



# Research for Health Newsletter

## October-December 2016

A periodic, informative bulletin reporting on the activities of research for health from the office of Knowledge, Bioethics, and Research to inform countries, partners, and PAHO managers and staff on the advances in the execution of PAHO's [Policy on Research for Health](#). Please send questions and comments to [cuervolu@paho.org](mailto:cuervolu@paho.org).

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# SPOTLIGHT

## 46<sup>th</sup> Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR)



The 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR) took place at PAHO Headquarters, Washington DC, 28–30 November 2016. The Committee met to discuss the advancement of the [Policy on Research for Health](#) and the monitoring of its progress in Member States and the Pan American Sanitary Bureau. The Committee discussed, among other topics, building on research to enable countries

to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as other priority topics relevant to the production and use of research for health. ACHR Members are consolidating a set of recommendations for the consideration of PAHO’s Director and the Governing Bodies regarding the six objectives of the Policy on Research for Health. The meeting joined the PAHO’s **Paperless Project** offering participants electronic access to the all meeting documents. Read more about this event [here](#).

## BMJ workshop at PAHO



On December 1<sup>st</sup>, The BMJ and the Pan American Health Organization hosted a workshop at PAHO Headquarters to discuss a **partnership and create a series of articles** on progress made in the countries with the [Policy on Research for Health](#). Several contributors attended the meeting and discussed a proposal to prepare a series of articles to address these issues, in 2017. In the photo, BMJ Editors

with participating contributors.

## Tutorial on Registration of Research Proposals available with captions



The Spanish version of the tutorial clip about registration of research proposals is **now available and includes captions**. This initiative goes in line with the World Health Organization’s (WHO) inclusive [policy](#) that promotes equitable access to health communications among deaf and hard of hearing populations across the globe. The clip produced by PAHO explains how to register clinical trials and

observational studies in compliance with international standards. Check the video [here](#).

## Call for proposals for reviews to identify and address research gaps on ZIKV



TDR/WHO has issued a call for proposals to undertake landscape analysis on research gaps related to mosquito vectors of the Zika virus. The deadline for submission is 21 January 2017, 17:00 (CET) To proposals support a landscape analysis identifying knowledge gaps about the transmission patterns and ecology of the mosquitoes vectors of the ZIKV developing commissioned reviews on two topics listed in the call Under this call, two commissioned review proposals will be selected for funding. More information

[here](#). Find more funding opportunities towards the end of this newsletter.

# RESEARCH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

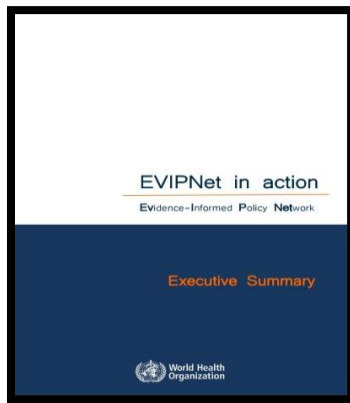
## In the Region

### CIDEIM Collaboration



On November 2016, representatives from the International Training Center and Medical Research ([CIDEIM](#), for its acronym in Spanish) and PAHO, met to discuss furthering their very productive collaborations, and move forward with the ongoing initiatives about **social innovation in health, implementation research, research methods, infectious diseases, and good research practices**, among others. CIDEIM is a WHO Collaborating Center, a training center for the [Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases \(TDR\)](#), part of the Social Innovation in Health Initiative, and the Americas lead training center for [Effective Project Planning and Evaluation in Biomedical Research](#). CIDEIM is aligning its work with PAHO's Policy on Research for Health and wants to build on the tools offered by PAHO to develop and disseminate research, and help in the regional assessment of capacity development relevant to both parties. **CIDEIM has trained hundreds of research teams in the region**, and is **developing inter-sectorial courses and networks** of trained consumers to enhance the relevance and applicability of research in the Americas, and address the social determinants of health.

