

# *Practical Approaches to Community-Partnered Dissemination, Implementation and Improvement Research*

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# Community Engagement

- ◆ Partnering with community members
- ◆ Sharing a vision for constructive change
- ◆ Embracing mutual respect, trust, open communication
- ◆ Acknowledging expertise of all members of the “engaged” partnership in the community

# Cultural Competence

- ◆ Embracing community members
- ◆ Learning from community
- ◆ Listening, asking questions
- ◆ Openness to understanding other cultural viewpoints

# Why Important?

- ◆ Community Engagement and Cultural Competency are BOTH essential to conducting Community-Based (or Partnered) Participatory Research
- ◆ Strong relationships between academics and community members are key to this research approach

# What is CBPR?

- ◆ Action-oriented research method that involves a team approach inclusive of ALL participants
- ◆ ALL = researchers and “researched”
- ◆ Reframe doing research “on” to doing research “with”
- ◆ Attempts to empower those who have not been empowered
- ◆ Focus on making constructive change (action)

# What do we mean by “research”

- ◆ Traditional definitions of research may connote being “examined” or “exploited” – “loaded” word
- ◆ Need to redefine: “PhDs of the sidewalk”
  - ◆ Wells, K., Jones, L. (2009). Commentary: “Research” in community-based participatory research. *JAMA*, 302 (3), 320-321.
- ◆ Community-partnered participatory research (CPPR) vs. CBPR (to emphasize the “partnership”) co-leadership
  - ◆ Jones, L, Wells, K. (2007). Strategies for academic and clinician engagement in CPPR. *JAMA*, 297 (4), 407-410.

# Taking a Stance of “Humility”

- ◆ Acknowledge different perspectives on truth
- ◆ Value diversity of views
- ◆ Struggle with difficulty at arriving at “shared interpretation”

# Importance of Perspective



# 8 Principles of CBPR

- ◆ Community is unit of study
  - ◆ Builds on strengths already present in community
  - ◆ Collaboration and partnership in all stages of research
  - ◆ Integrates knowledge and action
- ◆ Israel et al (1998)

# 8 Principles of CBPR

- ◆ Alleviation of social-inequality through co-learning
  - ◆ Iterative process
  - ◆ Focus on wellness and ecological perspective of health
  - ◆ Partnering in the dissemination of research findings
- ◆ Israel et al (1998)

# Community as Unit of Study

- ◆ Community and factors that influence community must be understood in order to understand individuals' experiences within the community
- ◆ Social, political, economic, environmental, sociological factors all influence the community= “social determinants of health”

# Builds on Strengths

- ◆ In the spirit of empowerment it helps to focus on strengths despite disparities in vulnerable communities
- ◆ Learn from community members what they see as their strengths and why (may not often be asked this question)
- ◆ This strength-based approach needs to be balanced with realistically assessing the needs of the community
- ◆ May allow researchers to get better idea of what approaches might work in the community

# Understanding Perspectives of Others



# Avoiding a priori variables



# Collaboration and Partnership in all Stages of the Research

- ◆ Signature aspect of CBPR
- ◆ Takes time – need to develop trust, need to listen to community members and include their views/perspectives
- ◆ Researchers should go to the community rather than have community members come to University
- ◆ Focus groups to elicit views of community and academia (co-led by community member and academician)

# Who is at the table?



And who is not at the table who should be at the table?

# Integrates Knowledge and Action

- ◆ Overt purpose of making social change (“action research”)
- ◆ Alleviation of disparities, oppression, vulnerability
- ◆ Great example of “translational research” – translation into practice is the primary goal at the beginning of the research project

# Alleviation of Social Inequality through Co-Learning

- ◆ Collaborative partnerships
- ◆ Viewing community members as experts
- ◆ Learning from one another as they progress in the research process

# Iterative Process

- ◆ Means that we are constantly learning: collect data, analyze, revise our interpretations, collect more data
- ◆ Research and co-learning as a process
- ◆ Ongoing

# Focus on Wellness and Ecological Perspective

- ◆ Wellness is related to the concept of building on strengths
- ◆ Ecological perspective is related to importance of “social determinants of health”
- ◆ Need to understand the context, the “ecology” of one’s reality, of the community

# Partnering in the Dissemination of Research Findings

- ◆ Who actually “owns” the data?
- ◆ Importance of dissemination – and of understanding dissemination of findings (“translational” in the literal sense)
- ◆ Meaning of findings
- ◆ Applicability of findings to the community

# Guiding Principles (Healthy African American Families)

- ◆ Co-planning, joint leadership at each stage of the research
- ◆ Written agreement re: roles, goals, privileges, rules of engagement
- ◆ Ongoing vertical and horizontal communication, problem-solving as part of the process
- ◆ All activities of project should be transparent (sometimes communication may take place via stories, music)
- ◆ Ensure that adequate financial and other resources are available to community members

