The Center for Health Services Research received grant funding from the National Institutes of Health in September 2017 to study the uptake of syringe exchange programs (SEPs) among people who inject drugs (PWID) in rural Appalachian Kentucky. Opioid abuse and injection are critical public health problems nationally, and serious health consequences associated with opioid injection are at crisis levels in Kentucky. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently identified eight counties in Appalachian Kentucky as among the nation’s top 10 most vulnerable to HIV and Hepatitis C among PWID. Responding to an NIH funding opportunity to address social determinants of HIV prevention and treatment through examination of structural level interventions (https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-14-134.html), this initiative aligns with the CHSR focus on community engaged health disparities research in underserved communities across the Commonwealth.

The two-year NIDA-funded study is designed to reach vulnerable PWID in Clark, Knox and Pike Counties to understand the multi-level barriers to SEP utilization, and to identify priority intervention targets and strategies to enhance uptake of SEPs among rural PWID. Dr. Hilary Surratt, Principal Investigator, led this collaborative effort which involves a robust partnership with the health departments in Clark, Knox and Pike Counties. The research will engage directly with community stakeholders, gathering data and input from PWID, health department directors and SEP staff, substance abuse treatment providers, law enforcement, and other community stakeholders. Through this engagement, data, feedback and new knowledge will inform the continued refinement of SEP policies and practices for vulnerable rural PWID and multi-level prevention strategies will be developed to enhance access and utilization of rurally located SEPs. The study will enhance HIV/HCV prevention efforts and treatment services delivery by addressing critical disparities in service accessibility among rural PWID.
Value of Innovation to Implementation (VI²P) Project Update

The goal of VI²P is to foster trans-disciplinary collaboration among scientists and practitioners to form project teams. In addition, VI²P aims to support studies to advance dissemination and implementation research methods and measures, and studies of de-implementation of clinical or community practices that are wasteful or not evidence-based but widely adopted. Applications for the Program were open to all Faculty across the University inclusive of all Colleges and Centers. There were twenty-six letters of intent (LOIs), and twelve LOIs were invited for full proposal. The CHSR VI²P Review Panel conducted rigorous reviews following NIH review criteria and selected four projects to be funded. The VI²P initiative has also been shared at the 10th NIH Dissemination & Implementation Conference as a poster presentation.

ASHFORD: TOBACCO USE IN PREGNANCY INTERVENTION FOR CESATION (TOPIC)

The purpose of this project is to evaluate the effectiveness and implementation success of a Tobacco use in Pregnancy Intervention for Cessation (ToPIC) in Kentucky.

Status Update: Two practice sites from UK HealthCare and two practice sites from Baptist Health Lexington participate in the study. The study team developed a Tobacco Use Questionnaire (TOQ) and trained clinic staff to administer it and implement cotinine screening. The baseline practice assessment is also ongoing and several general themes have already been identified.

KECK: PARTNERSHIP FOR IDENTIFICATION AND PRIMARY-CARE BASED ENROLLMENT TO A PREVENTION INTERVENTION FOR DIABETES (PIPE TO PREVENT DIABETES)

The objective of this study is to increase enrollment of UK Department of Family and Community Medicine prediabetic patients in the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) sponsored by the Barnstable Brown Diabetes Center. Using a pragmatic cluster randomized controlled study design, researchers will measure the effect of enhanced provider education, care management, and population health management strategies on the identification of prediabetics and their referral and enrollment in the Barnstable Brown DPP as compared to usual practice.

Status Update: The study team has identified eligible patients through the electronic medical record (AEHR) with CHSR Data, Analytics, & Statistical Core’s (DASC) support. The team also worked with UKHIT, Clinical Application Analysts, to develop the certificate of medical necessity (CMN), i.e. referral form, into AEHR to support provider workflow. The CMN is required by Medicare/other insurers for diabetes prevention program reimbursement. A focus group interview guide was also developed for the study.

