

5th International Conference on

Biometrics & Biostatistics

October 20-21, 2016 Houston, USA



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Characteristics of biostatistics, epidemiology, and research design programs in institutions with clinical and translational science awards

Limited information is available regarding the structure and scholarly output of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design (BERD) units in the US Academic Health Centers (AHCs), presenting a barrier to understanding common practices. Using four years of survey data from AHCs that were members of the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) Consortium during 2010-2013, we describe the size, composition, and scholarly output of CTSA-related BERD units. Overall, the size of BERD units ranged from 3-86 individuals. The median Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in BERD units remained similar and ranged from 3.0 to 3.5 FTEs over the years. BERD units reported more availability of doctoral-level biostatisticians than doctoral-level epidemiologists. In 2011, 2012, and 2013, more than a third of BERD units provided consulting support on 101 to 200 projects. A majority of BERD units reported that between 25% and 75% (in 2011) and 31% - 70% (in 2012) of their consulting was provided to junior investigators. More than two-thirds of BERD units reported their contributions to the submission of 20 or more non-BERD grant or contract applications annually. Nearly half of BERD units reported 1 to 10 manuscripts submitted annually with a BERD practitioner as the first or corresponding author. We describe the size, composition, and scholarly output of CTSA-related BERD units for the period 2010-2013. This characterization provides a benchmark against which to compare BERD resources and may be particularly useful for those institutions planning to develop new units in support of programs such as the CTSA.

Biography

Mohammad H Rahbar obtained his PhD in Statistics from Michigan State University in 1988. He is the Director of Division of Clinical and Translational Sciences in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Texas McGovern Medical School. He also serves as the Director of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, and Research Design component of Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. He has published more than 200 papers in reputed journals and has been the recipient of several grant awards from the National Institutes of Health in the United States.

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