental and policy features related to healthy eating, and 2) to understand the extent to which elementary schools are implementing their districts' local wellness policies.

In total, 90 elementary schools will be invited to participate. All schools have a free or reduced lunch rate of at least 40%. Half are located throughout rural Colorado and the other half are in the Denver Metro Area. Schools will be asked to complete our School Environment and Policy Survey, a three module paper and pen instrument that includes questions about the nutrition and physical activity environment and policies. Then, a sub-set of schools will be asked to do more in-depth data collection. Student diet recalls and school level food-related sales records will be used to assess diet and eating patterns over a period of two years. Environmental and policy profiles of schools and their surrounding neighborhoods will be used to identify key features that are related to healthy eating. Key informant interviews will

be conducted with principals to understand factors related to implementing their district's local wellness policies.

This project is exciting for many reasons! It has opened the door for the RMPRC to establish partnerships with schools throughout much of Colorado. It has also created opportunities to develop partnerships with new colleagues including Dr. Nick Cutforth from the University of Denver who will contribute his qualitative evaluation skills to the project, Dr. Lynn Gilbert from the School of Nursing here at University of Colorado who will provide big picture thinking about childhood obesity and related risk factors, and Ms. Bridget Beatty from the Denver Public Schools who will provide an "on the ground" viewpoint of the reality facing our schools.

For more information, contact Elaine Belansky at (303)315-0861 or Elaine.Belansky@uchsc.edu.



Elaine Belansky, RMPRC



Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center's Vision

Healthy Families and communities that advocate and partner for social and physical environments that support active, healthy lifestyles.

Director Dispatch

We are excited about the upcoming first annual San Luis Valley RMPRC meeting October 12th, 2006 hosted by our Community Advisory Board (CAB) and promoted as a 'family reunion' - bringing the family of the RMPRC in the SLV together. Hosts, CAB Chair Theresa Rudder and Co-Chair Suzanne Devore along with the planning committee, have put together what promises to be an outstanding meeting. The meeting will bring CAB and research project steering committees together:

- to meet and hear about the RMPRC research projects,
- to understand CAB's connection to the steering committees, i.e. CAB's 'eyes and ears in the community', and
- to allow CAB to offer appreciation for the work done by steering committee members and to use the shared information in CAB's advisory capacity.

During the meeting, community steering committees and project teams of current RMPRC



Julie Marshall, RMPRC Director

research partnerships will be giving attendees insights into each research project. Featured projects this year include:

- The School Environment Project (featured in RMPRC Update - Volume 3, Issue 1. Past newsletters are available at www.uchsc.edu/rmprc)

- Adoption and Follow Up of the Integrated Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (RMPRC Update - Volume 2, Issue 2)

- The Healthy Aging Network (RMPRC Update - Volume 2, Issue 1)

- The Healthy Family Project (RMPRC Update - Volume 2, Issue 2)

Rumor has it that there will be testimonials from family members at risk for diabetes who worked with a Healthy Family Project lifestyle coach and, later, all attendees will have fun role playing 2nd graders as Boyd teachers deliver a food preparation and literacy lesson from the Integrated Nutrition and Physical Activity Program. It should be an extraordinary evening!

National advisors Alan Cross, Charles Deutsch, Barbara Israel and Maria Salinas will be in attendance as part of their two day annual visit to provide external scientific advice to the RMPRC. Community members involved in RMPRC projects, CAB members, staff and investigators will all participate. It is sure to be the start of a terrific annual tradition! Thanks to our CAB!!

New RMPRC Special Interest Project (SIP) Focuses on Cardiovascular Health

The Cardiovascular Health Intervention Research and Translation Network (CHIRTN) celebrated its first anniversary at the end of September. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) named the Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center (RMPRC) one of six member centers, which CDC established to forward its Action Plan for Cardiovascular Health (www.cdc.gov/cvh/Action_Plan/action_plan.htm). Other participating PRCs include the lead center University of Rochester, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Washington, and West Virginia University. The principal investigator, Lucinda (Cindy) Bryant, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics (also principal investigator of RMPRC's Healthy Aging Research Network member center) is delighted to add this new venture to the RMPRC's "portfolio" of health promotion and disease prevention research activities that extend across the lifespan.