### Celebrating 10 years of EVIPNET



The [Evidence-Informed Policy Network](#) (EVIPNet) is a network established by the World Health Organization (WHO) **to promote the systematic use of research evidence in health policy-making** in order to strengthen health systems and get the right programs, services and drugs to those who need them. In this report, WHO commemorates 10 years of painstaking and determined effort by EVIPNet throughout the world, through **10 success stories that contributed to transform knowledge translation bridging the needs of policy makers and communities**, with the outputs of research, knowledge management, and local needs. Access the stories [here](#).

## In the Countries

### Bolivia

#### RIM AIS Ministerial Assembly took place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra



The Iberoamerican Network for Health Research and Research (RIM AIS, in Spanish) held its VIII Ministerial Links Assembly in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on December 12-14, 2016. Attendees discussed **the development of proposed, ongoing or completed projects**, in accordance with the Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018, and the Activities Plan 2016. Participants also addressed the strengthening of networks with support of collaborators from the Carlos III Health

Institute of Spain, the Council on Health Research for Development (Switzerland), and the Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency - AECID. RIM AIS emerged within the framework of the XV Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Salamanca, Spain, in October 2005 and seeks to strengthen cohesion and coordination of National Health Research Systems in Latin American countries. For more information, click [here](#).

### Honduras

#### Initiative to strengthen research for health in Honduras



Honduras has a **Network of Research Ethics Committees composed of 11 committees** of different development levels in three cities of the country, Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula and Santa Rosa de Copán. During the period 2015-2016, the

execution of a grant from the TDR/WHO granted to the Comité de Ética en Investigación Biomédica (CEIB) from the Facultad de Ciencias Médicas (FCM) of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (UNAH), allowed to address the objectives of (1) establishing and strengthening the [Network of Research Ethics Committees of Honduras](#) (REDCEIH); (2) implementing the ProEthos platform in the REDCEIH; (3) training online and in person: teaching researchers, students (graduate and undergraduate), and health professionals; and (4) train members of CEIB FCM UNAH and REDCEIH on operation and administration of an institutional ethics committee. The implementation of this initiative has contributed to **strengthen research for health and ethical research in Honduras**. For more information, click [here](#).

## Panamá

### PAHO Technical Cooperation: Regulation of the Policy on Research for Health in Panamá



In August 2014, with the goal of facilitating research, the Panamanian Ministry of Health began **to review and adjust regulations on research seeking a better approach to the use of research in addressing current challenges and strengthen the legal framework through a bill**. The leading actors (MINSA, ICGES, SENACYT, CSS and UP) are agreeing the draft to be formally presented on February 1, 2017 with support from PAHO. The bill will be made available later for other stakeholders to comment. More information [here](#).

## In the Secretariat

### Evidence Aid Workshop



On Wednesday November 16, PAHO headquarters in Washington, D.C. hosted an **Introductory [workshop on “evidence-based interventions in emergency and humanitarian contexts”](#)** organized by Evidence Aid and PAHO/WHO and other partners such as Georgetown University and the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences. The 45 participants included a wide range of professionals including members of national and international public policy and academic entities, as well several PAHO staff. The mixture of engaging seminars were facilitated by experts from Evidence Aid, PAHO, the Library of Congress, McMaster University, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and George University. The workshop also linked up with a session at the [Health Disaster Coordinator Regional Meeting](#) in Bogota, Colombia, a sign of the bright future and connection between communities working in the spheres of evidence and public health emergencies. Read more [here](#).

### Technical cooperation meeting with SENACYT



On October 6, 2016, PAHO staff **met with Panamanian authorities from the [Secretaria Nacional de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación](#)** (SENACYT, Panamá), to discuss scholarship programs, technical cooperation to advance the regional and national policy on research for health and capture lessons learned from Panama on the development of a console for research capacities. [Violeta Cumberbatch](#), Director of Management of Science and Technology, [Minerva Lara Batista](#), International Fellowships, [Karen Gladbach](#), Manage Training and Fellowships Health System and Services PAHO, and [Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo](#) participated of the meeting.

