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## Improving Access to Public Health Information: A Study of Information Needs in a State Health Department

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# **Improving Access to Public Health Information: A Study of Information Needs in a State Health Department**

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Medical Library Association Annual Meeting

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Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the  
Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine; Project #TS-0734



# Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project

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- ❖ Evidence-based public health
  - Informed decisions for practice
- ❖ Information must be accessible
- ❖ What are the information needs and accessing preferences of the public health workforce?

# Qualitative Study Methods

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## Study Sample:

19 Professionals at the Massachusetts  
Department of Public Health

- 12 - Bureau of Communicable Disease Control
- 7 – Division of Community Health Promotion

## Data Collection & Analysis

- Tape/transcribed key informant interviews & focus groups
- Thematic analysis of data; comparison across groups

# Questions Asked

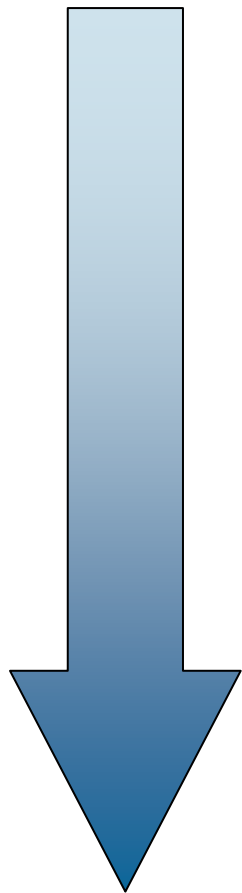
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- ❖ Type of work tasks performed requiring access to information?
- ❖ Information sources currently used?
- ❖ Current limitations to information access?
- ❖ Preferred format and features for information access?

# Evidence-based Information Continuum

## *Different information sources for different needs*

Minimum



Maximum

1. Early alerts & reports	➤ Email, news media
2. Emerging & promising practices	➤ Conferences, listservs, informal networks
3. Evaluated practices & interventions	➤ Reports, websites, conferences
4. Reference Information	➤ Books, websites
5. Published research & systematic reviews	➤ PubMed, journals, article summaries
6. Evidence-based guidelines	➤ AHRQ, Institute of Medicine



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**Data & Statistics**



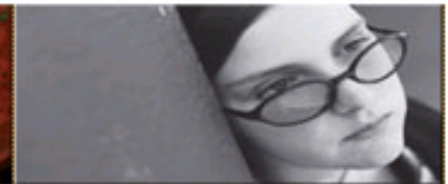
### Raising Healthy Kids

Public Health - See what CDC is doing to promote healthy communities...  
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Pandemic Flu resources...  
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### Child Abuse

Child abuse and neglect can lead to health problems throughout life...  
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A new portal with information and resources for CDC's partners ...[more](#)

### [Spring Break Guide to Staying Safe and Healthy](#)

Make your spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy. [more](#)

### Programs & Campaigns

#### [National Diabetes Education Program](#)

Partners work together to improve the treatment and outcomes of diabetes.

#### [Family History Initiative](#)

This evaluates how family history can assess common diseases risk and influence early detection and prevention strategies.

**Challenges & limitations** to public health information access

**Strategies** to meet the **needs** of the public health workforce



## Challenge:

- ❖ Too many sources to search efficiently
- ❖ Too much irrelevant information



## Need:

- ❖ One portal access to PH information
- ❖ Mediated searching & article retrieval services
- ❖ Training on accessing and selecting PH resources



# Partners

in Information Access for  
the Public Health Workforce

A collaboration of U.S. government agencies, public health organizations and health sciences libraries

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## Our Mission

Helping the public health workforce find and use information effectively to improve and protect the public's health

## Main Topics:

- ▶ [Health Promotion and Health Education](#)
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### Research

is just  
a click away...



### Resource Guide

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Preparedness

Role of Information Services for  
Emergency Preparedness and  
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MLA'05: CE 800

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ASTHO Executive Director](#)

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Disease in Young Infants  
Drops After Introduction of  
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Older Infants](#)

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## Partners:

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## Diabetes

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Click the  button to run the search in PubMed.