This network has two primary goals: 1) the development and implementation of a coordinated,

applied research and translation agenda, and 2) high-quality prevention research and translation activities that promote cardiovascular health and that can be incorporated into state-level programs. We developed our proposal to become a member of CHIRTN in close collaboration with the Colorado Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, administered through the Chronic Disease Section of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Although CHIRTN focuses on state- and national-level partnerships, we intend that the collaboration will benefit all of our various partners, with special interest in and concern for the San Luis Valley communities. Member centers recently identified a first demonstration project, to be conducted collaboratively across our culturally and geographically varied communities. Researchers will conduct an ethnographic study to learn how community members define, describe, and perceive terms related to cardiovascular health and disease, in order to develop better materials, and dissemination methods to deliver community-based, community-specific interventions.

Lucinda Bryant, UCDHSC

Food Security versus Food Miles

“Food Security” has several meanings including protecting our food supply from terrorists. Those working with low-income populations may define it as having enough nutritious food, i.e., avoiding food insecurity. Food security may be seen in the context of economically viable rural communities and farmers who make a reasonable standard of living. One concept that links these diverse meanings involves the promotion of local food systems.

Dr. Garry Auld, in Colorado State University’s (CSU) Food Science and Human Nutrition Department, is directing a project to compare the food miles of crops produced in Colorado with the same crops produced out of state. Working with Colorado Proud, they will identify the total state production of selected crops (including potatoes and carrots), as well as the proportion of those crops sold in and out of state.

Using US Department of Agriculture data, they will estimate total consumption within Colorado (based on the population) and infer how much of Colorado’s needs are met by “home-grown” versus imported crops. Knowing the likely sources of imports, they can estimate the weighted food miles (distance adjusted for weight of the food) of imported versus state grown crops.

Food miles have been used to link agricultural production to environmental, economic, and nutrition issues. For example, agriculture accounts for almost 20% of oil use in the U.S. and the price of oil certainly affects food prices. Buying food produced closer to home saves gasoline and reduces carbon dioxide emissions, benefiting the environment. A vibrant local food system is less susceptible to disruption (from any cause) than one dependent on imports from around the world. Food sold locally ensures more food dollars stay within the community, i.e., enhancing the rural economy and farmer’s incomes. It is assumed, but not proven, that local foods are more nutritious and tastier, as the length of time between harvest and consumption is shorter. Studies, such as the one described here, provide information that can be used by policy makers, producers, and consumers to justify alternative approaches to food production and distribution which, hopefully, will benefit rural communities.



Garry Auld

Garry Auld, CSU

A Collaborative School of Public Health for Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Region

The RMPRC is looking forward to a new home planned for fall 2008.

Colorado and its neighboring states face public health related problems, including persistent chronic diseases, emerging infectious diseases, costly injuries and high health care costs, compounded by a shortage of trained public health workers. Colorado is also at the center of a 9-state region without a school of public health.

Substantial development of public health educational and research resources has occurred in Colorado in the last twenty years, providing the building blocks for such a school. School accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) allows access to sources of funds for training and research not otherwise available.

Faculty, administrators, and public health leaders from the University of Colorado, Colorado State

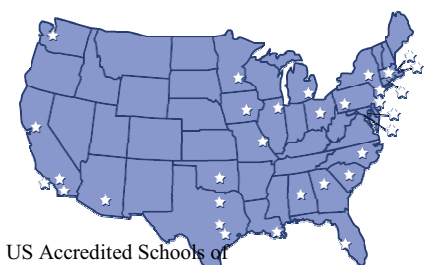
University, and University of Northern Colorado have developed a plan for an accredited, collaborative school that draws on the existing strengths of each educational institution. The proposed school will have shared faculty and administration and a single tuition structure for students on all campuses. Key features include:

- A multi-campus Master in Public Health (MPH) professional degree offered for students in the region to obtain a comprehensive education in all areas of public health.
- Master of Science (MS) and Doctoral (PhD) degrees for students pursuing academic/research futures plus medical residencies in Preventive Medicine and Occupational Medicine.
- A Center for Public Health Practice to provide expanded training for the workforce, facilitate student field training, and link students and faculty with public health leaders, employers, and local communities.
- Administrative and fiscal structure representing all partner

institutions with the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center serving as the lead institution; Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado as equal academic partners.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is an active partner in the development of the school. Future collaborations are planned with other regional universities, community colleges, and public health agencies to meet the needs of the greater Rocky Mountain region.