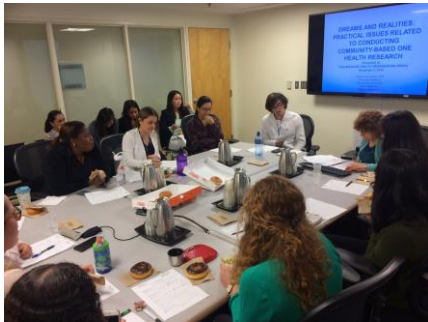
## Research Interest Group

### Communicating Research Effectively: Featured Speaker Ms. Nelvis Castro



On October 18, 2016, a [Research Interest Group \(RIG\)](#) took place at PAHO's Headquarters in Washington, D.C., led by guest speaker [Ms. Nelvis Castro](#), Deputy Director of the Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) at the [National Cancer Institute \(NCI\)](#)/[National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#). Ms. Castro shared her insights about **the role of communications in supporting research to set up the [Cancer Moonshot initiative](#)**. Ms. Castro engaged with attendees about the importance of **integrating communicators into research groups and shared practical tips** with the audience on how to communicate research findings to the media. She also shared her insights on how to engage and build trust with reporters and advocacy organizations, emphasizing the importance of providing clear communication, in simple language. Learn more about the event [here](#).

### Dr. Irene Jillson – Community-based One Health Research



Enlightening participants on a subject which has been underlying human society throughout its existence, [Dr. Irene Jillson](#) of Georgetown University led a [Research Interest Group](#) entitled “Dream and Realities: Practical Issues Related to Conducting Community-based One Health Research”. Dr. Jillson’s discussion led attendees **on a journey into this fascinating field** on November 3 “Global One Health Day”, in parallel with events occurring all across the world that **promoted exploration into understanding of healthy cohabitation between people, animals and their surrounding environment**. Particular focus was given to a project being carried in the village of Charbagh in the Laghman Province of Eastern Afghanistan addressing account primary, veterinary and environmental health activities. The discussion fostered fascinating debate across the range of subjects that One Health encompasses as well as the considerations for **research and the value of ownership of and engagement** with such programs organization by local populations.



## WHO-Collaborating Centre to Advance the Policy on Research for Health



On October 2016, the [WHO Collaborating Center to Advance the Policy on Research for Health](#), based at Arizona State University, hosted a meeting to advance their work. [Dr Carol Baldwin](#) and [Dr David Coon](#) coordinated the meeting with ASU staff and [Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo \(PAHO/WHO\)](#) and discussed making the University of Arizona a model in working across disciplines to promote evidence-informed policies, and support health systems, health outcomes and health equity.

[More info is available here.](#)

## Meet the Newest Team Member

### Josselyn Mothe



MPA Health Policies candidate, he is the latest addition to the Research Promotion and Development team. **Curious and calling for innovation**, with long-time experience in the health private and public sector, he will work on initiatives relevant to PAHO's Policy on Health Research. Convinced of the importance **of health as the most important human asset**, [Josselyn Mothe](#) from France began interning at the Office of Knowledge Management, Bioethics and Research while completing

his [MPA Degree in Health Policies](#) at Sciences Po Paris. Back in France, Josselyn worked as a corporate governance assistant to the CEO of an NGO managing 21 care facilities. He then joined the French Ministry of Health where he worked on the development of a [reference book](#) on health professions [FR]. Driven by curiosity and eager to remain in the field, he was working as a consultant in hospital management strategy and organization prior his arrival at PAHO. Persuade that **the training of the newest generation of researcher is crucial**; he will work to expand initiatives such as [Students 4 Best Evidence](#) and [SIHI](#). He is also supporting the **assessment for research promotion initiatives** in the Caribbean with his colleague [Lorcan Clarke](#), including French-speaking areas. As a young professional, **he values curiosity and team-working as key professional skills and thinks that humour and goodwill can help make the workplace and the world a little bit better.**