STUDTS: ADAPTATION AND PILOT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY CHECK-UP FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN

In this pilot implementation study, targeting deaf and hard of hearing children, the team will use the ADAPT-ITT model to systematically adapt the Family Check-Up (FCU) behavioral parent training (BPT) to increase (1) its relevance and acceptability to parents and hearing healthcare providers in preparation for wide-scale implementation research, and (2) its “fit” for hearing healthcare settings.

Status Update: The study team assembled a community advisory board (CAB), including 16 members across the state. The team has conducted 6 parent interviews and 1 focus group with audiologists, speech-language therapists, deaf & hard of hearing (DHH) educators. The parent interviews and educator/provider focus groups are scheduled for January 2018.

KOLESAR: IMPLEMENTING ONCOLOGY PRECISION MEDICINE IN KENTUCKY

In this study, the research team will engage stakeholders (e.g., providers, payers, patients and administrators) and assess their perspectives regarding the MTB + PMT (Molecular Tumor Board, Precision Medicine Toolkit); refine the MTB + PMT offerings based on stakeholder preferences and input; and pilot-test the adapted MTB + PMT in two community oncology sites to assess feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary provider- and practice-level outcomes.

Status Update: The study team conducted online surveys to practitioners throughout Kentucky, completed 4 practitioner focus groups and 3 community member focus groups including patients and advocates.
EDWARD RECEIVED APHA JUNIOR INVESTIGATOR AWARD

Jean Edward, PhD, RN received the Junior Investigator Award from the American Public Health Association (APHA), Public Health Nursing Section in October 2016. This award was based on her paper entitled, “Examining the Impact of Health Literacy and Health Insurance Literacy on Healthcare Access for Hispanics” at APHA’s Annual Meeting and Expo in Denver, Colorado in 2016. This is an annual award that recognizes junior faculty who have contributed to important research in public health.

TRAUGOTT REFLECTS ON BEING ELECTED FOR STAFF SENATE

It is a privilege to be elected Staff Senator from July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2020. The Staff Senate represents the interests of staff in order to strengthen relationships at the University of Kentucky and foster a climate that promotes and empowers all university employees and students to participate in the decision-making process. The vision of the senate is to be the nation’s premier model of university staff leadership in shared governance. In order to reach these goals, the staff senate holds open discussions on issues concerning salaries, benefits, work environment, and ongoing committee updates. We follow the principles of shared governance and use a democratically elected representation and use inclusive decision-making.

CONFERENCE ROOM AT NORTHWESTERN NAMED FOR DIRECTOR, MARK WILLIAMS

The Division of Hospital Medicine at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University and Northwestern Memorial Hospital dedicated its conference room to our very own Director, Mark Williams, the founding Chief of the Division established in 2007!

FUGAZZI PARTICIPATES IN THE UK WOMEN’S FORUM

Annie Fugazzi, CHSR’s Administrative Services Assistant, is a member of the University of Kentucky Women’s Forum. The UK Women’s Forum is an organization for all employees of the University — faculty and staff. Its mission is to exert a leadership role in empowering, validating, informing, including and celebrating all women employed at the University of Kentucky by addressing the challenges, communicating issues, and recognizing successes within the context of the workplace.

DR. SMALLS SELECTED FOR 2018 NRMN PROPOSAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

Congratulations to Dr. Brittany Smalls on being selected for a career development opportunity with the 2018 National Research Mentoring Network Proposal Preparation Program (NRMN-P3). The NRMN-P3 is one of four intensive grant writing training programs that is committed to delivering relevant and thorough coaching on the grant writing and submission processes to scientists from all backgrounds, with the ultimate goal of increasing the number of individuals from currently underrepresented backgrounds successfully obtaining NIH grants.

To learn more about this program and the opportunity that it provides, visit: https://nrmnet.net/grantwriting-coaching-groups/trainee-programs/nrmn-proposal-preparation-program-for-trainees/.