Kathleen Mathews & Richard Hamman,
UCDHSC



US Accredited Schools of Public Health, 2005

Community Advisory Board

Hello from the Community Advisory Board (CAB)! This has been an exciting and busy year for us. We set 3 major goals last November and have used them to guide our future planning strategies. The goals include:



Theresa Rudder, CAB Chair

- To define the identity of the CAB and work on better public relations and community recognition of our work and goals.

- To determine the appropriate size of CAB, and potentially target specific groups from which to recruit new members, especially in regards to project steering committees.

- To review and define the sustainability and capacity of the PRC projects.

I am proud to say that the CAB is a good representation of the community. We are a mighty 13 strong! The collective knowledge of

the different members is extremely valuable to the RMPRC and to the success of the research projects. As a way of broadening our scope, we are involving the steering committee members who are participants in the different projects as they bring another dimension of valuable information to us. We are looking to partner with other community agencies, organizations and projects as a way of sustaining the work that has been done. These research projects are vital to the health of our communities and we want to assure that the results are shared with

the public in a way that is understandable and helpful.

The CAB has focused on creating a new brochure which is filled with information about the RMPRC and the projects in which we are currently involved. It is a great source of information and we plan to get it out into the community to let them know what and who we are!

We are excited about what is happening within our CAB and with our partnership with the RMPRC. The future is bright!

Theresa Rudder, CAB

The Healthy Family Project Continues to Recruit Families in the San Luis Valley!

The Health Family Project (HFP) seeks families who are interested in doing things together as a family, are at risk for or have diabetes and will be living in the valley for at least eighteen months.

- The HFP is a program looking at ways to help families make healthy lifestyle choices including,
 - Eating better foods
 - Increasing exercise
 - Attaining or maintaining a healthy weight
 - Diabetes self-management

•Families will be asked to visit our office in Alamosa 4 times over 18 months. These visits will consist of lab work, general health interviews and participants will be compensated. An educational session will be offered to all participating families. Two out of three families will have the opportunity to take part in home visits with a lifestyle coach, who will assist families in identifying their goals, developing personalized action plans and to discover the steps needed to reach their goals. Families will also be empowered to access community resources

•Research has shown that these healthy choices can help prevent or delay the onset of diabetes and can also reduce or delay complications in those who have diabetes. Moreover, having a family member with diabetes increases the risk of other family members getting diabetes. The family is an important source of social and environmental support for developing sustained health promoting behaviors.

•The Healthy Family Project (HFP) is a randomized controlled trial funded by the National Institutes of Health, and is designed to determine the effectiveness of a family-based home visit program among families at high risk of developing diabetes or its complications.

For more information, please contact **Jennifer Atencio** or **Robin Liston** at 719-589-5801.



Robin Liston, RMPRC

RMPRC of the San Luis Valley Health Studies Staff Update



Robin Liston, the Healthy Family Project Coordinator, began working at the RMPRC on May 1st, 2006. She moved to the San Luis Valley from Kansas City, MO where she earned her Master's Degree in Public Health from the University of Kansas Medical Center. She has almost four years of professional experience working on community - based, randomized controlled trials that integrated behavioral sciences and health education. Her professional responsibilities have included delivering intervention components, data collection and integrity, recruitment, building community-partner relationships and preparation of manuscripts for publication. Further, she brings an extensive background in Motivational Interviewing counseling. She enjoys escaping to the mountains for a hike, black and white photography, reading and her dog Mia.

Terry Uyeki resigned in May from her position as Evaluation Coordinator for the Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center, after nearly 6 years of employment with the PRC. She and her husband, Michael, said good-bye to the San Luis Valley, moving to the North Coast of California in June. Terry's new work "home" is the California Center for Rural Policy, at Humboldt State University in Arcata. She is Director of Development and Evaluation, and will continue to do the community based participatory research that she loves, as part of the Center's mission of conducting research and evaluation to better inform rural policy. She considers herself lucky to have found such a close match to her interests and passion - moving from issues of rural isolation that people of the San Luis Valley experience (geographically and historically), to the rural isolation of living and working behind "the Redwood Curtain." She continues to enjoy hiking with her husband and dog, Bentley, but on beaches and in redwood forests, and is also closer to family who live in the area. She misses the friends, food, and culture of the San Luis Valley, and hopes that friends from Colorado drop in when they're in the area ("and bring some green chile!" Terry says...)



We wish all the best to Terry and Emily in their new pursuits!