## PARTNERSHIPS

### SCHOLARSHIPS IN BRAZIL | The Advisory Committee selected the awarding scholarships on November 14-18, 2016.



The Organization of American States (OAS), the Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities (GCUB) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) announced the selected candidates of the **OAS-GCUB 2016 scholarship program for master's and doctorate studies in Brazilian universities in 2017**. More than 400 scholarships were awarded to applicants from **19 countries**, including Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Panamá, Perú, Paraguay, Uruguay, Mexico, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, Venezuela, El Salvador, Nicaragua,

Guatemala, and Honduras. The scholarships will benefit professionals from OAS member nations, including **76** who will pursue postgraduates' studies in health disciplines, and more than 300 fellows who will pursue other disciplines that also contribute to the improvement of social determinants of health. Congratulation to all the selected candidates! To see the results, please click [here](#). All scholars will have access to dedicated websites and tools provided by PAHO, to better develop and use research for health.

### SCHOLARSHIPS IN MEXICO | The Advisory Committee selected the awarding scholarships on October 25, 2016



The Organization of American States (OAS), the National Council of Science and Technology of Mexico (CONACYT), the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) have selected the fellows for the Program Mexico 2017. A total of **56 scholarships**

were awarded to applicants from **20 countries**. Eight will benefit from health related scholarships mainly for Doctorate and Masters or specializations, and as above, they will all be offered specialized tools to use and produce research for health, regardless of the discipline in which they are specializing. For the more information, please click [here](#).

## TDR Tools for implementation research



With the help of invited experts from regions across the globe, TDR is **producing this interactive tool to introduce people to the concepts of this type of research.** It is valuable for public health researchers and decision makers, academic and research institutions and public health practitioners. Implementation research (IR) is the systematic approach to understanding and addressing barriers to effective and quality implementation of health interventions, strategies and policies. Learn more about this Massive Open Online Course [here](#).

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

## PAST CONFERENCES:

### Fourth Symposium on Health Systems Research



From 14-18 November 2016, 2,062 delegates from 101 countries assembled in Vancouver, Canada, for the [Fourth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research](#) on the theme of ‘Resilient and responsive health systems for a changing world’. During the symposium several discussions emerged regarding the **importance of resilient and responsiveness health systems**, recognizing their importance for achieving Universal Health Coverage

and the Sustainable Development Goals. This conference is organized every two years, and brings together a full range of players involved in the health systems and policy research from around the world. The [5<sup>th</sup> Global Symposium](#) will take place in October 7, 2018, at Liverpool, UK.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Evidence Aid International Conference



“[Humanitarian Evidence](#)” took prominence as Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> International Evidence Aid Conference over November 17 and 18, 2016. Organized as a collaboration between [Evidence Aid](#), Georgetown University, the

Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and PAHO. The event’s inspirational core fostered from a [Policy Delphi Study](#) carried out by the organizers which engage a broad range of key stakeholders in a **dialogue on disaster response focusing on what factors impact effectiveness, the role of evidence for best practice, approaches to improve investments using systematic reviews and identifying gaps in the base of available evidence.** Presentations from key actors in the humanitarian and risk reduction sectors further explored the questions posed by study, including perspectives from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Médecins Sans Frontières, ALNAP, Public Health England and Johns Hopkins University. Like the preceding workshop, the conference fostered excellent discussion between participants on **how to innovation and develop the role of evidence in humanitarian situations**, an area

ripe for engagement by actors across the global health sphere. More information is [available on the Evidence Aid website](#).

