



ISUH Connections

The Newsletter of the International Society for Urban Health Number 1 • January 2004

The goal of the International Society for Urban Health (ISUH) is to encourage research, interventions, and program evaluations that lead to healthier cities in the twenty-first century. This is the inaugural issue of *ISUH Connections*, the official newsletter of the Society.

CONTENTS

- 1 The 2nd International Conference on Urban Health in Review: Building Healthy Cities for the 21st Century
- 2 Looking Ahead: The 3rd International Conference on Urban Health — Boston, October 20-23, 2004
- 3 Profile: Inner City Health Research Unit, St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto
- 3 About the International Society for Urban Health and the *Journal of Urban Health*
- 4 Notices and Events

The 2nd International Conference on Urban Health in Review

BUILDING HEALTHY CITIES FOR THE 21st CENTURY

Sarab Sisco, MPH, MSSW

The 2nd International Conference on Urban Health, which was hosted by the New York Academy of Medicine in New York City on October 15-18, 2003, focused on urban health as an emerging multi-disciplinary area of study. The incredible enthusiasm evoked by this event was reflected in the fact that over 650 attendees registered from more than 20 countries, including Bangladesh, Brazil, France, India, Nepal, South Africa, Tajikistan, and the United Kingdom. Over the course of three days, participants explored a wide array of exciting topics, including the urban environment, issues in urban health, and the building of healthy cities. The growth of urban health as a research focus was apparent in the more than 270 poster presentations at the conference. Video and slides of the plenary presentations highlighted below are available at www.isuh.org.

Under the theme of "the Urban Environment," David Vlahov delivered a keynote address that provided an outstanding overview of the evidence for how and why city living may be an important determinant of health. Howard Frumkin, in his fascinating talk on "The Physical Environment and Health," delineated the powerful effect of the built environment on human

behaviors and health. Ichiro Kawachi delivered a masterful presentation on "The Social Environment and Health in Cities." In a panel discussion facilitated by Ahmed Bayoumi, speakers shared their perspectives on what constitutes urban health and how urban health can coalesce as a discipline. Capping off the day, Eileen Kennedy spoke on "Nutrition in the Urban Context."

In its second day, the conference explored a number of significant themes in urban health. Trudy Harpham presented an exceptional keynote address on "The Health of Cities Worldwide." Other plenary speakers included Francesca Gany on "Migration and the Health of Migrants in Cities," Dennis Andrulis on "Services and Service Systems in Cities," and Ezra Susser on "Mental Health and the City." Students delivered a number of presentations of their research; top honors went to Cathryn Tonne, Lynne Messer, and Shannon Zenk for their outstanding work.

The final day of the conference focused on the vital task of building "The Healthy City." Stimulating presentations were given by Nicholas Freudenberg on "Building Healthy

continued on page 4

The International Society of Urban Health

Communications Committee

Stephen Hwang	Toronto
Wale Adekunle	Lagos
Vivek S. Agrawal	Jaipur
Irina Campbell	New York
Jenifer Cartland	Chicago
Marylin A. Deluca	New York
Anthony J. DeLucia	Johnson City
Randall Freeman	Baltimore
Sandro Galea	New York
Emily Gibble	New York
Anita Palepu	Vancouver
Maxine L. Rockoff	New York
Katherine Rouleau	Toronto
Altaf H. Sarker	Dhaka
Tania Xerri	Toronto

ISUH Connections

ISUH Connections is a forum for information exchange among ISUH members and others interested in the health of urban populations. Articles do not represent official positions or endorsement by ISUH.

ISUH Connections is distributed by email. To request that your name be added to or removed from our mailing list, please contact Emily Gibble at egibble@nyam.org

ISUH Connections welcomes submissions of brief articles relevant to the field of urban health (maximum 500 words) for consideration. Notices of conferences, events, research funding opportunities, positions available or sought, and other announcements are also welcome. Please submit materials to Stephen Hwang at hwangs@smh.toronto.on.ca.

Looking Ahead

THE 3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN HEALTH — BOSTON, OCTOBER 20-23, 2004

Hortensia Amaro, PhD



Northeastern University



Boston and the Charles River

Remember to save the date – October 20-23, 2004 – and spread the word! The 3rd International Conference on Urban Health promises to be an exciting event that will build upon the past successes of the 1st and 2nd International Conferences to reach even greater heights. The conference, to be held in Boston, Massachusetts, will be hosted by the Institute on Urban Health Research at Northeastern University.

