

Out of Academia's Harbor and into the Rough Waters of Reality:

**Lessons for Librarians
New to the Information Environment
in Public Health Departments**



**Public health is most
successful
when it is most
invisible.**

Who will keep the public healthy? : educating public health professionals for the 21st century. Kristine Gebbie, Linda Rosenstock, and Lyla M. Hernandez, eds. (Washington, D.C. : National Academy Press, c2003.)

What is Public Health?

1950s: immunization

1960s: healthcare for poor, uninsured

1970s: air & H₂O quality

1980s: epidemiology, health education

1990s: food safety

2001: risk communication, antibioterrorism

2003: global disease surveillance

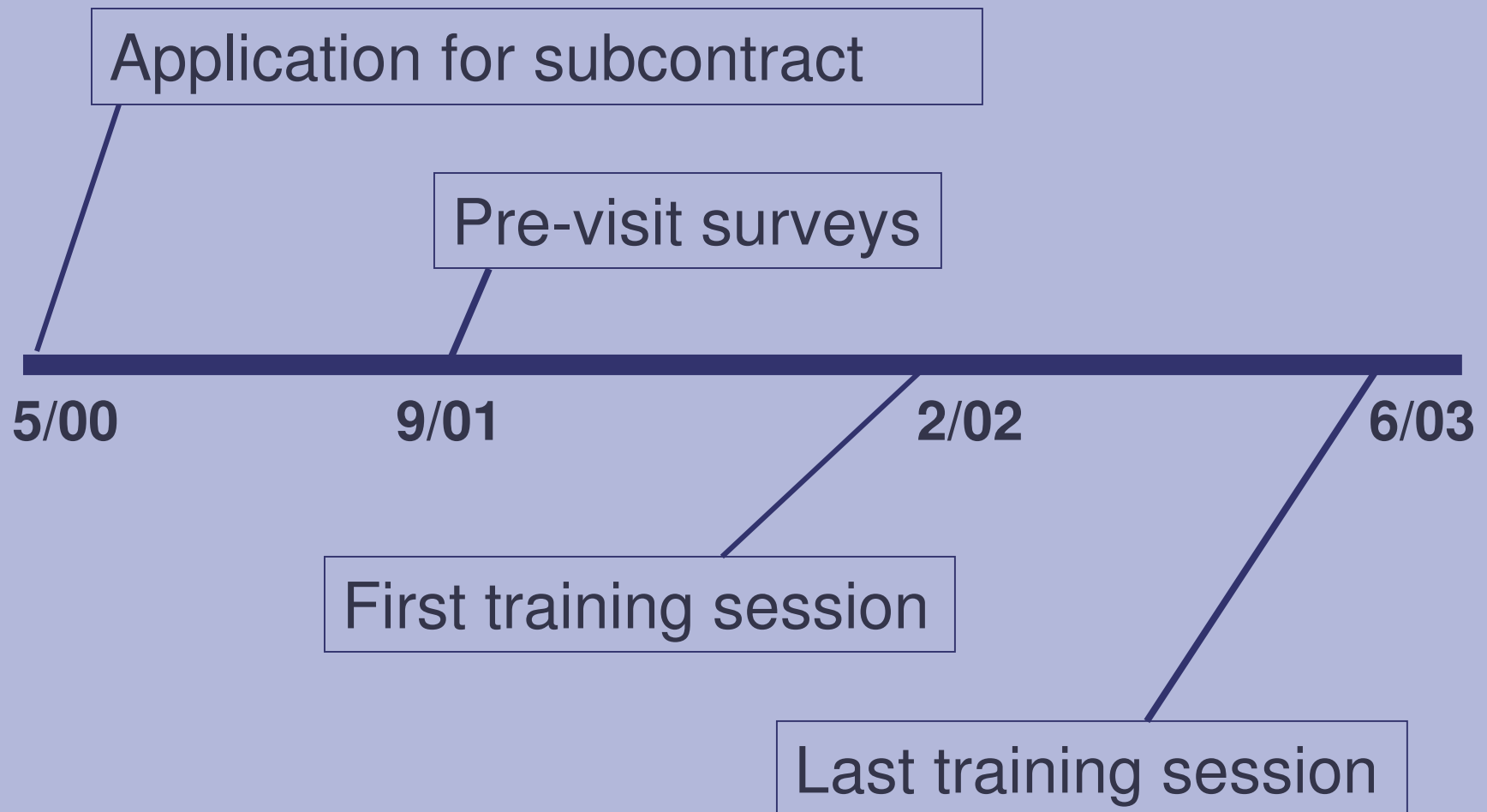
The Problem

- **Too far from training opportunities**
- **No \$ for travel**
- **No time for training**

