

ATMCH Newsletter

Spring 2000

A Letter from the President by Pierre Buekens, MD, PhD

This is the first time the ATMCH Newsletter is entirely electronic, and soon will be downloadable from our new web site at <http://www.atmch.org> (more info to follow on the posting date). This is also the first time the semi-annual newsletter has been prepared by our new secretariat, hosted by the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH), with generous support from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). I am very excited about the increased capacity these changes will give us to achieve our mission.

A strategic planning process was also launched this year. Many members provided feedback before the Executive Committee's retreat that took place in early February in our new secretariat's offices in Washington, DC. Strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities were reviewed, and many exciting new ideas for the future came out

from the discussion. The spring business meeting will be almost entirely devoted to further strategic discussions, and a final plan will be available for our November meeting.

ATMCH's changing role parallels the redefinition of the MCH field. MCH decisions are increasingly data-based and evidence-based. The very fast growth of MCH epidemiology is an illustration of this process. There is an exploding need for doctoral training, for skills-oriented master's programs, and for continuing education focused on data management. Such training programs can only be effective if they are developed in academic departments vigorously involved in data-management and evaluation themselves. MCH Departments are thus increasingly research-oriented. Much of the funding of such departments is coming from other sources in addition to MCHB. Their faculties are often very active in scientific associations, such as the American Public Health Association (APHA), the Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research (SPER), or clinical societies. We will have to define what unique products ATMCH can offer to such new MCH Faculty. We also will have to acknowledge that many teachers in MCH are not based in MCH Departments.

A last but extremely important change in our field is its globalization. The traditional division between domestic and international affairs is increasingly irrelevant in a world dominated by a global economy. Many health problems are shared by industrialized and developing countries. The workforce is flexible and mobile,

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and many of our students will have non-linear careers, moving from domestic to international jobs and vice versa. There is thus an urgent need to discuss how to make ATMCH a global organization. This should be one of the central issues to be discussed in our strategic planning process.

A Record High of More than 1,000 Applications to MCH Programs in 1998

In 1998 (latest data available from ASPH) over 1,000 applications were received from individuals seeking acceptance into MCH programs at schools of public health. This is a 15.4 percent increase in MCH applications from 1997 (overall increase in applications from 1997 to 1998 was 6.4 percent). Over the past 5 years, schools of public health have experienced an 18 percent increase in MCH applications (overall increase in applications over 5 years was 13.4 percent).

From the desk of Peter Van Dyck, MD, MPH, Associate Administrator for MCH in HRSA

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the MCH Bureau (MCHB), thank you for this opportunity to share with you some of our recent events, thinking, accomplishments and challenges in your *ATMCH Newsletter*. The last several months at the Bureau have been a very busy and exciting time with a number of changes in staff leadership--including the appointments of Henry Spring, M.D., J.D., as the Director of the Division of Perinatal Systems and Women's Health and Michael Kogan, Ph.D., as the Director of the new Office of Data and Information Management. In addition, we are currently in the process of appointing a number of other key leadership positions such as the MCHB Deputy Director for Programs; the

Director and Deputy Director of the Division of Research, Training and Education; the Director and Deputy Director of the Division of State and Community Health; the MCHB Executive Officer and the Chief of the MCH Training Branch. Hopefully by this spring I will have the opportunity to announce a cadre of inspiring new Bureau leaders.

Another major endeavor has been the development of draft performance measures for all discretionary grants (SPRANS, Healthy Start, CISS, etc.) administered by the Bureau. As a result of this effort, analogous to the implementation of performance measures accomplished in partnership with the State Title V programs, MCHB will be in a better position to assess the performance and accomplishments of grant investments related to our strategic goals. Also, it will assist the MCH community in telling a more compelling and clear story to key constituents and decision-makers about the significance of maternal and child health investments. We look forward to sharing these draft performance measures with ATMCH in late spring for your review and comments.

It is also my pleasure to announce the publication of the updated 2nd Edition of the *Bright Futures Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents*, developed through a MCHB grant to the National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health (NCEMCH) at Georgetown University. The document is now available through the National Maternal and Child Health Clearinghouse at (888) 434-4MCH.