The Institute on Urban Health Research (IUHR) was founded in response to serious and largely unmitigated disparities in the level of overall health and health care found in urban populations, particularly those of the urban poor, African-American, and Latino communities. The mission of the IUHR is to promote excellence in interdisciplinary community-based and basic research that leads to strategies that improve health in urban communities through a better understanding of the causes of disease, racial and ethnic health disparities, and

characteristics of urban environments related to health.

Information regarding conference registration and abstract submission will be available on March 1, 2004, at www.iuhr.neu.edu. Early registration (before June 1, 2004) will be US\$200 for ISUH members, US\$250 for non-members, and US\$50 for students. Late registration (after June 1, 2004) will be US\$250 for ISUH members, US\$300 for non-members, and US\$75 for students. Those wishing to register by mail may do so by sending a check payable to “Northeastern University, International Conference on Urban Health” to:
Mathea Quinones
Institute on Urban Health Research
Northeastern University
360 Huntington Ave., Stearns 503
Boston, MA 02115 USA

For further information about the conference, please contact Dr. Hortensia Amaro, Director, IUHR, at h.amaro@neu.edu. ■

Profile

INNER CITY HEALTH RESEARCH UNIT, ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL, TORONTO

Stephen Hwang, MD, MPH, and Tania Xerri



Leading with Innovation
Serving with Compassion

ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL
A teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto

In October 2002, the Inner City Health Research Unit at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, Canada, hosted the 1st International Conference on Inner City Health. This groundbreaking event, which was attended by hundreds of leading researchers, community members, and practitioners, was a landmark event in the formation of the International Society of Urban Health and subsequent conferences. The 1st International Conference reflects the commitment of the Inner City Health Research Unit (ICHRU) to improve the health of disadvantaged urban populations

through a program of applied, clinical, and health services research, with particular emphasis on the social and economic determinants of health.

St. Michael's Hospital, which is affiliated with the University of Toronto, is a Catholic hospital with a long tradition of caring. Founded in 1892 by the Sisters of St. Joseph to serve the sick and the poor of Toronto's inner city, the hospital has preserved this commitment to compassion and excellence. At the same time, it has developed into a center for innovation in research, teaching, and patient care.

The ICHRU, established in 1998 and the only one of its kind in Canada, is currently under the direction of Wendy Levinson, an accomplished health researcher and leader in academic general internal medicine. The core scientific team at the ICHRU includes investigators with expertise in

a wide range of urban health issues. These include Ahmed Bayoumi (HIV/AIDS), Arlene Bierman (health care access and quality among the elderly), James Dunn (health geography and social and economic determinants of health), Richard Glazier (health services research focusing on poverty and immigration), Stephen Hwang (homelessness and health), Kamran Khan (infectious diseases in immigrant populations), James Lavery (bioethics of research in marginalized populations and developing countries), Paul Links (suicide prevention), Anne Rhodes (health services for persons with depression), Sean Rourke (neuro-cognitive function in HIV/AIDS), and Donald Wasylenki (mental health care delivery in community settings).

Further information about the Inner City Health Research Unit is available at www.stmichaelshospital.com/content/research/ichru/index.asp ■

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR URBAN HEALTH AND THE *JOURNAL OF URBAN HEALTH*

The International Society for Urban Health (ISUH) is an association of researchers, scholars, and professionals from various disciplines and areas of the world who study the health effects of urban environments and urbanization. ISUH's goals are to encourage research, interventions, and program evaluations that lead to healthier cities in the twenty-first century. Our aim is to facilitate the exchange of perspectives on the study of diseases in urban areas, to study the effects of urbanization on health, and to evaluate and help develop programs that promote the well-being of people living in urban areas.

Membership is open to anyone interested in the health of urban popu-

lations. The annual membership fee is US\$150 (US\$100 for students). Membership in ISUH includes a valuable subscription to the *Journal of Urban Health*.

The *Journal of Urban Health* has a unique focus on the emerging field of urban health and epidemiology from both clinical and policy perspectives, filling a previously neglected niche in the literature. The *Journal*, which is published quarterly, addresses health issues such as substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, HIV, tuberculosis, and violence in the context of social and economic determinants of health.