OTACHI SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE UK SCIVAL IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVE

Janet Otachi, MA, Project Coordinator for the CHSR Tracking and Evaluation Core of the CCTS, was selected to participate on the Implementation Team for the University of Kentucky’s SciVal implementation initiative. SciVal is a research evaluation and bibliometric analysis tool that offers quick, easy access to visualize research performance, benchmark relative to peers, develop collaborative partnerships, and analyze research trends. Led by the University of Kentucky Office of the Vice President for Research, SciVal implementation will improve measurement of quality and impact of research projects at the institutional level.
Li Named Director of Office for Value and Innovation in Healthcare Delivery (OVIHD)

Dr. Jing Li has been named associate director of the University of Kentucky Center for Health Services Research and the new director of the Office of Value and Innovation in Healthcare Delivery (OVIHD).

Li graduated from Tianjin Medical University and completed residency training in anesthesiology and subsequent clinical research training at its hospital. In 2002, she completed a master's degree in computer and information sciences at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She provided research and analytic support to several multi-center studies including CARDIA, NLST, and Dental PBRN at Division of Preventive Medicine at UAB. She then gained quality improvement, project management and program implementation and evaluation experience working for the Alabama Quality Improvement Organization, focusing on interdisciplinary teamwork, patient safety, care coordination, and best-practice adoption and implementation. Since arriving at UK in 2014, she has co-authored 11 peer-reviewed publications, collaborated on the submission of $96.3 million in grant and contract proposals and currently is principal or co-investigator on funded projects totaling $20 million awarded to the Center for Health Services Research.

Additionally, she served as deputy director of OVIHD at its inception in April 2015, helping recruit and build its staff. Prior to coming to UK, Li co-developed and led three statewide quality improvement programs, which were implemented in more than 60 hospitals in Illinois to promote system and culture change, optimize processes, and improve patient care.

DASC Hosts Analytics Open Lab for UKHC

The Data, Analytics, and Statistical Core (DASC) of the Center for Health Services Research (CHSR) hosts a monthly analytics open lab. The CHSR encourages interested faculty, and staff from UKHC and the 6 health profession colleges to join analysts and statisticians on the third Friday of each month from 10:00-11:00am in the Kentucky Clinic room J524. In this open forum, attendees talk about their data and analysis needs in research and quality improvement with experts and colleagues from around the enterprise. Topics vary from month to month based on the needs of those attending and can include anything from data sources, software tools such as Tableau, analytic methods, and support resources available.

Occurring for more than a year, DASC hosts the Analytics Collaboration meeting to foster communication among data experts from the Center for Clinical and translational Sciences, UKHC Finance, Markey Cancer Center, Quality Reporting, Radiology, UKHC IT, Institute for Biomedical Informatics, KMSF, and Pathology. At these meetings, staff and faculty share their experiences with analytic and data mining tools, data sources both internal and external to UKHC, infrastructure developments, techniques and methods for analysis. Importantly, this represents a great opportunity to network and collaborate on projects and initiatives. Based on the success of the meeting series, CHSR DASC now is hosting this monthly open lab so that end-users of data support services can meet and talk face-to-face with the data analytic experts.
Mark V. Williams, MD, Featured in Vizient Panel

The 2017 Vizient Health Innovation and Implementation Network (HIIN) Community Knowledge Network Education Series features CHSR Director, Mark Williams. This program continues the examination of an ongoing and crucial issue for healthcare providers and patients, reducing unnecessary utilization. Decreasing unnecessary utilization is not only important for cost-containment but also for patient safety, and it is a success factor for organizations moving into a value-based reimbursement environment. "Webcast #3: Choosing Wisely" highlights the recommendations of the national Choosing Wisely Initiative led by the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation in partnership with Consumer Reports, and how these recommendations encourage shared decision-making between clinicians and patients. It also features examples of healthcare organizations successfully carrying out 'Choosing Wisely'.