A Solution

NN/LM subcontracts for training in underserved areas

Project Timeline

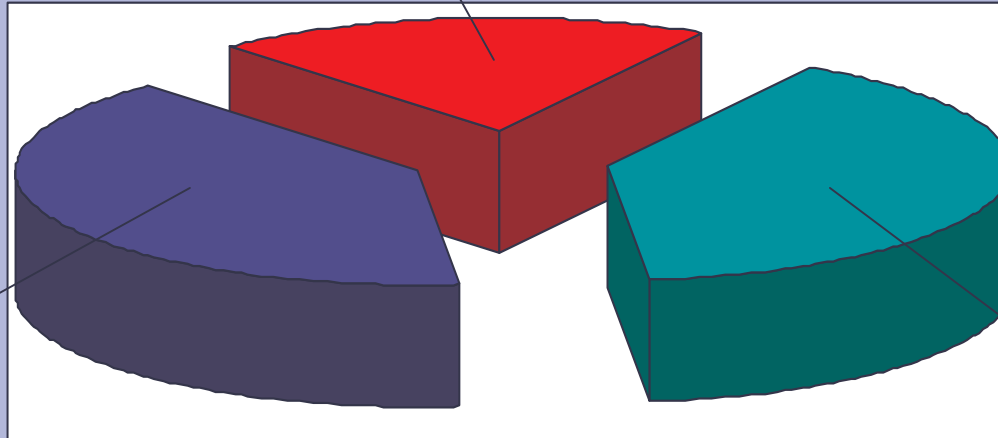


Health

Departments—

Arranged times, space, equipment; recruited participants

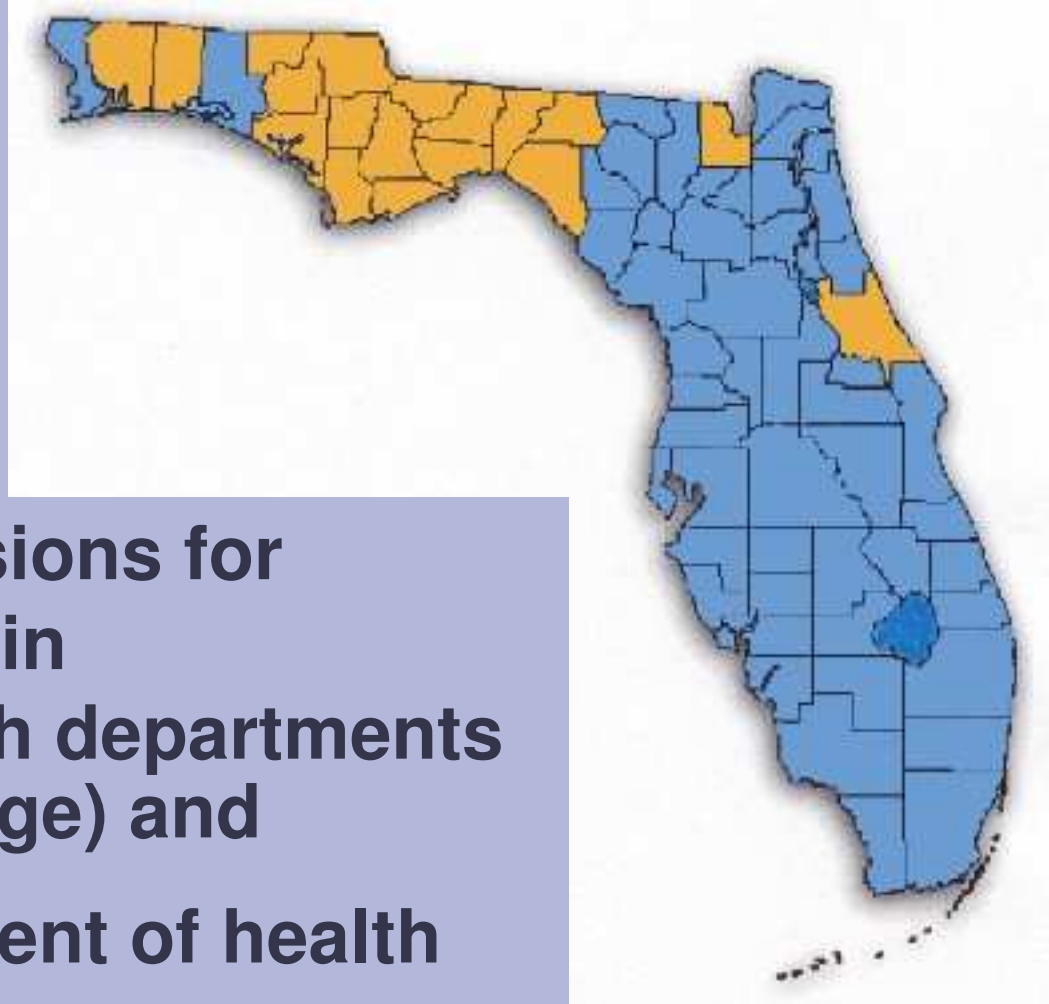
Division of Duties



AHECs—Liaised between library and health departments; scheduled; arranged CE credit and refreshments

UF Libraries—Wrote proposal and reports; taught on-site; drafted marketing tools

Accomplishments



- **25 training sessions for 336 individuals in 18 county health departments (shown in orange) and 1 state department of health**

Pre-Project Expectations

- **Older buildings with recent wiring for Internet**
- **Interest in environmental/occupational health**
- **Attitude toward health information & IT**
 - Eager for new medical resources
 - Disheartened by limited full-text available
 - Widespread discomfort with computers

Pre-Visit Trainee Interest Surveys

Directors

Medicare/Medicaid billing

Management tools

Team building

Benchmarking

Financial reports

Management techniques

Grants

Policies/regulations

Laboratorian training

Wellness programs

Staff

Aging issues

Grandparents raising grandkids

Healthcare needs of the elderly

Palliative/end of life healthcare

Violence prevention

Disability awareness

Obesity

Rheumatoid arthritis