## Cochrane Colloquium Seoul: Challenges to evidence-based health care and Cochrane



In October 23-27, 2016 took place in Seoul, Korea, the [Cochrane Colloquium](#), an **annual flagship event** that brought together Cochrane contributors from around the world to discuss, develop and promote Cochrane. This was the **first time the Cochrane Colloquium took place in East Asia** and **over 800 participants** attended the four plenaries 96 workshops, 151 oral presentations and almost 200 posters. **You can catch-up on the main decisions** to come from the Colloquium in Mark Wilson's round-up [blog](#) (Cochrane CEO).

## Research Ethics in Pregnancy: Global Forum on Bioethics in Research



The Global Forum on Bioethics in Research (GFBR) was held on November 3-4, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The topic of the GFBR 2016 edition was research ethics in pregnant women and was developed under five major themes: specific research in pregnant women, policies and regulations, non-infectious diseases, infectious diseases and Emergencies of public health.

Among the conclusions it was emphasized that pregnant women have been systematically excluded from participating in research under the concept of vulnerability, although gestation is not a disease or a vulnerable state in itself. The GFBR recommends promoting ethical research in and with pregnant women, which will lead countries to review regulatory and regulatory frameworks -where they exist- on the participation of human beings in research. For more information, click [here](#).

## PUBLICATIONS

### Registration of Observational Studies: Influence Research and its Impact



Former KBR Intern, [Christopher Khanoyan](#), and Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo published a **blog about the importance of registering observational studies in order to improve research value and protect study participants**. Research registration enables people to learn about research projects, increases the value of research and reduces its duplication. Read the article [here](#).

### ACHR, a Review of its Contributions to Health and Research in the Americas 2009-2015



The Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR) is working on a **summary of the committee's contributions to health and research in the Americas from 2009 to 2015**. The final version is expected to be ready in **January 2017**. The ACHR has contributed to the creation of the [Policy on Research for Health](#) and has developed several strategies to promote its implementation. If you want to learn more about the ACHR's contributions to the Americas [click here](#).

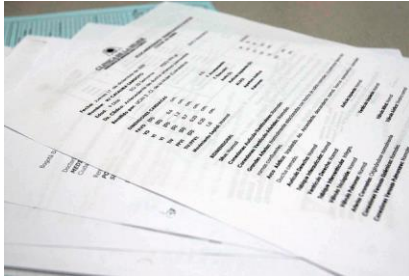
### One of the best 2015 Social Innovation Program in Health: a community-centered research to address Chagas disease in Paraguay



[Social Innovation in Health Initiative](#) (SIHI), TDR/WHO, has recently published a case study of the [Center for the Development of Scientific Research](#) (CEDIC) as one of the 25 best 2015 Social Innovation Programs in Health call, to be held jointly with the Harvard Business School and the Bertha School of Cape Town University. CEDIC is a non-for-profit center that promotes scientific research and knowledge management in biological, health and environment sciences. The recognition of its Innovation Project focused on its effort to improve the quality of life of indigenous communities in the Paraguayan Chaco who live in extreme

poverty and in areas of water stress where access to water and food is very scarce. Read the case study [here](#).

## Less is More: The dangers of too much medicine



Students for Best Evidence blog analyze the dangers of over treating patients. Overtreatment and over diagnosis are a concern in the healthcare sector. Each diagnostic test and treatment comes with added physical and emotional risk that may create anxiety in patient and may lead to several unnecessary workups that eventually increase healthcare costs. The good news is that several well respected journals in the healthcare sector are recognizing this problem to raise awareness on this issue. Journals like Jama and BMJ have developed collections and campaigns to face this issue and modify the current practices in medicine. If you want to learn more about this topic [click here](#).

## Access to health care in indigenous communities



Recently published in the Pan American Journal of Public Health, this review of systematic reviews published as of July 2015, aims to synthesize evidence on effectiveness of interventions designed to improve access to health services by indigenous populations. According to the study's conclusions, interventions do exist that have potential for producing positive effects on access to health services by indigenous populations in the Americas, but available studies are limited to Canada and the U.S. There is a significant research gap on the topic in Latin America and the Caribbean. Read the article [here](#).

