**President's Letter**

*By Carol J. Rowland Hogue*

**Fixing HIPAA**

With HIPAA upon us, it’s clear that our epidemiologic work has become more difficult... and, at times, impossible. The ACE Policy Committee would like to collect brief anecdotes of major problems that HIPAA has created for epidemiologists. We will pass these anecdotes to the AAMC, which is serving as a clearinghouse for anecdotes from researchers in all specialties.

Please find below a copy of the AAMC letter and an epidemiology example from one of our committee members. Feel free to provide more (or less) detail—or a similar example from your part of the country. Either way, please do send us an anecdote if you’ve had or anticipate having a major problem with HIPAA. While inconvenience is annoying, outright stoppage of a project is much more persuasive! With a sufficient number of anecdotes, we could better frame the issues for epidemiologists... as we begin to “fix” HIPAA. Five minutes of your time will make us much more effective advocates for you and for the specialty. So, again, please send us your paragraph (email: info@acepidemiology.org).

If you have a particularly strong interest in this topic, and a few hours each month to dedicate to this initiative, we are forming a subcommittee to work specifically on the impact of HIPAA on epidemiology. Please contact Robert Hiatt at rhiatt@cc.ucsf.edu with your contact information. And don’t forget to send your anecdote!

Finally, Faith Davis will spend some time at the annual ACE meeting in Chicago this year discussing epidemiologic challenges associated with HIPAA. Through shared experiences, we may be better able to “live with” HIPAA while going about the business of fixing it!

Thank you for working with us on this important issue.

**HIPAA Anecdote: Example for AAMC**

*By Roberta Ness (Pittsburgh)*

**Vignette:** For the past six years, we have been conducting a prospective study looking at risk factors and predictors for preeclampsia among women in their first pregnancy. The approach to recruitment has been to identify women at their first prenatal care visit. We then follow this cohort through labor and delivery to capture all women who develop the disease. Until now, our research staff has worked closely with clinic staff to scan incoming charts for eligible women, who we then approach for enrollment. All of this has stopped with the implementation of HIPAA. We can no longer scan charts, even if we are not recording any information on those not selected for possible ascertainment. We must now develop a registry system whereby women elect (or do not elect) to allow their medical records to be accessed for research. The most concerning implication of this new system is that many women may not participate in the registry, thereby reducing our ability to enroll enough women to achieve a meaningful result.

Moreover, women who participate may be systematically different from those who do not, thereby skewing our data toward a false result. Either way, it is likely that the barrier between researcher and patient mandated by HIPAA will reduce the likelihood of success in this research. Today, women enter pregnancy not knowing whether they may be at risk for an unpredictable, sometimes fatal disease. Only through research can we help them know and avoid the terrible possibility of developing preeclampsia.
ACE Web Info at a Glance

Number of user sessions
5,618 (average 181/day)

Busiest day of week
Monday

Busiest hours
3:00 - 5:00pm

% International
12% (excludes 24% unknown)

Top two countries outside US
• Canada (137 visits)
• UK (91)

Most requested pages
• Home page (2,591 visits)
• 2003 Annual Scientific Sessions (481)
• Epi Job listing services (446)
• What is epidemiology? (367)
• Directory of Epidemiology Societies (383)

Top two downloaded files
• Atlanta workshop materials
• Newsletter

Top referring sites
Google (417 visits), SER (143)

Data for March 2003

The ACE website is showing strong usage with about 180 daily users, up from a mean of 103 daily users in January 2001. Versatility and practicality of the site is evidenced by the large number of brochures and registration materials downloaded during the months preceding the recent ACE meeting held in Albuquerque, as well as other material downloaded for board elections, upcoming workshops and the newsletter. The popularity of the various website directories changes from month to month, reflecting the ebb and flow of annual meetings and major policy issues. The Communications Committee is actively exploring inaugurating online dues payments and meeting registrations, as a new service to members. There is a wealth of information and convenient links on the site today. Check it out! Give us your ideas to keep improving our website: info@acepidemiology.org.

Average users sessions per day

ACE Member Update

ACE News will be printing notes on important awards and position changes involving ACE members. The position changes can be useful to members who may want to contact colleagues about opportunities in their new areas of activity. Suggested contributions should be sent to the ACE office at pkralka@olsonmgmt.com.

Robert A. Hiatt, a former ACE President, has recently moved from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to the University of California in San Francisco (UCSF). As Director of Population Science and Deputy Director of the Comprehensive Cancer Center, he will be working to reproduce the program he helped to develop at NCI in cancer epidemiology, behavioral science, health services research and surveillance. He has appointments as Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at UCSF and as Senior Scientist for the national Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program in Oakland.