The MCH Training Program also has been busy season with the schools of public health training competition nearly completed. We anticipate announcing these new grant awards soon in preparation for a June 1 start date. We have recently received this year's pediatric pulmonary and continuing education competitive applications, including the distance learning category proposals, and will be holding the

objective review panels for these competitions in February and early March in preparation for June and July start dates. In addition, the Bureau is conducting, in collaboration with the MCH Institute at the University of Alabama, an assessment of short and long-term training needs in maternal and child health. We anticipate having vital information and recommendations from this project in the late fall to share with you. The MCH Training Program in collaboration with the NCEMCH is conducting a major evaluation of the Bureau's training investments. This effort includes the publication of phase one--a historical background piece--in late February and the completion of a careful evaluation of training programs, including numerous on-site assessment visits, with a final report to be completed by the summer of 2001. It is anticipated that these efforts will significantly support the Bureau in program planning and future direction setting.

This year the MCH Research Program through a consensus process has selected 15 research issues/questions as priorities for fiscal year 2000-03 research competitive grant cycles. These 15 priority areas represent a balance of competing programmatic needs and concerns linked to the goals of the MCHB and Health Resources Services Administration strategic plans. These research priorities can be viewed at and downloaded from the MCHB Web site: <http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov>.

As part of a recent review to measure the impact of the MCH Research Program on pediatric clinical practice, an assessment of MCHB (\$7.8 million) supported research efforts published in *Pediatrics* during 1999 and 2000 revealed that MCHB supported 17 articles. This compared favorably to other Federal child health research efforts, considering that the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (\$405.6 million) supported research publishing of 30 articles in *Pediatrics* and Agency for Healthcare and Quality (\$24 million) supported research publishing of 14 articles during the same time

period. In addition, the Bureau has established two new newsletters entitled "MCH Research to Practice"-- an effort to translate research findings to the broader MCH service community and "MCH Research Exchange"--a general informational publication on key priorities, findings and summaries of newly funded research investments.

In summary, these are just a few highlights of MCHB issues that I hope have been informative and useful to you. I will update you again in future issues of the *ATMCH Newsletter* and look forward to your valuable input on our various efforts especially our draft performance measures to be shared this spring!

Spring ATMCH Meeting

Sunday March 5, 2000 is the date for the spring ATMCH meetings in Washington, DC, to be held in conjunction with the AMCHP annual meeting. The site will be the Grand Hyatt Hotel on 1000 H Street, NW in the Renwick Room. The executive committee meets from 9-11 am and breaks for lunch between 11 and noon. Please note that the business meeting time and format has been changed. Members will meet from 12-4 pm for the business meeting, with committee meetings during the last hour, from 3-4.

One recommendation made at the February retreat of the Executive Committee was to energize our business meetings. More specifically, it was suggested that we devote most of our March business meeting to brainstorm on ideas to build a new *Plan for the Future* of the organization. During the ATMCH Executive Retreat we identified the following main components of our future activities:

- Be the leader in MCH education for research and practice
- Support faculty development
- Identify, develop, and establish stronger

partnerships

- Strengthen the ATMCH membership

For each of these components, we will ask members who are present at the business meeting to list potential activities in support of the *Plan for the Future*. This will help ATMCH to further develop the strategic plan, which we want to finalize before our November meeting. We are looking forward to a lively and exciting business meeting. We hope many of you will attend.

The dinner to fete the Lacey awardee will be held Sunday March 5th from 7-9 pm at Lei Garden in Washington, DC's "Chinatown." Please contact Liz Weist at emw@asph.org if you plan to attend the dinner. The charge is \$25/person. Note that Lorraine Klerman has received four nominations for the Lacey Award, and an awardee will most likely be decided this week and notified immediately thereafter.

The ATMCH research committee, chaired by Greg Alexander, has developed a session to focus on Public Health Practice/Academic Partnerships at the AMCHP meeting on Wednesday March 8, 2000. The roundtable will take place from 7:30-9:15 am.