## Kangaroo care has lasting benefits: 20 year follow-up. Great innovation!



Kangaroo mother care (KMC) is a multifaceted intervention for preterm and low birth weight infants and their parents. This study indicates that KMC has significant, long-lasting social and behavioral protective effects 20 years after the intervention. Coverage with this efficient and scientifically based health care intervention should be extended to the 18 million infants born each year who are candidates for the method. The aim of the study was to evaluate the persistence of these results in young adulthood. Read the whole study [here](#).

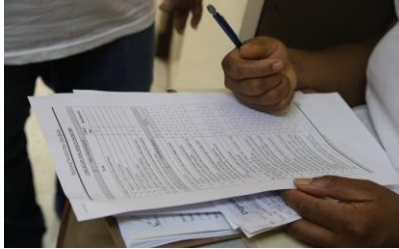
## Evidence Aid: Zika resources



In keeping with its [mission](#) to “to inspire and enable those guiding the humanitarian sector to apply an evidence-based approach in their activities and decisions”, Evidence Aid released on October 3, 2016, a series of [systematic and diagnostic reviews as well as guidelines regarding](#) the recent outbreaks of Zika Virus. Identified more than 60 years ago, it was only in 2015 that the epidemic of Zika was linked to an epidemic of microcephaly in Brazil, one symptom of the Congenital Zika Syndrome. It **remains unclear why the virus is causing outbreaks and congenital syndrome now** and the challenge that to tackle this epidemic are multiple (E.g. progress towards vaccines, treatments and better diagnostic tests and methods for mosquito control, reproductive rights of women). [Laura C Rodrigues](#), Professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology, [Faculty of Epidemiology and Population Health](#), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in London, UK, **has compiled dozens of evidence-based reviews to help establish better humanitarian actions.**

# CALLS FOR APPLICATIONS

## TDR Postgraduate training support in Colombia



The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) currently has [a number of funding opportunities](#) opened which may be of interest to readers. TDR supports PhD and Masters Degrees focused on **implementation research in malaria, TB and neglected tropical diseases** to improve health in these regions. The scheme provides a full academic scholarship. Among others is the Universidad de Antioquia, National Faculty of Public Health, Medellín, in Colombia ; **Next call to be announced May 2017.**

TDR is also part of a [joint fellowship](#) with the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership ([EDCTP](#)) on clinical research and development. This joint call for proposals provides fellowships **to early-to-mid-career scientists and clinical staff in low- and middle-income countries to learn how to conduct clinical trials.** Selected applicants are placed in pharmaceutical companies or product development partnerships for 6-15 months. **Deadline for applications: 2 February 2017, 17:00 (GMT)**

## US National Institute of Health Funding Opportunity Announcements



The NIH provides [financial support](#) in the form of grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts to support the advancement of the NIH mission to enhance health, extend healthy lives, and reduce the burdens of illness and disability. Six main types of grand funding are provided: [Research Grants](#) (R series); [Career Development Awards](#) (K series), [Research Training and Fellowship](#) (T & F series); [Program Project/Center Grants](#) (P series); [Resource Grants](#) (various series) and [Trans-](#)

[NIH Programs](#). The application [due dates](#) vary from **January 25 to september 5**. The NIH also provided parent funding. You can find all current parent fundings [here](#). The [Grants Information Service Desk](#) is 301-945-7573. You can also find information [in this video](#).

*For the compilation of material for this newsletter PAHO technical areas, PAHO country offices, the ACHR as well as strategic partners for the advancement of the Policy on Research for Health were invited to send contributions.*

*It was compiled by the Office of Research Promotion and Development; Maria Senés, Lorcan Clarke, Cristina Schreckinger, Josselyn Mothe and Dr. Luis Gabriel Cuervo*

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