Think Tank Session 120

Evaluating Public Health Research Centers: Assessing the Value-Added
Plan for this think tank

• Describe the basic components of a CDC Research Center
• Provide an overview of past and current evaluation activities
• Break out into discussion groups
• Reconvene to present findings and recommendations
How can we:

• assess accountability and merit of a center program?

• develop useful data systems for program monitoring and improvement in a center program?

• determine value added of a center program?
Why?

In an increasingly competitive environment for funds, CDC needs to assess the relative value of its research centers.
It’s not easy….

• Centers cover a variety of disciplines and content areas
• Across site variability
• Distal linkages. Is it causation?

Really, what makes research centers so special?
Panel Members

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CDC Injury Control Research Centers (ICRC) Portfolio Evaluation

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The findings of this presentation are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
ICRC Portfolio

• First centers funded in 1987
• 2005 funding ~ $1 million per center
• Research across broad injury topics
• Interventions
• Evaluation
• Translation and Dissemination
• Teaching, Training, and Service
• Collaboration across disciplines
Purpose of the Evaluation

• Mandated by CDC policy on research and scientific programs
• Assess the ICRC program
  – Relevance
  – Value
  – Significance
• Highlight program achievements
  – Success stories
• Identify areas for program planning and research gaps
How does the evaluation assess accountability and merit of the ICRC Portfolio?
Merit and Accountability of ICRCs

- Evaluation focus on program level
- Program and evaluation expectations
  - FOAs Review Logic Model
  - Implementation Logic Model
- Evaluation outputs and outcomes
  - Scientific and general public publications
  - Injury programs and treatments
  - Trained researchers and practitioners
  - Public and private policies
  - Behavioral modification
The ICRC Implementation Logic Model is a framework that outlines the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the ICRC's program. It includes a flowchart that connects various resources, activities, and goals. The model emphasizes the importance of collaboration and core activities to achieve short-term and longer-term outcomes. The ultimate goals are aligned with the model to ensure a comprehensive approach to injury prevention and control.
Building and Sustaining the Injury Field

- Building research infrastructure
  - Information warehouse, databases, laboratories
  - Key tools, curricula, protocols, or guidelines
- Maximizing partnerships in injury research
  - What does an influential partnership produce?
- Training injury researchers and practitioners
  - Creating the next generation
- Progressing through the research spectrum
  - Bicycle helmets
How does the ICRC evaluation prioritize research questions?
Inquiring Minds Want to Know . . .

What is the value of the ICRC Portfolio?

How have the ICRCs built the injury field?
- Value outside CDC & ICRCs
- Advantage of program vs. grants

How have the ICRCs affected injury outcomes?
- Contributions toward behavior modification
- Influences on policy and legislation
How does the ICRC evaluation address program improvement?
Identifying Programmatic and Research Gaps

• Interview questions
  – Research priorities in 5-10 years
  – Center evaluation and monitoring activities
  – Improving the ICRC Program

• Analysis to identify common themes

• Possible gaps
  – Diversity of research topics and phases
  – Technical assistance and training
  – Communication

• Challenges: What’s feasible and meaningful?
Discussion & Questions