



Tribally-Driven Research

The National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center (NCAI PRC), led by Dr. Malia Villegas, will convene the Executive Committee and a Scientific Community Advisory Committee.



The Univ. of New Mexico Center for Participatory Research, led by Dr. Nina Wallerstein, is responsible for eight case studies of CBPR projects and the qualitative development of vignettes for the survey instrument.



The Univ. of Washington Indigenous Wellness Research Institute (IWRI). Project leader, Dr. Bonnie Duran, is responsible for development, implementation, and analysis of a survey of approximately 400 CBPR sites.

Research for Improved Health

A National Study of Community-Academic Partnerships

A partnership of the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center, the University of New Mexico Center for Participatory Research, and the University of Washington Indigenous Wellness Research Institute received funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to study community-academic partnerships in research and intervention projects addressing health disparities and health equity.

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), also sometimes known as “participatory or action research,” is an approach to health research which aims to maximize community involvement in and control over research studies. Key goals of current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) initiatives include:

- Eliminating health disparities, and
- Translating effective public health programming for implementation in communities.

Towards these goals, we are conducting a research project on the factors that contribute to and detract from meaningful and effective community-academic partnerships in American Indian/Alaska Native communities, other communities of color, and other communities that face health disparities. We believe that a better understanding of these factors will help improve this approach for the benefit of all partners. It is critical for us to include a broad and diverse sample of CBPR research projects in our study to generate representative results. Research teams participating in the study will have the opportunity to contribute to our understanding of factors that contribute to and detract from meaningful and effective community-academic partnerships and results will be shared as aggregated data with participating community-academic partnerships.



Our Scientific Community Advisory Committee



The Study Aims Include:

- 1 Describe the variability of CBPR characteristics across dimensions in the CBPR conceptual model to identify differences and commonalities across partnerships.
- 2 Describe and assess the impact of governance on CBPR processes and outcomes across AI/AN and other communities of color.
- 3 Examine the associations among diverse contexts and partnering processes with major CBPR outcomes, such as culturally-centered interventions, health-enhancing policies and community capacities, found to be linked to health disparities, by testing the CBPR conceptual model.
- 4 Identify, translate, and disseminate best practices in CBPR for tribal leaders and other community and academic partners to improve health status and health equity.

Study Methods:

This multi-method study, which includes both quantitative and qualitative components, is funded through the Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH) program, NIH, and the Indian Health Service. The study will be conducted from 2009 – 2013. The internet survey sample is 320 NIH and CDC funded research projects (2009). Data collection includes:

- A key informant internet survey with study Principal Investigators (PI) about their research project, funding, and formal mechanisms of the partnership; and
- An internet survey with academic PIs and community PIs about their knowledge and beliefs about the operations of the partnership.

The case studies of six to eight CBPR sites will probe similarities and differences across key contexts, partnering processes, and outcomes. They will deepen our understanding of links between processes and outcomes based on the CBPR research model¹.

Accomplishments To Date Include:

- Study design based on a new CBPR conceptual logic model.
- Literature review of instruments and creation of variable matrix with measures to assess characteristics of CBPR for partnership self-reflection and evaluation².
- Multiple presentations at national and international conferences and professional venues.
- Data collection since 2010 for case studies; survey data collection will start in 2011.

Core pilot funding for this project from 2006-2009 was provided by the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities. Current funding is provided under the Native American Research Centers for Health NARCH V program (Indian Health Service/NIGMS/NIH U261HS300293 2009-2013) with contributions from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, National Institute on Drug Abuse, NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research, National Center for Research Resources, and National Cancer Institute.

¹Wallerstein, Oetzel, Duran, Tafoya, Belone, Rae, "What Predicts Outcomes in CBPR: Community Based Participatory Research for Health," From Process to Outcomes, 2nd edition, (Minkler and Wallerstein, eds). San Francisco, Jossey Bass 2008.

²See <http://hsc.unm.edu/SOM/fcm/cpr/research.shtml>.