Emily Waters resigned from her position with the RMPRC at the end of July 2006 to pursue a Master's Degree in Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Emily joined the Center staff in Denver as a Professional Research Assistant in December of 2003. She was a team member with the Healthy Family Project (HFP) as well as the School Environment Project. Her efforts on the HFP were focused on the development and implementation of study protocols, survey instruments, and the family intervention. In 2005, Emily moved to Alamosa for a year to help facilitate a planning process called Intervention Mapping in the intervention arm of the School Environment Project. Prior to coming to the RMPRC, Emily was a Project Coordinator at the Cooper Institute in Golden, CO, where she helped develop a nutrition education website (5-A-Day, the Rio Grande Way) for adults in Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico. She enjoys nature and animals and loves to spend time with her pets: Lula, a lovebird, and Nala, a dog she found and adopted while living in Alamosa.

Postpartum Depression in Fathers

It is well known that many new mothers suffer from postpartum depression, but a recent study suggests many new fathers become depressed as well. Researchers from the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center and Eastern Virginia Medical School reviewed nationally-representative data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study on more than 5,000 two-parent families with children age 9 months and found that approximately 14% of mothers and 10% of fathers suffered from

moderate to severe postpartum depression. These findings suggest that men during the postpartum period may be two times more likely to suffer from depression compared to men in the general population (10% compared to 5%, respectively). The study's findings also suggest that postpartum depression in mothers and fathers results in undesirable parenting practices and limited parent-infant interaction. Depressed mothers are less likely to engage in preventive health behaviors, such as breastfeeding and placing a child on his or her back to sleep, and are less likely to play

or interact with their child. Depressed fathers also engage in less positive interactions with their infants. The study recommends that pediatricians make a greater effort to screen both parents for postpartum depression to help ensure successful adherence to parenting and child prevention health guidelines. For more information, please refer to the published article "Individual and Combined Effects of Postpartum Depression in Mothers and Fathers on Parenting Behavior" in *Pediatrics*, 2006; 118:659-668 or contact Jenn Leiferman at jenn.leiferman@uchsc.edu.

Jenn Leiferman, RMPRC

Prostate Cancer in Colorado

Prostate cancer was detected in 2,680 Colorado men in the year 2005, affecting more individuals than breast, lung, or colorectal cancer. Screening and treatment for prostate cancer are surrounded by controversy, because there is no solid evidence that finding and treating prostate cancer leads to a reduction in prostate cancer deaths, and because treatment has many side effects. Therefore, it is recommended that men be informed of the benefits and limitations of prostate cancer screening so that they can make informed decisions about whether it is right for them.

In 2002, under the leadership of Dr. Lori Crane, the RMPRC was awarded a "Special Interest Project" (SIP) to develop and test a CD-ROM program to aid men in making informed decisions about prostate cancer screening. "Prostate Cancer Screening: The Decision is Yours" uses an interactive format to present information about the potential benefits and drawbacks of prostate cancer screening. It

includes seven video stories in which Colorado men discuss their decisions about screening. While the CD-ROM contains about 90 minutes of content, it costs only about 50 cents to reproduce.

In 2004, the CD-ROM was mailed to over 4000 men throughout the state of Colorado who were randomly selected from commercial mailing lists. Among those who were sent the CD-ROM, 39% reported in telephone interviews that they remembered getting it, and 13% used it in a computer. Using the CD-ROM resulted in significantly higher prostate cancer knowledge, higher comfort in deciding whether or not to be screened, and more realistic expectations about the outcomes of screening and treatment for prostate cancer. This direct mail approach appears to be a good, low-cost mechanism for reaching a broad group of men. We are currently looking for opportunities to further disseminate the CD-ROM - contact Lori Crane (303-315-7862 or lori.crane@uchsc.edu) for information.

Lori Crane, RMPRC



Prostate Cancer Screening:

The Decision is Yours



SLV EPI COMMITTEE

In July, the San Luis Valley (SLV) Prevention Coalition, along with RMPRC CAB co-chair Theresa Rudder, mobilized partners interested in collecting and disseminating data for planning and evaluating prevention services in the San Luis Valley. The group is calling itself the SLV EPI Committee (EPI for epidemiology and data). Attendees included representatives

from Costilla, Conejos and Alamosa Public Health Nursing Services, SLV Mental Health, SLV Prevention Coalition, public schools, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the RMPRC.