John M. Last, who received the ACE’s Abraham Lilienfeld Award in 1997, was invited by the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh to receive an honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine on July 12, 2003. Dr. Last’s contributions to public health and epidemiology for more than 40 years include his being author or editor of 14 books, chapters in more than 40 books, and over 280 other articles and editorials. He is emeritus professor of epidemiology at the University of Ottawa and an honorary life member in ACE.
Epidemiology
On the Front Line
and Under Fire:
Focusing Attention on the Practical and Methodological Issues of Conducting Epidemiologic Research Today

American College of Epidemiology
Annual Scientific Sessions
September 6-9, 2003
Hotel InterContinental · Chicago, Illinois
ACE ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS
September 6 - 9, 2003
Hotel InterContinental • Chicago, Illinois
PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Saturday, September 6

Preconference Workshops
May choose one of two:

1:00 - 5:00pm Workshop 6 (half-day) – Ethical Issues Arising from Differing Study Designs – Cohort Studies vs. Randomized Clinical Trials
Robert McKeown, Organizer
(free to participants)

9:00am - 4:00pm Workshop 7 (full-day) – What’s an Epidemiologist to Do? Implications of the Classification of Race and Ethnicity for Research on Health Disparities in Blacks, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders
Vickie Mays, Organizer
(free to all)

5:00 - 7:00pm Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, September 7

9:00am - 5:00pm Workshop 2 – Applying Quantitative Sensitivity Analysis to Epidemiologic Data
Timothy L. Lash, Boston University School of Public Health

9:00am - 5:00pm Workshop 3 – Cognitive Issues Related to the Design of Valid Survey Questions
Dick Warnecke, University of Illinois at Chicago

8:45am - 12:45pm Workshop 4 – New Approaches in Molecular Epidemiology
Timothy Rebbeck, University of Pennsylvania

1:00 - 5:00 pm Workshop 5 – Teaching the Teacher: Essential Tools for Analyzing Large Public Health Data Sets
Selected analysts at the National Center for Health Statistics, selected faculty from Schools of Public Health

7:00 - 9:00pm Host Reception (Chicago: Faith Davis) and Inaugural, Late-Breaking Poster Session

Submit your abstract by July 31 to info@aceepidemiology.org.

Monday, September 8

7:00am - 5:00pm Registration

8:30 - 9:00am Welcome to ACE Annual Meeting
Carol Hogue, Emory University

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Welcome to Chicago
Susan Scrimshaw, Dean, UIC SPH

9:00 - 9:45am Keynote Address – How Much and for How Long Did the WTC Impact on Residents throughout the City? The Epidemiology of Mental Health Among New York City Residents Following September 11th
David Vlahov, Director, Center for Urban Epidemiologic Studies at the New York Academy of Medicine

9:45 - 10:00am Beverage Break

10:00am - 12:00 Symposium I – When Observational Studies and Randomized Trials Conflict: Lessons from Recent Studies
Marlene Goldman, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School, Moderator
Steven N. Goodman, John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health – From a Trialist's Perspective
Julie E. Buring, Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Harvard Medical School – Lessons from the Women’s Health Initiative, Nurses, and Physicians Studies
Robert N. Hoover, National Cancer Institute – Conflicts and Concordance in Trials and Observations
Elizabeth Barrett-Connor, University of California at San Diego – What Have We Learned?

12:00 - 12:10pm Break

12:10 - 2:20pm Buffet Lunch
By reservation only – must pre-register for lunch
Roundtables – Competencies for Doctoral Trained Epidemiologists
Jonathan Samet, Moderator

Report of the Competencies Workshop
Jonathon Samet and Mike Stoto

Followed by: Facilitated roundtable discussions about what the role of ACE should be in fostering PhD Competencies

2:20 - 2:30pm Break

2:30 - 4:00pm Policy Forum – HIPAA and Beyond
Faith Davis, Moderator
Overview of HIPAA Rules for Epidemiologic Studies
Dennis Deepen

HIPAA Subcommittee of ACE Policy Committee Response
Robert Hiatt

Corporate Perspective
Robin C. Leonard, Dupont

General discussion, including case studies

4:00 - 4:30pm Presentation by the American Chemistry Council Award Winner, Robert Lyles
Introduction by John Acquavella, Monsanto

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ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

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4:30 - 5:15pm  ACE Business Meeting
               (members only)  2:15 - 2:30pm  Break
5:15 - 7:15pm  Poster Session/Reception
               Irene Hall, Poster Committee Chair  2:30 - 4:30pm  Symposium III – Challenges
to Surveillance
               Moderator, Toni Alterman, NIOSH

Tuesday, September 9

7:00 - 11:00am  Registration
7:30 - 8:45am  Breakfast Roundtables (various
topics, including these listed)
                  Conversation with JAMA editor
                  Conversation with Annals of
                  Epidemiology editor
                  Conversation with ESOP
                  Committee regarding upstream
                  causes of war