Psychopharmacology

Alternative medicine

First Impressions

Waiting Room

- Fewer patients than expected
- Available materials being ignored



CHD Community Program Displays

Bioterrorism & disaster control

Pediatric health

Dental care

School health

Environmental health

Seat-belt / traffic injury prevention

Healthy Families

Substance-exposed infants

HIV / AIDS

Tuberculosis control

Nutrition (WIC)

Teen services

Patient confidentiality

Tobacco prevention

Patient literacy

Women's health

Facilities, Connectivity and Equipment

Class Area	Information Source	Equipment
Open area in a large room	PowerPoint presentation on disk	HSCL ¹ Laptop PC HSCL Tabletop projector Wall
Multi-purpose room	Internet connection	CHD ² PC or laptop CHD projector CHD projection screen
Computer lab with work stations	Internet connection	CHD teaching computer SmartBoard

¹Health Science Center Libraries

²County Health Department

Multipurpose Conference Rooms



TV, conference table and microwave in one half, fridge & sink in other

Low End Training Space



Our projector & laptop, CD-ROM (no Internet connection),
plain wall as screen

High End Training Space



Large-screen TV & smaller monitor, 2 blackboards, podium, laptop, 2 pull-down projection screens

Demographics of last 2 counties shown

-Bureau of Economic and Business Research.