At our second meeting we asked the following questions:

1) What do we hope to accomplish? To coordinate collection of accurate and current data;

to improve systems to store and retrieve data; to collect common data items across counties for key health indicators; to build local capacity to present and interpret data; to use data to make program decisions; and to work together to avoid duplication and make resources go farther.

2) What is our current focus? To identify and review existing data resources, review

Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships indicators, and determine additional data needs.

The EPI committee will meet the second Tuesday of each month. Anyone interested in joining this committee, please contact Sue Davis, 719-589-5801 or Liza Marron, 719-587-6944.

Julie Marshall & Sue Davis,
RMPRC

Developing “Evidence-Based” Health Promotion Programs: What’s a Health Professional to do?

The latest trend in health promotion and health education seems to be using “evidence-based” programs. What is an evidence-based program? Decades of funding by the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and numerous private organizations and foundations have produced numerous programs to address everything from drug abuse prevention to healthy survivorship after cancer. These programs have been studied using research designs that have produced strong evidence of their effectiveness. The “evidence-based” trend is all about getting these effective programs out into communities, so that lots of people can benefit from the research.

How can you find an evidence-based program to fit your needs? How can you adapt an evidence-based program for your community? For several years, the RMPRC has dreamed of creating a workshop to help program planners find answers to these questions.

That dream is being realized with the first Evidence Based Health Promotion Workshop, to be held November 1 and 2 in Alamosa. In partnership with the Colorado Prevention Partners and the San Luis Valley Prevention Coalition, the RMPRC will sponsor this workshop in which participants will learn what is meant by “evidence-based,” how people involved in program planning can search for and evaluate available evidence-based programs, and how evidence-based programs can be adapted for local communities. The faculty of the workshop will include RMPRC behavioral scientists experienced in program planning, and the workshop will incorporate hands-on opportunities to search for evidence-based programs using the internet. Following the workshop in November, the RMPRC hopes to obtain continued funding to “take the show on the road” to other communities throughout Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Region. For more information, or to sign up for the November workshop, contact Sue Davis at (719)589-5801.

Lori Crane, RMPRC

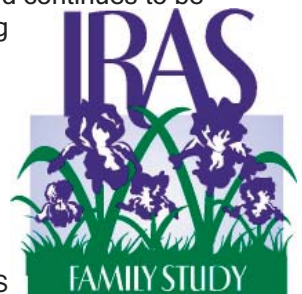
IRAS Family Follow-Up Study

As the Insulin Resistance Atherosclerosis Study (IRAS) Family Study follow up exam draws near to completion, the IRAS team (Kathy, Leonard and Rodney) is working hard to get the final participants scheduled. Data collection will end December 31st, although we expect to schedule some participants beyond that date and closing the clinic will take at least until February or March.

There have been a couple of changes to the IRAS team. The largest change is that Kathy has moved to the Denver office after almost 9 years of working at the clinic in Alamosa. She will continue to work 50% on the IRASFS thru December, which is great news for the study! Kathy now coordinates the Denver clinics and continues to be involved in the overall coordination of the Study in the Valley. Leonard and Rodney are heading up the team in Alamosa, which has a new member, Rianna Abeyta. Rianna joins the Clinic team assisting with several tasks that Leonard and Kathy used to share, such as annual follow-up surveillance interviews, preparing charts, and keeping the data tracking system up to date. She is also working with the Healthy Family Project.

Rodney has graciously taken on some of the tasks that Kathy used to handle at the clinic; Leonard continues relentlessly at recruiting. They look forward to seeing all of our Valley participants in the Alamosa office.

Kathy Duncan, IRAS



Dates to Remember

October 12-13: State and National Advisory Council (SNAC) Meeting, Alamosa, CO

October 18-20: National Community Committee (NCC) Retreat, Ann Arbor, MI, www.cdc.gov/prc/news/index.htm

November 1-2: Evidence-based Health Promotion Workshop, Alamosa, CO, Sue.Davis@uchsc.edu

November 3: School Summit, Wellness in Action - Celebrate Success, Invesco Field - West Club Lounge, Denver, CO

November 4-8: American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference, Boston, MA, www.apha.org

March 20-22, 2007: PRC Program Meeting, Holiday Inn Select, Conference Plaza, Atlanta, GA, JNSmith@cdc.gov

April 11-14: Community Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) 10th Anniversary Conference, Toronto, Canada, <http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/conf-overview.html>



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