PCORI Proposal Collaboration

MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT DELIVERY FOR PREGNANT WOMEN WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Led by Dr. Agatha Critchfield in Maternal Fetal Medicine at UK, this proposal involves a comparative effectiveness study of the UK-Perinatal Assistance and Treatment Home (PATHways) program to evaluate the relative importance of group care and subspecialty physician interactions in the treatment of perinatal opioid use disorder in rural care settings across Kentucky. Opioid use disorder is a major public health problem in Appalachia, and has had enormous health, economic, and social impact in rural communities. Prevention, treatment, and intervention services for opioid use disorder in the area are limited, and although Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) during pregnancy has been shown to improve maternal and neonatal outcomes, knowledge of the best method of delivery of prenatal MAT in rural settings is lacking. Dr. Hilary Surratt of CHSR collaborated as a Co-Investigator on this proposal submission to conduct qualitative research and patient engagement activities. Merit review is scheduled for January 2018, with awards to be announced in May.
Center Houses Health Literacy Kentucky

In June 2017, Health Literacy Kentucky (HLK) signed its first Memorandum of Understanding with the Center for Health Services Research. The Center will provide a much-needed home for HLK with administrative and operational infrastructure support. With this new collaboration, the CHSR and HLK will continue to develop and expand a framework of cooperation to develop mutually beneficial programs, projects, and activities to further health literacy in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The CHSR will provide administrative and operational infrastructure support, and support the development, dissemination, and implementation of health literacy evidence-based guidelines. The Center will also support HLK’s mission and help raise awareness of the issues related to health literacy in communities across the state, enhance training, and foster interdisciplinary research teams to pursue extramural funding opportunities.

KHC COMMUNITY HEALTH FORUM IMPROVING HEALTH THROUGH LITERACY

On Tuesday, December 5th, Jean Edward, PhD, RN, served as a panelist for the Health Literacy Kentucky Panel during the Kentuckiana Health Collaborative (KHC) Community Health Forum. As a local statewide expert on HLK, she discussed health literacy as it relates to benefits, policy, decision-making, and local topics. The Health Forum brought together the Kentuckiana Health Collaborative and Health Literacy Kentucky to discuss how communities can support the growing demands of being an informed healthcare consumer.

CENTER SELECTS RECIPIENTS FOR KENTUCKY HEALTH LITERACY AWARD

With the Kentucky Health Literacy Award, HLK aims to recognize agencies which address health literacy in an innovative or compelling way. During the past seven years, Health Literacy Kentucky has been inspired by unsung health literacy champions across the Commonwealth and their projects. The simple act of applying for the Kentucky Health Literacy Award demonstrates a commitment to the community as well as an eagerness to share experiences and expertise in health literacy. The distinct honor of winning the Award exhibits remarkable standards to which others will aspire.

The winners of the Kentucky Health Literacy Award will collectively paint a picture of creative, insightful, caring health delivery and community-based organizations that are exceptionally committed to improving the health literacy and well-being of everyone in their communities. These organizations are not all large or small (nor urban or rural) nor economically disadvantaged or advantaged. Yet uniformly, they will demonstrate a passion and continuous commitment to making their communities healthier and more vital.

We are pleased to announce our first-place winner, La Casita Center for their project called Una Mano Amigo, “A Friendly Hand.” With its creation in 2013, Kentucky had its first culturally-specific support group for Hispanic/Latino families with children with special needs. Una Mano Amiga combats health literacy barriers by providing information, education, advocacy, and support free of charge and in linguistically and culturally appropriate ways. Its efforts have grown from 11 families in 2013 to 130 in 2017. It serves a wide range of mild to severe special care needs, including autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy, and hearing and speech impairments.

In second place is Catholic Health Initiatives Visiting Nurse Association Health at Home. Catholic Health Initiatives funded the Health Connections Program, which operated from July 2013 to June 2017. The program focused on social determinants of health among low-income, vulnerable, urban populations. Two interdisciplinary teams, consisting of an RN, LPN, social worker, and two community health workers, facilitated the 90-day program. It assessed health literacy and developed tools to assist in health coaching and navigation, such as user-friendly logs for blood pressure and glucose monitoring. It was able to reduce avoidable returns to the hospital within 30 days following discharge by 50 percent for their program “graduates.”