Florida Statistical Abstract 2002. Gainesville: University of Florida. 2001

Money	Bay County	Liberty County
Local Government Finance: Total and Municipal Ad Valorem Taxes 1/1/2000 -Rounded to hundreds of dollars	\$98,549,400	\$2,214,800
Median Household Income, 1997	\$32,047	\$27,178
House Purchase Prices, 2000	\$98,390	\$90,851
Population		
Population April 1, 2000	148,217	7,021
Persons per Square Mile April 1, 2002	194	8
Race Distribution April 1, 2000		
-White	124,761 (84.1%)	5,365 (76.4%)
-Black	15,800 (10.7%)	1,300 (18.5%)
-Hispanic	3,600 (2.4%)	300 (4.3%)
Licensed Health Professionals		
-Medical Doctors	18.1	1.4
-Nurses	144.0	60.3
-Dentists	4.6	1.4
-Dental Hygienists	5.9	0
-Physical Therapists	4.8	1.4
-Pharmacists	8.5	8.4

Staff Variations

- **Subgroups**

- Unfamiliar with computers
- Gregarious camaraderie
- ‘New information not useful’—
less interested in class content

vs.

- Computer savvy
- Quieter, more serious and focused
- Grateful for new resources

Class Complications

- **Interruptions**
 - **Late arrivals**
 - **Early departures**
 - **Mid-session phone calls**
- **Technical difficulties**
 - **Incompatible equipment**
 - **Equipment failures**

Requested Search Topics

From the predictable:

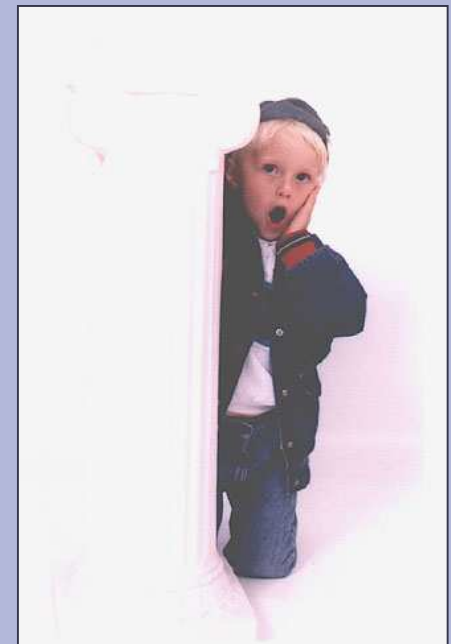
- **Headlice**
- **STDs**
- **Abuse of OxyContin®**
- **ADA diabetic diet – 1500 & 1800 calorie**
- **Monkeypox virus**
- **Tobacco control**
- **Abstinence for prevention of pregnancy**
- **HRT and vascular health**

Requested Search Topics

continued...

To a few surprises:

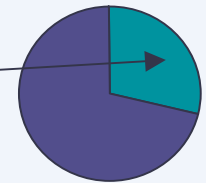
- Malathion
- Goodpasture syndrome
- Explaining bioterrorism to children
- Trisomy 22
- Frenectomy for tongue-tie
- Turner syndrome



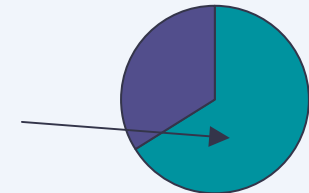
Post-Training Survey Responses

- **PubMed surveys**
 - 49% response rate
 - 29% had used PubMed since training
- **Website surveys**
 - 80% response rate
 - 66% felt hands-on was important for this class
 - 66% felt they would use 2+ of the sites they had learned about