# Guiding Principles (Healthy African American Families)

- ◆ Follow community values and timeframes; academic researchers are actually “guests” in the community
- ◆ Strive for highest standards of productivity (focus on strengths of all the partners – academic and community)
- ◆ Academic researchers need to seek consultation from community leaders re: cultural sensitivity, understanding
- ◆ Learning the historical and social context of the community is essential for academic partners

# Guiding Principles (Healthy African American Families)

- ◆ Social justice perspective of community-partnered research (inclusive, including community members in the scientific endeavor)
- ◆ Need for academic researchers who do this kind of research to communicate with promotion and tenure committees (may require some institutional changes, modifications)
- ◆ Partnering in evaluation, assessing impact on community

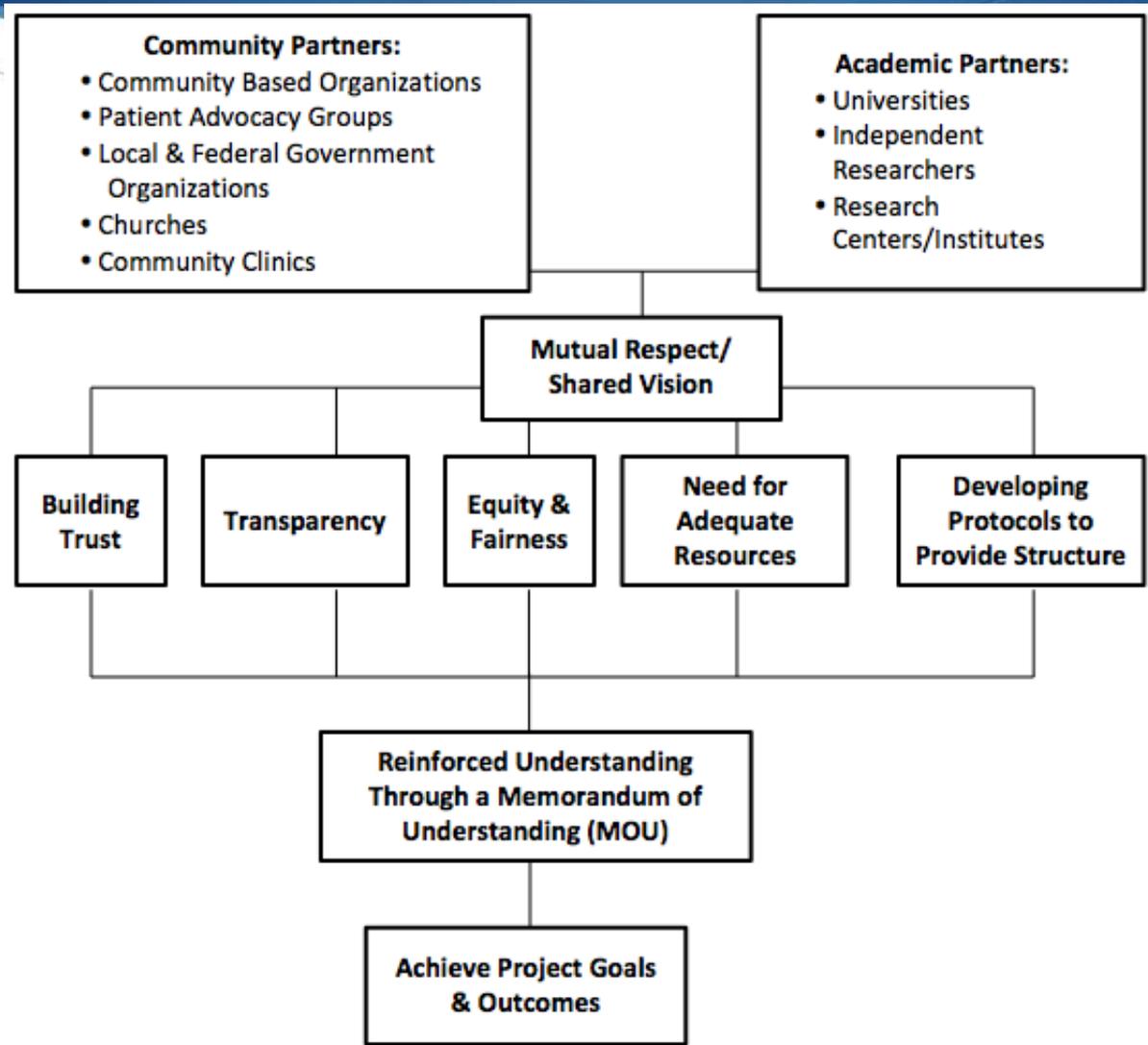
# Specific Issues in Community Research

- ◆ Informed consent (needs to be truly “informed” through bi-directional communication)
- ◆ Sharing/disseminating research results (including asking for input re: whether the results do, in fact, reflect their experiences)