[Link to the complete Healthy People 2010 Chapter.](#)



Prevent Diabetes. ([Objective 05-02](#))



Increase the proportion of adults with diabetes whose condition has been diagnosed. ([Objective 05-04](#))



Reduce diabetes-related deaths among persons with diabetes. ([Objective 05-06](#))



Decrease the proportion of pregnant women with gestational diabetes. ([Objective 05-08](#))



Reduce the frequency of foot ulcers in persons with diabetes. ([Objective 05-09](#))



Increase the proportion of adults with diabetes who perform self-blood-glucose-monitoring at least once daily. ([Objective 05-17](#))

## Related Resources

- [Guide to Community Preventive Services. TOPICS: Diabetes and Physical Activity](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetes](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetes and Pregnancy](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetic Diet](#)
- [MEDLINEplus - Diabetic Foot](#)
- [Screening for Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. Guide to Clinical Preventive Services, 3rd ed.](#)

**NCBI**

All Databases

Search PubMed

Limits

Display

All: 85

1: [checkbox] [icon] [text]

2: [checkbox] [icon] [text]

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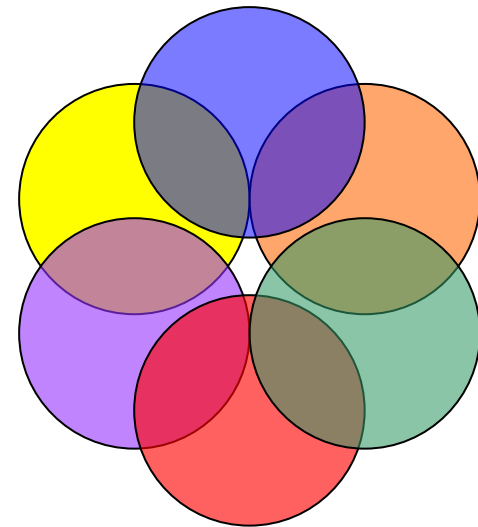
ostinence in Louisiana.

## Challenge:

- ❖ Gaps in public health information
- ❖ Difficulty accessing information beyond biomedical field – beyond PubMed

## Need:

- ❖ Access to information from multiple disciplines



## Challenge - limited access to:

- ❖ Full-text journals
- ❖ Unpublished research
- ❖ Systematic reviews and summaries with practice recommendations

## Need access to:

- ❖ **Free** full-text journals
- ❖ Grey literature & conference proceedings
- ❖ Systematic reviews and evidence-based guidelines related to public health

**GUIDE TO**

# COMMUNITY

## Preventive Services

SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS AND EVIDENCE BASED RECOMMENDATIONS

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### In The Spotlight:

The Guide to Community Preventive Services is now available in book form.

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-  [injury prevention & safety](#)
-  [mental health](#)
-  [nutrition](#)
-  [parenting/infants & children](#)

#### ▶ Most Popular References...

- ▶ [Q15783 - Day care for pre-school children](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q15782 - The health and welfare effects of day-care: A systematic review of randomized controlled trials](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q15329 - Interventions for preventing obesity in children](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q15345 - Effectiveness of community-based interventions to increase fruit and vegetable consumption](#) modified: 6/2/2011
- ▶ [Q16121 - Effectiveness of physical activity enhancement and obesity prevention programs in children and youth](#) modified: 6/2/2011

#### ▶ Latest Additions...

- ▶ [Q16153 - Intervention programs for arthritis and other rheumatic diseases](#) modified: 8/24/2011
- ▶ [Q15457 - The efficacy of influenza vaccine in elderly persons: A meta-analysis and review of the literature](#) modified: 8/24/2011
- ▶ [Q15513 - Is dental health education effective? A systematic](#) modified: 8/24/2011

# Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project Web Site:

<http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph>



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University of Massachusetts Medical School

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## Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project

### Overview

There are numerous clinically based models for finding the "best evidence" for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. This process is called **Evidence-based Medicine** or **EBM**, which has been defined as "the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients. The practice of evidence-based medicine means integrating individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence from systematic research" (Sackett DL, Rosenberg WMC, Gray JAM, Haynes RB, Richardson WS. Evidence based medicine: what it is and what is isn't. BMJ 1996; 312: 71-2). Within the EBM models, there is no or little attention paid to the "best practices" for population-based (public) health. The purpose of this project is to **examine the clinical EBM models and assess their effectiveness to the public health literature**. The project will also identify any existing evidence-based projects in public health and assess their effectiveness. The outcomes of the project will be:

1. An Evidence-based Public Health website;
2. An electronic publication or database based on the preferred models(s);
3. A training program for public health practitioners introducing them to evidence-based public health practice and literature retrieval methods.

### Funding

The Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health Project is funded by an award from the [Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine / Centers of Disease Control and Prevention](#) Cooperative Agreement to the [Lamar Soutter Library](#) at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

### Objectives

- Identify the knowledge domains of public health and their corresponding literature.
- Identify at least three models of evidence-based literature approaches to clinical medicine and review their applicability to the literature of public

# EBPPH Project Web Site:

<http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph>

## Evidence-Based Resources for Public Health Practice Available for Free Online Access

### Evidence-based Guidelines

- United States
  - [CDC Recommends: The Prevention Guidelines System](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
  - [Guide to Clinical Preventive Services](#) (U.S. Preventive Services Task Force)
  - [Guide to Community Preventive Services](#) (Task Force on Community Preventive Services)
  - [MMWR Recommendations and Reports](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
  - [National Guideline Clearinghouse](#) (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality)

### Systematic Reviews

- United States
  - [PubMed Systematic Reviews](#) (National Library of Medicine)
  - [Healthy Aging Initiative - Evidence Reports](#) (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services)
- International
  - [Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, Abstracts](#) (Cochrane Collaboration)
  - [Cochrane Reviews of Relevance to Health Promotion and Public Health](#) (Cochrane Health Promotion and Public Health Field)
  - [DARE \(Database of Abstracts of Reviews of Effects\)](#) (Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, University of York, UK)
  - [The Effective Public Health Practice Project](#) (Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the City of Hamilton, Public Health and Community Services)
  - [EPPI \(Evidence for Practice and Policy Information\) Centre](#) (Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, UK)
  - [Evidence Based Health Promotion](#) (Victorian State Government, Department of Human Services, Australia)
  - [Health Development Agency Evidence Base](#) (Health Development Agency, UK)
  - [Health Evidence Bulletins Wales](#) (Duthie Library, University of Wales College of Medicine, Cardiff, UK)
  - [Health-Evidence.ca](#) (Canadian Institutes of Health Research)

### Pre-formulated and Filtered Searches of Published Research Studies

- United States
  - [Healthy People 2010 Information Access Project](#) (National Library of Medicine and the Public Health Foundation)
  - [PubMed Clinical Queries](#) (National Library of Medicine)
  - [PubMed Health Services Research \(HSR\) Queries](#) (National Library of Medicine)

### Best Practices (Experience-Based)

- United States

# Responding to the Need

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- ❖ Expert searching and article retrieval services
- ❖ One portal access to:
  - Free public health journals
  - Free public health bibliographic databases
  - Evidence-based public health resources
- ❖ Training on finding resources for EBPH

# Contact

[Hathy.Simpson@umassmed.edu](mailto:Hathy.Simpson@umassmed.edu)

Evidence-Based Practice for Public Health

<http://library.umassmed.edu/ebpph>

## Published Paper:

Lapelle NR, Luckmann R, Simpson EH, Martin ER. Identifying strategies to improve access to credible and relevant information for public health professionals: a qualitative study. *BMC Public Health*. 2006 Apr 5;6(1):89.