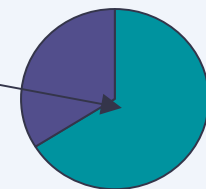
PubMed Usage since Training



Hands On Important



2+ Useful Sites

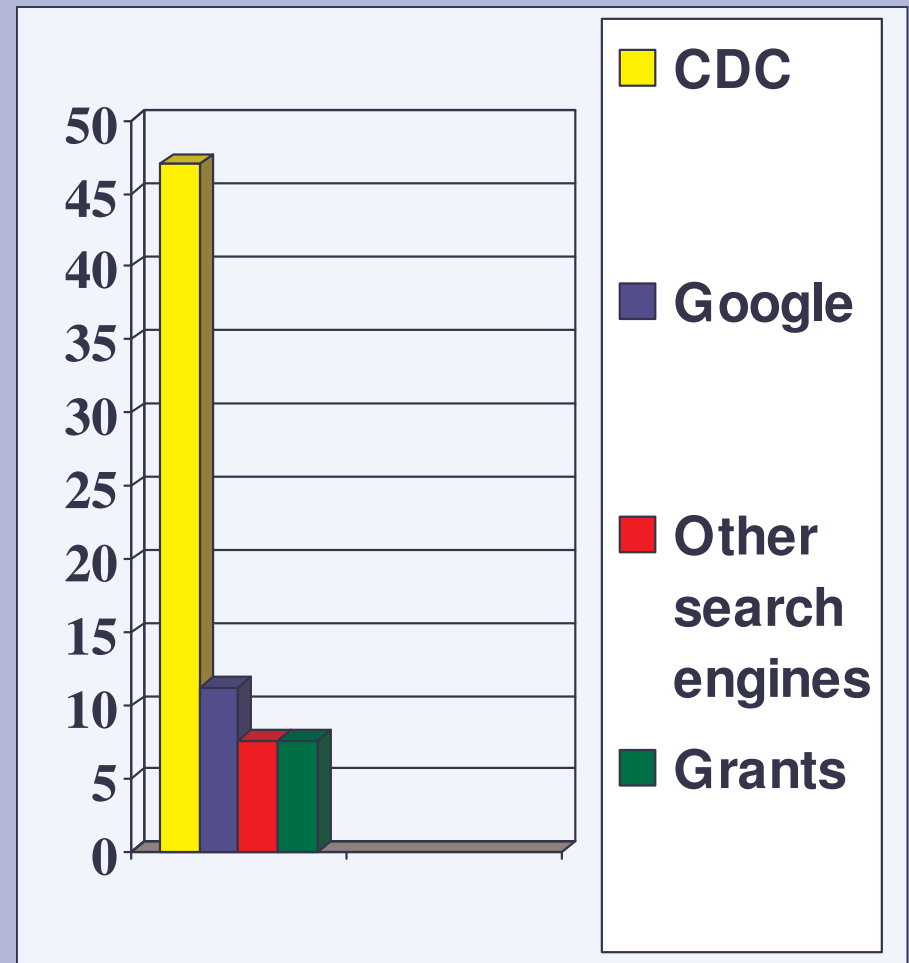


Why PubMed Isn't Used

- **Miscommunication**
- **Limitations in computer literacy**
- **Access problems**
- **Time / Timing**
- **Reliance on 'old friends'**
- **Perceived lack of relevance**

Website Interest

- **Websites most likely to be used in future:**
 - **CDC 47%**
 - **Google 11.3%**
 - **Search engines other than Google 7.6%**
 - **Grants resources 7.6%**



Resource Priorities

Of least interest

- Research literature
- Occupational health
- MEDLINE/PubMed

Of greatest interest

- Internet sites for free patient education info
- MEDLINEplus.gov
 - Spanish language version
 - Health Topics
- ClinicalTrials.gov

Pressures



Internal

- Staff turnover, shortages, role changes
- Communication problems

External

- Responsibility for patient care / education
- Paperwork
- State imposed training / performance requirements

Can you relate?

- **Comparison to libraries:**
 - Doing more with less \$, fewer staff
- **Contrast with libraries:**
 - We can cut a lot of print without ‘endangering’ the majority of our clients.

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Implications for Your Library

Ø **Public health departments are invisible as service groups for our institutions**

Ø **Yet every patient AND health care professional we serve is affected by what they do or what they fail to do.**

Reaching out

Who provides information skills training and library services to *your* local county health department?

The state library? Probably, though it doesn't specialize in medical literature.

Your home institution does....

What you could provide

- **Materials**
 - MEDLINEplus marketing tools
 - information on health literacy
 - pathfinders on
 - consumer/patient ed
 - public administration
 - computer basics
 - Internet searching
- **Training**
 - one-time or on a regular basis (long interval)
 - on subjects under pathfinders above

And even...

- **Services**
 - **Borrowing privileges**
 - **ILLs**
 - **Forwarded (relevant) emails from discussion lists:**
 - **CAPHIS**
 - **Public health**
 - **Medlib-L**
 - **Hosting CE opportunities**

The End



Presentation available at

<http://www.library.health.ufl/nancy/SCMLA>

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