# Discussion Questions

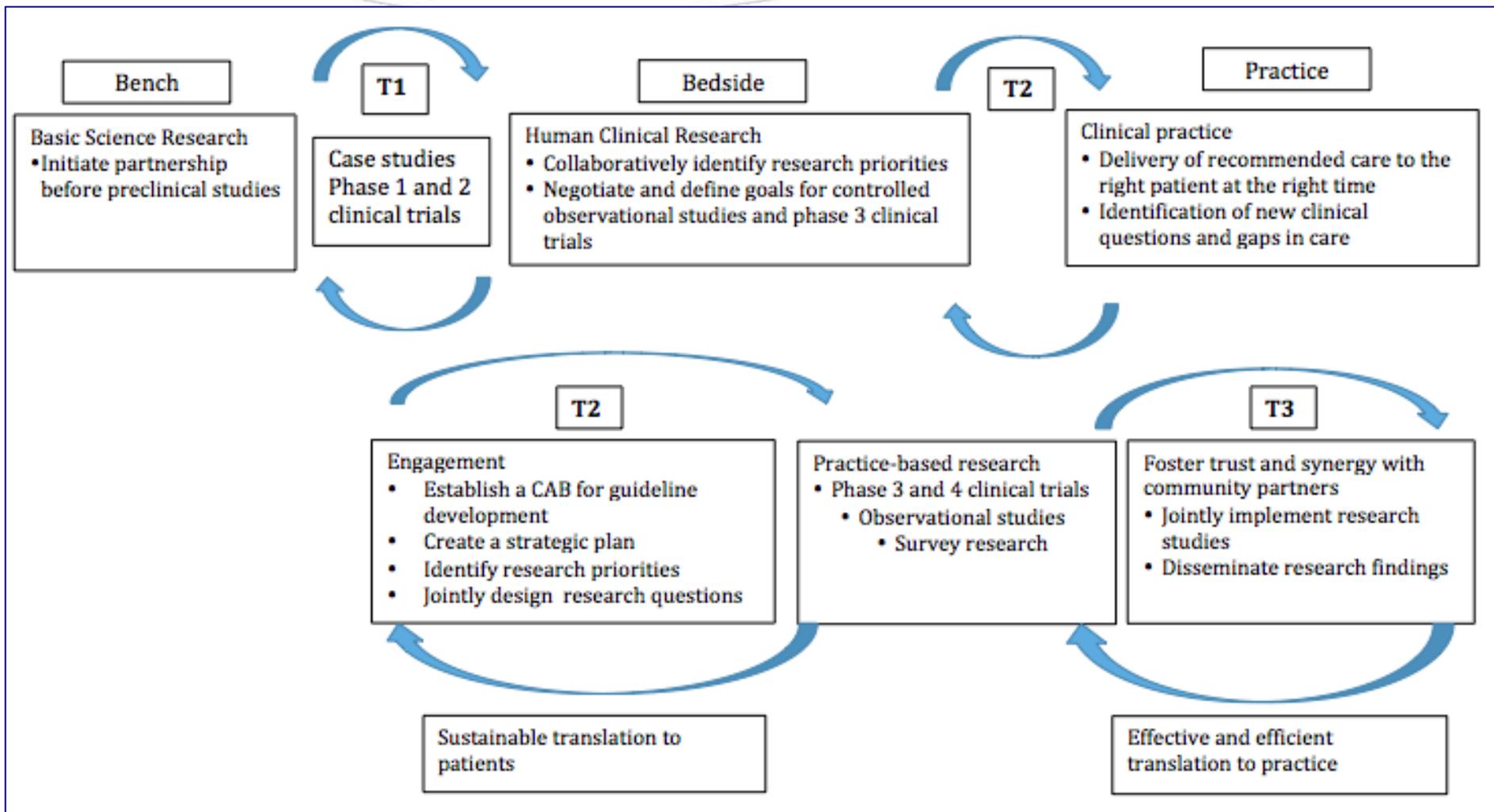
- ◆ What do you see as challenges to conducting community research?
- ◆ What kinds of research topics lend themselves to this kind of research?
- ◆ What issues might create problems in trust between academic researchers and community members?
- ◆ How can people with different “world views” come together to conduct a research study?

