

# USE OF ACADEMIC JOURNALS



Use of scientific evidence aids in ensuring that public health interventions have the best possible health and economic return on investment. This brief describes information seeking among state health department (SHD) chronic disease prevention staff to find public health (PH) evidence.

**SAMPLE:** A TOTAL OF 904 SHD STAFF PARTICIPATED IN 2013 (6 TO 45 RESPONDENTS PER SHD). THE RESPONSE RATE WAS 77%. ALL 50 US STATES AND WASHINGTON D.C. WERE REPRESENTED IN THIS NATIONAL SAMPLE OF CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION STAFF.

Participants were asked: **"What methods allow you to learn about the current findings in public health research? (rank the top three)"**

## METHODS TO FIND PUBLIC HEALTH EVIDENCE

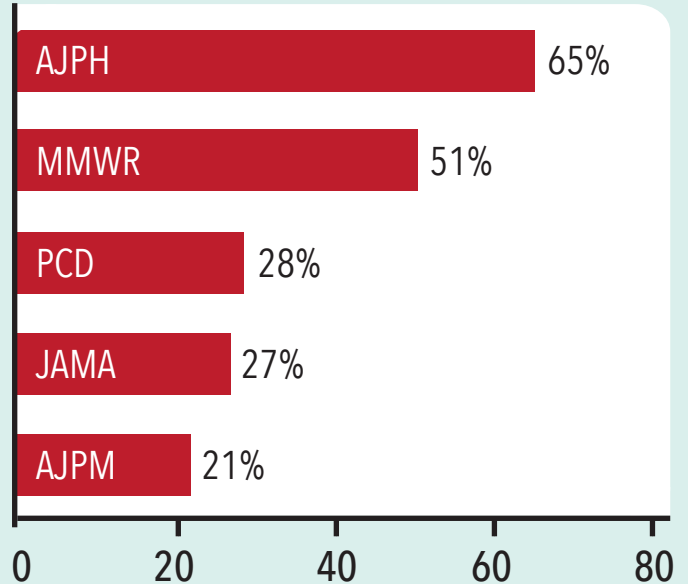
On average,

# 46%

of staff per SHD reported using academic journals as a top method for finding PH evidence.

Of SHD chronic disease staff who reported using journals, the American Journal of Public Health (AJPH) was most commonly used (65%), followed by Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) (51%) and Preventing Chronic Disease (PCD) (28%). MMWR and PCD are both open-access with a long publication history and affiliation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Other methods SHD staff used to find PH evidence included seminars or workshops (47%), policy briefs (33%), and e-mail alerts (32%).

**FIGURE 1. TOP 5 MOST-USED JOURNALS<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Acronyms not defined within the text: JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association  
AJPM: American Journal of Preventive Medicine

## BARRIERS TO USE

Of SHD staff who did not report using journals as a top method, the most common barriers to journal use included lack of time (67%), lack of access (57%), and expense (46%).



**TIME**



**ACCESS**



**EXPENSE**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To increase access to full text journal articles:

- Utilize free online public health journals: [www.phpartners.org/howtoaccess.html](http://www.phpartners.org/howtoaccess.html).
- Partner with your state library or university library for increased subscription and inter-library loan access to other key public health journals.
- Partner with a nearby public health school or accredited program to create joint appointments for several of your staff.