

# LatinCLEN plans for 2002

In preparation for 2002, the LatinCLEN Executive Committee conducted a number of key activities throughout the year.

Last September 2001, a call for proposals for research and capacity building was launched. Nine research proposals and seven capacity building projects were reviewed. Relevance, quality of the proposal, and the capacity of the research team to conduct the study successfully were the criteria used to assess eligibility for funding. The Committee congratulates all researchers who presented proposals and encourages all others to submit proposals in the future.

Priorities for 2002 were identified. For capacity building in the region, the first priority was distance learning. In research the priority areas included: children's health, reproductive health, violence, health systems research, infectious disease, pharmacoepidemiology (including rational drug use), cardiovascular disease, mental health, research methods, health technology assessment, drug addiction, chronic non cardiovascular diseases, tumors, occupational and environmental health. Long-term goals and priorities will be set in the Strategic Planning Workshop during the LatinCLEN VII Regional Meeting in April 2002.

In November 2001, Rodolfo Dennis successfully conducted The Leadership and Management Program workshop for Executive Committee Members in Temuco, Chile (report can be downloaded from <http://www.ciges.ufro.cl/latinclen>). Among the participants were President Sergio Muñoz, Vice-President Juan M Lozano, Evelina Chapman, Antonio da Cunha, Eddy Rios, and Dean Wilfried Diener. Activities centered on understanding the Latin-American health research context. The working sessions included modules on priority setting, knowledge management, team and coalition building. Dr. Wilfried Diener, Dean of the School of Medicine at Universidad de la Frontera and INCLEN fellow, gave a talk on organizational management under the "complexity paradigm". Essentially, the concept focused on the initial need for organizations to diminish their own complexity below background complexity. However, to become sustainable, organizations then need to rebuild back their own complexity, but in a less chaotic state than the background complexity. Executive Committee members felt that this organizational theory approach is relevant to LatinCLEN, especially if a strategic planning exercise is planned for the near future.

The LatinCLEN VII Regional Meeting will be held in Cartagena, Colombia on April 4-6, 2002. The Colombian CERTC and the recently created CEUs are jointly working hard to make this meeting a significant one for the region. A series of state-of-the-art workshops and conferences are already confirmed. The key activity will be the Strategic Planning Workshop for the Network, wherein priorities for the next five years will be set. The draft of the by-laws prepared by the LatinCLEN Executive Committee will also be presented for approval during this meeting. This document can be downloaded from the network's website. For more information on the regional meeting, visit <http://hermes.javeriana.edu.co/latinclenvii>.

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