8:45 - 8:50am  Break
8:50 - 9:20am  Presidential Address –
               “Just the FAQs, Ma’am”
               Carol Hogue
9:20 - 9:50am  Student Prize Paper
9:50 - 10:00am  Break
10:00am - 12:00  Symposium II – Challenges
                 and Solutions to Conducting
                 Epidemiologic Studies in the
                 Current Era
                 Moderator, Ed Trapido, NCI
4:45pm  Adjourn

Gene-Environment Analyses
Sandra Melnick, NCI, invited

Telephone, Internet or Other Survey Approaches?
David Sly, invited

Probabilistic Record Linkage
Jack Leiss, invited

12:00 - 2:15pm  Lilienfeld Awards Banquet,
                 honoring Dr. Elizabeth Barrett-Connor

Save the Date!
September 15-18, 2003
Visit www.cancerconference.net/sig for additional details about CDC’s 2003 Cancer Conference, Comprehensive Approaches to Cancer Control—The Public Health Role.
REGISTRATION FORM
ACE Annual Scientific Sessions
September 6 - 9, 2003 • Hotel InterContinental • Chicago, Illinois

Pre-registration closes on August 15, 2003. Registrations received after August 15 will be processed at on-site rates. Refunds will be issued for cancellations received in writing by August 22, 2003.

Please print or type the following information. It will be used to print your name badge and mail your confirmation.

Name
Institution
Address
City __________________________ State ________________ Zip ________________

Workshop Registration
Preconference Workshops – September 7
Five workshops will be held on Sunday, September 7. Enrollment is limited. Please indicate your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices. You will be assigned your highest priority available.

____ Workshops 1 – (Full Day) Multilevel Analysis in Public Health, Ron Harrist, University of Texas School of Public Health
____ Workshops 2 – (Full Day) Applying Quantitative Sensitivity Analysis to Epidemiologic Data, Timothy L. Lash, Boston University School of Public Health
____ Workshops 3 – (Full Day) Cognitive Issues Related to the Design of Valid Survey Questions, Dick Warnecke, University of Illinois at Chicago
____ Workshops 4 – (Half Day) New Approaches in Molecular Epidemiology, Tim Rebecc, University of Pennsylvania
____ Workshops 5 – (Half Day) Teaching the Teacher: Essential Tools for Analyzing Large Public Health Data Sets

Fee for Full-Day Workshops (1, 2, 3)
Member …….
Non-Member ……..
Student* ………

Fee for Half-Day Workshop (4, 5)
Member …….
Non-Member ……..
Student* ………

(A $50 surcharge will be assessed for on-site preconference workshop registration.)

Workshops Free of Charge – September 6
Two workshops will be held on Saturday, September 6, free of charge. Please indicate which one you would like to attend:

____ Workshops 6 (1 - 5pm) – Ethical Issues Arising from Differing Study Designs – Cohort Studies vs. Randomized Clinical Trials, Robert McKeown, ESOP Committee Chair
____ Workshops 7 (9am - 4pm) – What’s an Epidemiologist to Do? Implications of the Classification of Race and Ethnicity for Research on Health Disparities in Blacks, Asians, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islanders, Vickie Mays, ACE Minority Affairs Committee Chair

Monday Lunch/Roundtables – September 8
(must pre-register – includes lunch)
____ Competencies for Doctor Trained Epidemiologists
……………………………………………… $19 ……..

General Registration
Registration includes all sessions (except preconference workshops and lunch roundtable workshops), breaks, roundtable breakfast, banquet, and poster reception.

Before 8/15 After 8/15
Member ………… $250 ………… $300 ………… $ …………
Non-Member …….. $340 ………… $380 ………… $ …………
Student* ………… $120 ………… $150 ………… $ …………

*Proof of student status is required.

Registations received after 8/22 will be processed on-site.

Banquet
Do you plan to attend the Tuesday lunch banquet on September 9?

❑ Yes ❑ No

Special Services
❑ Please check here if you require special accommodations to fully participate. Attach a written description.

Payment Information

TOTAL ENCLOSED ……………………………… $ …………

Check or credit card information must be received with registration form. Please either fax OR mail registration form. Do not fax AND mail registration form! Thank you.

❑ Check (US currency, payable to American College of Epidemiology)
❑ MasterCard
❑ Visa
❑ American Express

Authorized Cardholder (Please print):

Card Number: ………… Exp. Date: …………

Please Mail or Fax This Form with Payment to:
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Phone: (919) 861-5573 • Fax: (919) 787-4916

Questions? Please call us at (919) 861-5573 or e-mail us at info@acepidemiology.org.

For Membership Information – Please visit the ACE website at www.acepidemiology.org.
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