



12th WORLD CONGRESS ON PUBLIC HEALTH

(April 27-May 1, 2009, Istanbul-TURKEY)

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161.06 Building capacity for applied public health research through a community-centered academic health department

Thursday, April 30, 2009

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Building Capacity for Applied Public Health Research through a Community-Centered Academic Health Department

The concept of an Academic Health Department, the public health version of a teaching hospital, requires collaboration between academic institutions and public health departments. A community-centered model of an academic health department builds on the strengths of a partnership between a local public health department and academic institutions with a primary focus on addressing the health needs of a local community. The Duval County Health Department, a well developed community-centered model, enhances core public health functions of assessment, assurance and policy development through collaboration with academic institutions. The Institute for Health, Policy & Evaluation Research, located within the local Health Department, is a community-based applied research partnership between the local Health Department and University of Florida regional Medical College, located in Jacksonville, Florida. The academic side of the collaboration, a University of Florida, Center for Health Equity & Quality Research, has a similar mission of applying research to reduce disparities and address the social determinants of health. The Institute combines the core public health functions of assessment with academic institution research functions. The resulting synergy creates a robust applied research capacity to investigate disease, evaluate programs, develop evidence based policy, and utilize a broad range of research methods to address local public health problems. The social and political capital, gained through enhanced capacity and visibility in the community related to the core public health functions and essential services, provides greater leverage for the public's interest to be represented in major private sector initiatives such as Regional Health Information Organization development. Description of the model and illustrations of the applications provide important implications for community empowerment through this model of campus-community partnership.

Learning Objectives: 1) Describe models of an academic health department 2) Discuss the synergies that can result from combining the core public health functions of assessment with the academic missions of research.

Sub-Theme: Building capacity for applied research

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