

Introduction to this Special Issue: GIS in Public Health Research

Chi-Yin Chow¹

Zhuojie Huang²

¹Department of Computer Science, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

²Pitney Bowes, USA

Public health-related issues (e.g., illness, pollution, and healthcare) are important social issues for governments and researchers. Many of these issues have strong spatial and/or spatio-temporal components, for example, epidemics of infectious disease. It is a highly topic to investigate how to apply GIS technologies and research findings to public health access, processes, analysis, and decision-making. This special issue consists of five contributions that address different problems in the research area of GIS and public health.

The first contribution by Kun Hu et al. is about how to accelerate foodborne illness investigation in global food supply chain through spatio-temporal data. The second newsletter article written by Mehreteab Aregay et al. address the scaling problem in geography to aggregate from a finer to a coarser geographical level for small-area health data. Xinyue Ye and Jay Lee study how to integrate geographical activity space and social network space to promote healthy lifestyles. For the fourth article contributed by Hedi Haddad et al., it describes a fully GIS-integrated simulation approach for analyzing the spread of epidemics in urban areas. Last but not least, Imad Afyouni et al. talk about a very interesting GIS-based game for hand physical therapy.

I hope the readers will enjoy reading this issue and find it useful in their research work.