

Starting an Early Career in Studying Social Determinants of CVH

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Agenda

- Using Publically Available Data Sources
 - Broadening Your Funding Search: Beyond NIH
 - Positive Approaches to Criticism: Grants and Papers
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Using Publically Available Secondary Data Sources

- Benefits:
 - Completing and publishing research in a timely manner
 - Developing content and methodological expertise
 - Providing data for future grants
- Limitations:
 - The study population and measures collected may not be exactly what you want to study
 - Difficult to infer causality
 - Potential to be scooped

Selecting a Data Set

- Use a resource such as:
 - the Society of General Internal Medicine's Online Compendium (www.sgim.org/go/datasets) or
 - the online book, "Secondary Data Sources for Public Health"
- Consider a dataset that has not been widely used in your field or link datasets together to gain a fresh perspective
- Factor in complexity of the dataset
- Factor in cost and time to acquire the actual dataset
- Consider selecting a dataset your mentor has used

Get to Know Your Dataset

1. Learn the answers to the following questions:
 - Why does the database exist?
 - Who reports the data?
 - What are the incentives for accurate reporting?
 - How are the data audited, if at all?
 - Can you link your dataset to other large datasets?
2. Read everything you can about the database
3. Check to see if your measures have been validated against other sources
4. Analyze the data yourself or closely review outputs if someone else is doing the programming

Finding Secondary Data Sources

1. The Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan

- Archive of over 500,000 files
- Primarily focuses on social and political data, but has substantial data relevant to health and health services researchers
- <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/>

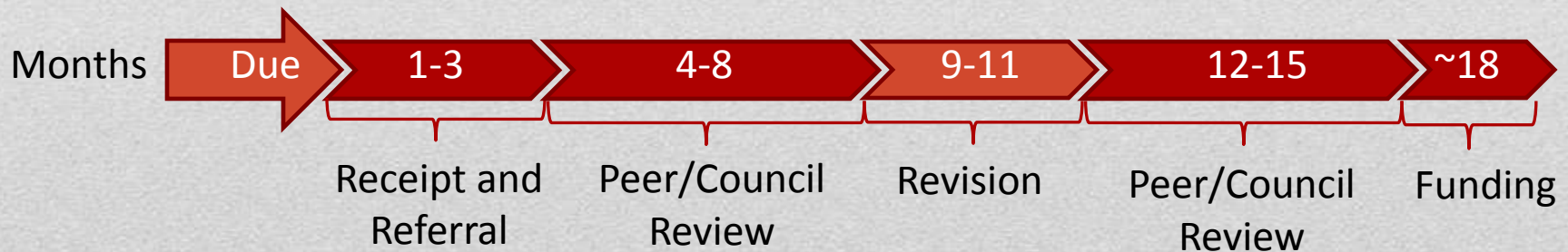
2. The Federal Government

- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
 - Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
 - Medical Expenditure Panel Survey
 - National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey
 - http://chess.uchicago.edu/methods_core/feddata.html
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Broadening Your Funding Search: Beyond NIH

- NIH is competitive and the funding decision timelines are long
- Generally, all proposals will require revision and resubmission

NIH Decision Timeline



Broadening Your Funding Search: Beyond NIH

- American Heart Association
 - National Fellow-to-Faculty Transition Award (no current faculty/staff appointment)
 - Scientist Development Grant (faculty/staff position up to Assistant Professor)
 - Foundations – Transition Awards
 - Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 - American College of Cardiology Foundation
 - Doris Duke Foundation
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Broadening Your Funding Search: Tools

- National Health Council – www.healthresearchfunding.org
 - Funds researchers with peer-reviewed NIH grants that were not funded
 - Other Federal Funding - www.grants.gov
 - Sign up for email alerts from funding organizations about requests for proposals
 - Talk with mentors and colleagues
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“O.K., let’s slowly lower in the grant money.”
Todd Bearson, Arlington, Massachusetts
2009

Positive Approaches to Criticism: Grants and Papers

- Don't spend too much time feeling sad/frustrated/angry
 - Aim for a quick turnaround
 - Grant cycles are long
 - Journals take months to review a new paper
 - Consider reviewer comments (but remember that sometimes viewpoints are subjective)
 - Don't always take "no" for an answer
 - Perseverance pays off!
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Positive Approaches to Criticism: Grants and Papers

- Case Study 1 - Paper
 - Author submitted a paper and received an immediate rejection
 - Sent a letter to the editor asking to reconsider
 - The paper was accepted for review!
 - Case Study 2 – Grant Proposal
 - Proposal was “triaged” – not discussed
 - Researcher revised and resubmitted proposal
 - Proposal was funded!
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Thank you!

Comments or questions?

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