CHSR Presents at SOAR Summit

Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) held its fourth-annual summit at the East Kentucky Expo Center on Friday, August 4. More than 1,200 people from across Appalachia Kentucky attended the day-long event, which featured showcases from more than 130 organizations.

Mark Williams, Jing Li, and Hilary Surratt attended the SOAR Summit and presented a Solution Showcase highlighting the Kentucky Consortium for Accountable Health Communities (KC-AHC) project. They shared information about the KC-AHC initiative with regional stakeholders from healthcare, community services, economic, non-profit and governmental agencies to develop relationships and engage the community in collaboration. UK’s own Coach Cal also attended as a keynote speaker highlighting community development and the future of growth in the region.
Smalls Selected as a PRIDE-AHD Scholar

Dr. Brittany Smalls has been selected as a Scholar in the 2017-2018 Programs to Increase Diversity among Individuals Engaged in Health-Related Research Advanced Health Disparities Research Training program (PRIDE-AHD). As a scholar for this program, Smalls will receive advanced training in an interprofessional environment that facilitates successful team science career development and contributes to decreases in health disparities through impactful research. This year-long mentoring experience will offer training that includes experiential skill development in grantsmanship, scientific writing strategies, epidemiological/bio-statistical methods and more.

Li Participates in KY Performance Measure Alignment Subcommittee

The Kentucky Performance Measures Alignment Committee (PMAC) is a public-private partnership between the Kentucky Department of Medicaid Services and the Kentuckiana Health Collaborative. Members of PMAC will help form recommendations for measure prioritization in key areas of focus. The final measures chosen will be included on the Kentucky Core Healthcare Measure Set (name to be negotiated). Ultimately, the expectation is for KCHMS to be adopted by public and private organizations to better focus improvement efforts toward shared areas. As a member of the Acute and Chronic Care Subcommittee, Dr. Jing Li, MD, MS, will attend an estimated 4 to 5 meetings from November 2017 to March 2018 with the goal of establishing broadly agreed upon core quality measures that improve the quality and value of care, reduce provider reporting complexity, and align Kentucky’s healthcare organizations.

Proposal Submissions

PREPARING FOR HYBRID EFFECTIVENESS-IMPLEMENTATION TRIALS FOR HEART, LUNG, BLOOD, AND SLEEP DISEASES IN THE INPATIENT SETTING (U01)

In October 2017, Jing Li, MD, MS, Associate Director of the CHSR completed a U01 proposal submission to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) in collaboration with the University of Kentucky Divisions of Cardiology, Hospital Medicine, and Emergency Medicine to identify the barriers and facilitators to implementation of evidence-based practice(s) for heart, lung, blood, and sleep (HLBS) diseases in the inpatient setting.

Syncope is a complex presenting symptom that requires thoughtful and efficient evaluation to determine the etiology of a patient’s loss of consciousness. Clinicians remain challenged to consistently identify patients at high risk of adverse outcomes related to syncope as opposed to the majority of patients experiencing syncope who are at low risk of adverse outcomes. The major challenge in the evaluation of patients with syncope is that most patients are asymptomatic at the time of their presentation. Because of concerns that patients presenting with syncope are at risk for an impending catastrophic event, overuse and inappropriate use of testing and hospital admission are common.

The proposed project aims to: assess the gap between current (baseline) and guideline-recommended practices for syncope diagnostic work-up and management within an academic Medical Center and affiliated community hospitals; engage stakeholders and assess the multilevel patient, provider, organizational, and system barriers and facilitators to performing guideline-based evaluation for all adult patients with syncope symptoms presenting to the ED; develop a novel multicomponent, multilevel implementation strategy to increase adherence to guidelines for the evaluation and management of patients with syncope and refine plans for a subsequent type 3 hybrid effectiveness-implementation trial; and pilot test this multi-component, multilevel implementation strategy.
Project ACHIEVE Featured in Health Leaders Media & The Joint Commission Journal

