

**Daniel S. Blumenthal MD MPH**  
**Associate Dean for Community Health**  
**Morehouse School of Medicine**

**Community-  
Based  
Participatory  
Research**

# CBPR Growing in Popularity...

PubMed search on “Community-Based Participatory Research:”

- 1989- 1995: 12 citations
- 1996- 2000: 24
- 2001-2002: 55
- 2003-2004: 89
- 2005-2006: 170
- 2007-2008: 259
- 2009 -2010:427 (3/18/10)
- Total (through 3/18/10): 1036

## ...but has a long way to go

- Pubmed search on “Community-Based Research:”

T = 16,419

- PubMed search on “Clinical Research:”

T = 1,015,851

(Searches conducted March 18, 2010)

# Research Settings

- Basic Research: Laboratory
- Clinical Research: Hospital or clinic
- Health Services/Outcomes Research:  
Computer
- Community-Based Research: The community

# From CBR to CBPR

- CBPR = Research done with the community, not “in” the community or “on” the community
- Community is a partner

# **CBPR: The Community Participates in Every Phase of the Research**

- Identification of the research topic & the research question
- Design of the study
- Execution of the study
- Analysis and interpretation of the data
- Dissemination of the results

## **Traditional Clinical Research**

- Therapeutic Focus
- Centered on individual participant (patient)
- Physician scientists
- Participants are patients, receiving care
- Strong motivation to participate

## **Community-Based Research**

- Prevention focus
- Population-centered
- Multidisciplinary approach
- Participants continue their usual activities
- Motivation to participate may be low



# Why Community-based *Participatory* Research?

1. Ethical: Don't exploit the community
2. A vehicle for community organization and community development

Also: Better research

# The ethical issue

## Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male

A *great* community-based research project:

- Little attrition
- Excellent follow-up
- Good data collection

# Community Development

- Break the “Cycle of Poverty”:

Poverty begets powerlessness, which begets poverty

# Challenges to CBPR



# **I. Who represents the community?**

# Four Levels of Community Participation

Hatch, J., Moss, N., Saran, A., Presley-Cantrell, L. & Mallory, C. (1993).  
Community research: Partnership in Black communities. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 9(supp), 27-31.

1. Persons consulted by the researchers are at the periphery of the community, often working for human service agencies and living outside the community. Community residents are unaware of the research.

# Four Levels of Community Participation

2. The project's advisors are leaders drawn from organizations and churches within the community, but the researchers retain total control of the project. There is community involvement, but it is passive.

# Four Levels of Community Participation

3. Community leaders are asked not only for endorsement of the project, but for guidance in hiring community residents to serve as interviewers, outreach workers, etc. This model is community-based but not community-involved, since community members do not contribute to the design of the research. Offers potential for community manipulation by hiring influential community members.

# Four Levels of Community Participation

4. Community members are first among equals in defining the research agenda, identifying the problem to be studied, analyzing its contributory factors, and proposing possible solutions.

## II. Identifying the Research Topic

- Community vs
- Funders: What's in the RFA?
- Researchers: What's their area of expertise?

# III. Analyzing & interpreting the data


Biostatisticians required

but

What does it all mean?

## IV. Issues for Academics

- CBPR takes longer than other research approaches – promotion & tenure at risk
- IRBs don't understand it – needless delays, complex consent forms and procedures, etc.
  - IRBs protect individuals – not communities

- 
- “Research is good, but what do you do with the research after you get it?”

- Ella Heard Trammell

- Chair, Morehouse School of Medicine  
Prevention Research Center  
Community Coalition Board