

Reviewer's report

Title: Establishing an Implementation Network: Lessons Learned from Community-Based Participatory Research

Version: 1 **Date:** 24 March 2008

Reviewer: Ann C. C Macaulay

Reviewer's report:

Community-based participatory research is expanding into different fields of health research. Both researchers and those choosing to partner in the research—especially those looking to adopt this approach for the first time—are interested in the lessons learned from other projects. For this reason the authors, who include members of both the academic team and the community based partner, are to be congratulated on submitting an article that adds to process of developing and maintaining CBPR partnerships. The article will be of particular interest to those working in the mental health field, and I agree with the authors that the lessons learned which are outlined in this article could be highly relevant to other CBPR partnerships.

However, in my opinion, the current article needs much greater detail and many more examples to illustrate the points. While the lessons learned are useful they are not adequately discussed. The reader is left needing to know many more details before being able to apply them in their own work. On Page 4 the authors state that 'details of the CBPR partnership have been detailed elsewhere'- but reference 7 seems to be an error as it does not include any of the details. Even with the correct reference I recommend that the authors add a succinct summary of the paper.

The details that I recommend including are as follows:

In the introduction on P5, second paragraph, what were the exact organisational and bureaucratic processes that were difficult, and what were the previous set of expectations and barriers?

Lesson 1. Please add more details about the meetings "to educate ourselves about each other's cultures." Which year were the initial meetings? Who initiated these meetings? How many meetings? How long were the meetings? Where were they held? What did you discuss? Who attended? Did some people drop out? What was the governance structure of the three committees? How large were they and how often did they meet? Was decision making by consensus or by voting?

Building the partnership is a crucial time in CBPR. This team has obviously built a very successful partnership and it would be highly beneficial for future teams to have some of these details.

Lesson 2. What kind of reports and educational materials did the research assistant write and for what audience(s)? Was this part of the dissemination process? Was there some level of collaboration between the research assistant and the County Organisation because in my experience writing for non scientific audiences is a real art.

Lesson 3. What were the procedural and administrative issues? Were these linked to one or both of the partners or to the granting agency? How did NIMH contribute to this MOU? Could you make the MOU available if the journal was able to host it on their website? (It would be a very useful addition to the current available MOUs and guiding principles.)

Lesson 4. Achieving this policy change is a major accomplishment! Did the original idea originate from the university or the community organization or just evolve through discussions? Who approached the County Public Conservator's Office and how long did it take to effect the change in policy? In order to know if this was successful please add how many subsequent studies have used persons with conservators and have the majority of conservators agreed to participate in the studies?

Lesson 5. What 'other procedures'? (Page 8)

Page 9 and the end of first paragraph - how else and to whom were results disseminated? I.e. did results go to county staff, conservators etc.?

Discussion. P10, Line 1. Please add references for other academic- public collaborations. Line 4 is this adapted or adopted? Line 12 what kind of educational programs? If the mental health systems for older adults are new then this should be stated- also were these systems a result of research findings?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.