To become a member of ISUH, submit your application online at www.isuh.org, or complete the



attached application form and mail with payment (check or money order) to: International Society for Urban Health The New York Academy of Medicine Center for Urban Epidemiologic Studies Attention: Emily Gibble 1216 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10029, USA ■

NOTICES AND EVENTS

3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR EQUITY IN HEALTH

“Pathways to Equity in Health: Using Research for Policy and Advocacy”

June 10-12, 2004, Durban, South Africa. The International Society for Equity in Health (ISEqH) welcomes those interested in equity in health and health services to participate in this cross-disciplinary conference. A dynamic mix of papers and workshops will provide a stimulating forum for discussion and debate. The deadline for early registration is April 1, 2004. Further information is available at www.iseqh.org.

“CHALLENGING CITIES IN CANADA” -- ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE MCGILL INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF CANADA

February 11-13, 2004, Montréal, Canada. This conference will consider the big questions of urban politics, local governance, urban planning, and innovative solutions. Urban planners, architects, government representatives, community and special interest advocates, members of professional associations, researchers, students, and concerned citizens will articulate their vision of “the good city,” and have the opportunity to identify concrete solutions for implementing these

ideas. Using Montréal and Canada’s other cities as examples, and drawing from international expertise, the conference will broach the following questions: Why do cities matter? What challenges cities? How can we sustain our cities? How does a city make its mark? Who is responsible for cities? Further information is available at www.misc-icem.mcgill.ca/cities/presEN.html.

JOURNAL OF HEALTH CARE FOR THE POOR AND UNDERSERVED (JHCPU)

JHCPU is a U.S. journal that focuses exclusively on contemporary health care issues of low-income, under-represented, and other medically underserved communities. The journal addresses diverse areas such as health care access, quality, costs, legislation, regulation, promotion and disease prevention. Beginning in 2004, *JHCPU* will be published by the Johns Hopkins University Press and will be the official journal of the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved, a Washington, DC-based professional organization for front-line clinicians and others interested in the health of underserved populations. Further information is available at www.press.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_health_care_for_the_poor_and_underserved and at www.clinicians.org.

HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS SURVEY: A STATUS REPORT ON HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA'S CITIES

The *Hunger and Homelessness Survey* was released in December 2003 by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and reports on the situation in 25 major U.S. cities. The survey provides data on: (1) the demand for emergency food assistance and emergency shelter and the capacity of local agencies to meet that demand; (2) the causes of hunger and homelessness and the demographics of the populations experiencing these problems; (3) exemplary programs or efforts in the cities to respond to hunger and homelessness; (4) the availability of affordable housing for low income people; and (5) the outlook for the future and the impact of the economy on hunger and homelessness. The full report is available online at:

<http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/hungersurvey/2003/onlinereport/HungerAndHomelessnessReport2003.pdf> ■

BUILDING HEALTHY CITIES

continued from page 1

Cities for the 21st Century," by Laura Leviton on "Structural Interventions: Improving the Health of Urban Populations," by Mary Bassett on "Implementing Multi-level Interventions: Challenges for Health Departments," and by David Jacobs on "Building Healthy Homes in Urban Areas." Throughout the conference, concurrent parallel sessions covered a wide range of topics including urbanization and suburbanization,

community and economic development, community-based research, urban disaster preparedness, occupational health, violence, transportation systems, media advocacy, and teaching urban health.

Clearly, the 2nd International Conference on Urban Health was an unqualified success. The co-chairs of the conference, David Vlahov and Sandro Galea, the members and staff of the Center for Urban

Epidemiologic Studies, and the members of the conference organizing committee all deserve heartfelt congratulations. We now look forward to a superb 3rd International Conference on Urban Health, to be held in Boston, Massachusetts, in October 2004. ■



The International Society
for Urban Health

Membership Application Form

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____
LAST FIRST M.I.

HOME ADDRESS: _____
STREET APT. #

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____
STREET SUITE/FLOOR #

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

PHONE (home): _____ PHONE (work): _____

FAX: _____ EMAIL: _____

INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION:

NAME DEPT. STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP CODE

Please complete this form and send with a check or money order
(made out to New York Academy of Medicine) in the amount of **\$150.00***
for your annual membership fee and subscription to the *Journal of Urban Health* to:

The International Society for Urban Health (ISUH)
Attention: Sarah Sisco
Center for Urban Epidemiologic Studies (CUES)
New York Academy of Medicine
1216 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10029

Questions about this form or about the conference, call or email Sarah Sisco,
212-419-3590, or at ssisco@nyam.org

***Students with proof of valid student ID and NYAM fellows have a reduced membership rate of \$100.00.**