



## **What is participatory health research?**

In participatory health research (PHR) the goal is to maximize the participation of those whose life or work is the subject of the research in all stages of the research process. Such participation is the core, defining principle of PHR, setting this type of research apart from other approaches in the health field. Research is not done “on” people as passive subjects providing “data,” but “with” them to provide relevant information for improving their lives. The entire research process is viewed as a partnership between stakeholders which may include academic researchers; professionals in the fields of health care, education and social welfare; members of civil society; policy makers and others. The stakeholders decide which questions will be asked in the research, what the the goals of the research are, how the research will be done and how the results will be used. PHR is action research, engaging people in making change for the better, for example, by finding ways to make neighborhoods safer, helping health professionals to know what patients need, and empowering citizens to take political action to improve their living conditions.

## **What is the International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research?**

The ICPHR was founded in 2009. We are a group of over 100 researchers, health professionals and engaged citizens from over 15 different countries. We are interested in promoting participatory health research as a way to improve the health of the people where we live. We meet once a year in a different country to decide what topics we want to work on together and what projects we want to organize. Our projects include:

- Position papers on issues important to PHR
- Literature reviews in different languages
- Workshops and short courses on PHR
- Publications on PHR in scientific and professional journals
- Presentations at national and international conferences on PHR
- A database containing information on PHR studies and issues related to PHR

## **What are the goals of the ICPHR?**

Not all people have an equal chance to live a long and healthy life or to have their voice heard in society. People who have to struggle to live, for example, because they are poor or because they are discriminated against or because they have a disability, often have more health problems. We promote PHR as a way to generate knowledge that is relevant to these people and can thus increase the likelihood of

improving their living and working conditions so they, too, can have a chance to live healthier, happier lives.

PHR is a new way of doing health research. There are still many questions about how to do PHR and how to judge its quality. The many different people involved in PHR around the world have different experiences and expectations. We are bringing together their knowledge and experience for the purpose of strengthening PHR regarding issues of quality, credibility, and impact on policy and practice.

### **How to get involved**

The ICPHR has its central office at the Catholic University for Applied Sciences in Berlin (Germany). There is no cost to become a member. Anyone interested can sign up by contacting the central office. The ICPHR is run by a consortium of organizations from different countries. Each organization is responsible for specific tasks. The organizations are members of the executive committee which governs the ICPHR.

The best way to become active in the work of the ICPHR is to become a member by contacting the central office and by becoming part of a project team. The list of current projects and their leaders can be found on the website ([www.icphr.org](http://www.icphr.org)).

Groups are forming at the local and national levels to promote the work of the ICPHR. Look on our website to find out if there is a group in your country and language.

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