# Community-Academic Partnership Framework



King K, et al. The Los Angeles Healthy Community Neighborhood Initiative: Building and sustaining a successful community-academic partnership (under review)

# Synergy Model in Developing Community Academic Partnerships Along The Translational Science Continuum



# Key Challenges/Barriers of Building a Successful Community-Academic Partnership

Challenges/ Barriers	Outcomes	Strategies to Overcome Challenges
Differences in opinion and different communication styles sometimes stalled efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discouraged some members of the study team from fully participating in the partnership</li> <li>• May have contributed to the departure of some study team members</li> <li>• Slowed progress toward study goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used egalitarian approaches to work past personality conflicts or remove individuals who could not effectively interact with members of the team.</li> </ul>
Individual/agency agenda versus group agenda; group agenda not fully aligned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strayed from main goals of the collaborative and the specific projects needed to achieve these objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on aligning and/or merging personal goals with those of the study overall by emphasizing the MOU</li> <li>• Meeting agendas that focused on project Identified and tried to work through differences</li> <li>• Discouraged participation of those whose personal agendas could not be aligned with the primary goal(s) of the study</li> </ul>

# Key Challenges/Barriers of Building a Successful Community-Academic Partnership

Challenges/Barriers	Outcomes	Strategies to Overcome Challenges
Departing from the MOU goals and protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caused friction between team members and directed project away from primary goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reminding partners about the goals and strategies in the MOU strengthened the process of partnership</li> </ul>
Lack of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited staff and resources to move study forward in a timely fashion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraged existing academic programs to initiate specific data collection and analysis tasks. For example:</li> <li>Secured funding through partnering institutional centers to assist with data collection, analysis, and reporting.</li> </ul>
Difficulty finalizing survey questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protracted disagreements, limited staff and resources regarding the survey focus and which questions to include slowed progress by a year</li> <li>Limited staff/resources to finalize survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brought in new study team members to view survey in light of overall goals and community feedback and developed an iterative process to revise survey. Fielded several drafts with community and found survey was too long. Forced team to revisit original goals from MOU to guide focus and shorten the survey.</li> <li>Improved staffing</li> </ul>

# Factors Identified by the HCNI Team Members that Contributed to a Successful Community-Academic Partnership

Characteristics of the Partners	Partnership Accomplishments
Consistent and committed leadership with shared vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kept the study team focused on the needs of the community</li> <li>Helped community partners and residents navigate through some of the challenges of research from a community perspective.</li> </ul>
Many original team members continue to partner, and several representatives from each agency/institution involved in the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintained continuity</li> <li>Presented a consistent face to the community</li> <li>Depth of agency/institution involvement means that leadership changes do not destabilize the partnership</li> </ul>
Transparency about needs of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kept the needs of the community foremost</li> <li>Used the strengths of the community to enhance partnership, study design, and data collection.</li> <li>Pursued extramural funding for future opportunities</li> </ul>
Transparency about needs of academic partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressed the needs of the academic partners</li> <li>Pursued extramural funding for future opportunities</li> <li>Supported publications and other deliverables for academic promotion</li> </ul>

# Factors Identified by the HCNI Team Members that Contributed to a Successful Community-Academic Partnership

Characteristics of the Partners	Partnership Accomplishments
Several individuals (both community and academic partners) had prior experience with (CBPR/CPPR*)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created a more efficient process</li> <li>• New or less experienced members mentored by community and academic members with more experience in CBPR/CPPR</li> </ul>
Trust within partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-existing partnerships grounded in trust helped study team work together with similar assumptions, which provided a foundation for a more committed partnership;</li> <li>• Helped navigate balance between trust &amp; skepticism</li> </ul>
Peer Governance and Egalitarian Processes were informed by group discussions, community and academia “resident” experts presentations, and presentations from external experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved operations and reduced tensions and hierarchies</li> <li>• Allowed team to make informed decisions regarding study design, protocols, data collection, and ethical issues within the study team</li> </ul>
Built trust within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened community support of the project, enhanced participation of stakeholders, and facilitated honest feedback and engagement of community members</li> </ul>

# Factors Identified by the HCNI Team Members that Contributed to a Successful Community-Academic Partnership

Characteristics of the Partners	Partnership Accomplishments
Emphasis on a non-deficit, asset based approach to working with community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated respect and regard for community being served</li> <li>• Synthesized information on community resources that could be shared with residents, local agencies, and academic institutions</li> </ul>
Commitment to ethical behavior within the partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed an expectation of fair, equitable, and respectful treatment of and by all members of the partnership</li> </ul>
Identified benchmarks and celebrated interim successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced the engagement of individual participants in the process</li> <li>• Highlighted achievements of individuals, organizations, and the HCNI team</li> </ul>
In-kind funding from CAP despite initial limited funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Space for project activities</li> <li>• Project materials</li> <li>• Administrative support</li> <li>• Obtaining local funding to support the partnership</li> </ul>