Project ACHIEVE was featured as the lead article of The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety. The article, titled “Understanding Facilitators and Barriers to Care Transitions: Insights from Project ACHIEVE Site Visits,” reports findings from site visits conducted between Mar-Dec 2015 at 22 U.S. health care organizations—e.g., community hospitals, academic medical centers, integrated health systems—in which barriers and facilitators to effective care transitions were assessed. Findings from this research may be used to leverage true partnerships within health organizations and the broader communities in which they are located. (www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1553725016300654)

In addition, an editorial describing the importance of this research project was also included in the journal: “Optimizing Care Transitions: Adapting Evidence-Informed Solutions to Local Contexts.” (www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S155372501730288X)

Project ACHIEVE was also featured in Health Leaders Media Article, “Care Transitions Know-How Not Just for Clinicians.” The article highlights Project ACHIEVE’s findings from site visits at 22 U.S. health care organizations, as well as Dr. Williams’ thoughts on care transitions and the practice of ‘teach back’ methods. (http://www.healthleadersmedia.com/quality/care-transitions-know-how-not-just-clinicians)

OVIHD Team Implements RFID Program to Improve Patient Flow

In 2017, OVIHD’s team of engineers worked to develop a plan for an RFID Pilot program as a way to track patient and work flow.

RFID stands for “radio frequency identification.” A “reader” sends out a signal which prompts any ‘tags’ (i.e. on the front of a brochure) to send a signal back letting the reader know its “name”. The reader then remembers the tag’s ID and the date and time it “heard” from the tag. Using these RFID readers and tags, the OVIHD team collects data from patient and employee flow to then determine the best possible way to improve care and flow within each individual clinic.

Prior to starting the study, the OVIHD team will meet with the selected clinic to discuss the current work process and possible solutions to existing problems. The engineers will then draft a plan for the placement of each individual RFID reader to effectively collect clinic flow data. The data that will be collected during the process includes stops within the clinic, patient wait time, and length of specific procedures.

**FIRST PILOT PROGRAM**

OVIHD’s first pilot RFID Program is scheduled to be completed at the UK Cardiovascular Pediatrics clinic. Using eight different RFID readers throughout the clinic, the engineers plan to monitor approximately 500 patients during a two to three week time period.
Publications


Campbell JA, Walker RJ, Smalls BL, Egede LE. Use of adaptability index to explain selfcare and diabetes outcomes. BMC Endocrine Disorders, 2017 [In Press].


Kurtz, SP, Buttram, ME, Pagano, ME, & Surratt, HL. In press. “A Randomized Trial of Brief Assessment Interventions for Young Adults who Use Drugs in the Club Scene,” Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment. http://www.journalofsubstanceabusetreatment.com/article/S0740-5472(17)30132-0/fulltext


O’Leary KO, Johnson JK, Manojlovich M, Gastik GJ, Williams MV. Use of Unit-based Interventions to Improve the Quality of Care for Hospitalized Medical Patients: A National Survey. The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety; in press.


Employee Recognition Awards

CHSR introduced Employee Recognition Awards in February, 2017 to acknowledge outstanding staff contributions to Center activities and work products. CHSR staff are nominated by their supervisors or peers for demonstrating excellence in teamwork, leadership, commitment, or performance that promotes a robust and rewarding professional environment. Barb Latham received the Employee of the Quarter Award for 2017 Quarter II and Dan Cleland received the Employee of the Quarter Award for 2017 Quarter III.

Faculty & Staff Enjoy 3rd Annual Cookout

Above: From left to right, Arden Cooper, Ying Liu, Megan McIntosh, and Nikita Vundi enjoy wine tasting at Talon Winery.

Above: From left to right, Jing Li and Mark Williams.
2017 Halloween Party & Chili Cook-Off

Above: From top to bottom, Chili Cook-Off Winners Dan Cleland, Jon Colquitt, & Arden Cooper. Megan McIntosh, Nikita Vundi, & Jennifer Cook.

Above: Project ACHIEVE Team participates in door decorating contest.

2017 Thanksgiving Luncheon

Above: CHSR faculty & staff enjoy the 2017 Thanksgiving Luncheon.