

American College of Mental Health Administration



New ACHMA Research Interest Group and Result Highlights From Initial Membership Survey

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A new Research Interest Group has been formed for ACMHA members to join. During the 2008 Summit, Ron Manderscheid and Eric Goplerud held an open informational meeting to discuss the possibility of establishing a group within ACMHA focused on mental health and substance abuse research. Over 25 Summit attendees met and initially agreed that such a group could effectively support the professional and personal goals of ACMHA's members and its affiliates.

During the meeting four ACMHA members volunteered to co-facilitate the Group's development with Ron Manderscheid and Eric Goplerud: Deborah Altschul, Research Psychologist, University of New Mexico's Center for Rural and Community Behavioral Health; Jennifer Magnabosco, Associate Director and Senior Research Associate, The Leavey Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University; Maria Monroe-Devita, Director of The Washington Institute for Mental Health, Research and Training at the University of Washington; and Stephanie Oprendeck, Consultant, California Institute of Mental Health. This core group decided that an initial survey was needed to help formalize the Group's membership, and to learn more about members' interests in research activities and their professional experiences. A web-based survey addressing this need was sent to all ACMHA members via Survey Monkey during Fall 2008.

This initial survey yielded a high response as 45 ACMHA members completed it and joined the *Group*. Following are result highlights from the initial survey. So far, *Research Interest Group* members:

Demographics

- *Are predominantly male (62%); 50+ years old (61%); and Caucasian (89%).*
- *Have pursued a variety of advanced educational degrees, with the majority having received doctorates (48%), followed by master's degrees (33%), M.D.'s (5%) and other degrees (5%). Almost 8% had completed post-doctoral studies, and 3% had pursued some college.*
- *Majored predominantly in psychology (78%), followed by professional school disciplines (31%, social work, business, journalism), other social sciences (22%), medicine (19%), public administration/policy (17%) and the humanities (8%).*
- *Are predominantly employed in administrative positions in behavioral health (65%), and in public and private behavioral health or health organizations (45%). Group members are also employed in universities (20%), government (16%), research centers (11%), trade organizations or foundations (11%), mental health centers (2%), and hospitals (2%). Only 9% indicated Research as a word in his/her title.*

ACHMA Involvement

- *Represent a range of tenure in ACMHA: 30% had been a member of ACMHA for 1 year, 36% for 1-5 years, 23% for 6-10 years, and 11% for more than 11 years.*
- *Participate in other ACMHA activities (N=22/45 group members): 41% participate in the Summit Planning Committee; 32% in Board of Directors, Communications Committee; 18% in Development Committee, Leadership Committee, Mentorship Program, Diversity Interest Group; 14% in Membership Committee; 9% in Resource Development Team; and 5% in Consumer/Person in Recovery Interest Group.*

Research Interest Group Planning and Goals

- *Are currently involved in or planning research (N=22/45 Group members) in over 80 projects in 10 areas—behavioral health services (e.g., EBPs, depression care management, emergency behavioral healthcare, continuity of care, telephone counseling, cost-benefit analyses, person-centered*

recovery); *services for targeted groups* (e.g., peer support, Native American behavioral health, postpartum depression, homeless, co-occurring disorders); *integration/ collaboration* between services, organizations, systems; *accountability* (e.g., quality of care, quality improvement, outcomes); *mental health transformation/policy development*; *mental health administration/leadership*; *prevention*; *education*; and *child welfare*.

- *Would like to participate in a variety of Group activities that require interactions with others or receipt of information.* Members had a:
 - High interest* in receiving information about research activities consistent with ACMHA's mission and vision; discussing research interests with colleagues; and collaborating with other ACMHA work groups to use data to support policy and advocacy directions;
 - Medium interest* in participating in educational forums (e.g., webinars about research organized by ACMHA); planning panels (e.g. recruit speakers) in the research area for the ACMHA Summit on other educational forums; identifying individuals and organizations to collaborate with ACMHA in the research area; and planning ACMHA-driven research projects; and
 - Low interest* in presenting research projects/results at the ACMHA Summit or other ACMHA educational forums.

Upcoming activities for the Research Interest Group include further analysis of survey results, conference calls with the full Group to plan activities that meet their interests and research needs, and a meeting at the 2009 Summit. If you would like to join the Research Interest Group and complete the initial survey, please contact Ron Manderscheid (ronald_manderscheid@sra.com) and he will send you the survey link. If you have ideas about the Group please feel free to contact any of the co-facilitators or Kris Ericson (executive.director@acmha.org).

We look forward to making the Research Interest Group a meaningful and supportive activity for its members and a resource that enhances ACMHA's capacity to more effectively integrate research into its policymaking, leadership, mentoring, consumer, communications, conference, and development endeavors!