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Differences in Definitions

May 9, 2014



A collaborative study including Dr. Gulzar Shah, associate dean of research, at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University examines differences of definitions of EBPH and evidence. In this study, we interviewed twelve members of an expert panel to elicit their views on Evidence-based Public Health (EBPH), including how they define EBPH, what constitutes “evidence”, and what LHDs do that can be described as EBPH. Telephone interviews lasting 60 minutes were recorded and transcribed for basic content analysis. Experts differed in their definitions of EBPH and their views of what constitutes evidence. Definitions of EBPH ranged from the adoption and implementation of rigorously tested interventions to the application of evidence to decision making for population health improvement. Views on what constitutes evidence also varied, from strict “evidence from science” to broader “evidence from

experience.” Because of these differences in meaning, our study suggests we use more concrete and specific messaging for what practitioners are expected to do.

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