Finally, all ATMCH members who are also leaders in APHA's MCH section, and those MCH Section members who would like to become leaders, are invited to the Section Mid-Year Leadership meeting at the APHA's new offices at 800 I (Eye) St. NW from 3-5 pm on Saturday, March 4 (the day before the ATMCH meeting). The program committee will meet just before (1-3 pm) to plan the Section's meetings and sessions for the November 2000 APHA meeting.

Education Committee Report from the November 1999 Meeting

The committee has been working on revising the MCH competencies so they can be reviewed at the March 2000 meeting. A preface has been added

briefly describing the history and intended uses for the competencies. They have been made more general and updated to reflect changes in MCH as well as our experience with using them in academic programs. Look for the revision in your e-mail box the last week of February.

We will have an informal discussion of doctoral programs Monday evening at 5:15 p.m. A specific meeting place at the Grand Hyatt will be announced at the Sunday afternoon meeting. Interested ATMCH members are asked to bring materials from their doctoral programs and be prepared to share ideas on doctoral programs.

Letter from Secretariat

We are excited to serve as the new secretariat for ATMCH and are working hard to bring everything up to speed for the members. We have already met many of you and are looking forward to working with you on your important issues.

We have a few updates for you: Allison Foster presented a draft web site to the participants at the ATMCH retreat earlier this month. She got excellent feedback and is making the suggested changes. This site will "go live" shortly. So far, she has put up a "page under construction" site at <http://www.atmch.org>. Also, Allison reports that ATMCH has received a great response to its request for payment of dues for FY '99 and FY '00. Thanks!

As you have seen, this electronic newsletter is distributed, as are all ATMCH announcements, on an e-mail distribution list rather than a true listserv. Please e-mail any items you'd like posted to the membership to Liz Weist at emw@asph.org. We'd also appreciate any comments or suggestions on this newsletter. You may contact Stacia Maher by e-mail (smm@asph.org) with your thoughts. We would

like to hear from you! FYI, the fall newsletter will come out in early November 2000.

ATMCH History

The ATMCH secretariat is researching the history of the organization for archival purposes. According to Dr. Isabelle Valadian and Dr. Fuzzy Downs, the first meeting of a proto-ATMCH took place in Minneapolis in 1955 or 1956. It was a special meeting of the educators sponsored by the Children's Bureau. There were published proceedings titled, *Teaching Maternal and Child Health*. We have also contacted some knowledgeable members who were present at the official founding of ATMCH in the 70s. If you have information on ATMCH's history, and have NOT yet been contacted, please e-mail Stacia Maher (smm@asph.org) to share your memories.

Announcements

--The University of Minnesota, School of Nursing, Minneapolis, MN is sponsoring three institutes with the support of the Federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau of HRSA, DHHS: (1) *Resource Development through Grantwriting*. May 15 & 16, 2000. An intensive, focused learning to enhance skills for resource development through grantwriting; (2) *Foundations for Care Coordination for Children with Special Health Care Needs*. June 11, 2000. Skill-building sessions to create family centered care for children in managed care environments. (Optional pre & post Internet Computer Workshop, June 10 or 12.); and, (3) *Clinical Assessment and Interventions: Adolescent Violence*. June 13-16, 2000. Refining skills for responding to youth violence in clinical settings and community-based prevention programs. For more information contact Karen Larsen at (612) 624-3174.

--NIH, and a number of other federal partners (AHRQ, CDC, FDA, HIS, HRSA, and USDA),

is hosting the *The Face of a Child: Surgeon General's Conference on Children and Oral Health* in Washington, DC on June 12 and 13. Registration is limited to 500 attendees. Contact Beth Pernerewski by e-mail: bpernerewski@kevrice.com for more information.

--After over 20 years of teaching and research at the Harvard School of Public Health, Dr. Jane Gardner is retiring in June. She is taking up new adventures like building furniture, turning wood bowls, fly fishing and seeking adventures in travel. ATMCH would like to take this cyber opportunity to congratulate Jane for her wonderful work over the years. Members look forward to Jane's further contributions to the field of MCH education. Good luck, Jane, in your retirement, but we hope you stay in close touch with us at ATMCH.

The ATMCH newsletter is produced by Liz Weist and Stacia Maher, who work closely with Allison Foster to staff the ATMCH secretariat. You may reach us at the following address, phone, and fax:

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