

Health Services – Strategic Plan

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Workgroup Focus

The Institute's Center for Health Services Research is home to a robust program of research that applies a population health perspective to the complex factors and processes that shape utilization and outcomes of health services and treatments in the health care system. Center studies often address issues of the impact of health policy choices on treatment and outcomes for important populations, including those subject to disadvantage and stigma, and on application of measurement strategies to healthcare to better understand effectiveness and provide tools for measurement-driven quality improvement. Center work has significantly impacted practice patterns in areas that include safe and judicious use of antipsychotic medications for children and the elderly; use of evidence-based practices in care of persons with severe mental illness; and other aspects of health services.

Mission and Vision

The Center's mission is to conduct a high-quality program of health services research that addresses critical issues influencing population health, providing actionable insights that can help improve healthcare processes and outcomes in large usual-care populations, including those receiving publicly funded care through programs such as Medicaid and Medicare. Our vision is that data, analytics, solid science and partnerships can be brought to better understand and improve care processes in ways that will produce improved population health outcomes.

Areas of Research Focus and Priorities

Center studies have applied quantitative methods, often involving large healthcare datasets, and mixed-methods strategies to address large, complex healthcare challenges that pose major and/or new threats to population health, including:

- Challenges of substance abuse, treatment, and health system responses to the opioid epidemic,
- Care systems, treatment, and outcomes for people with HIV;
- Quality, outcomes and improvement of care for persons with severe mental illness;
- Treatment for children with behavioral health disorders;
- Treatment of Medicaid beneficiaries with multiple chronic behavioral health and medical conditions;
- Safe pharmacological management of individuals with dementia;
- Quality of nursing home care; use and outcomes of psychotropic drugs in large usual-care pop.;
- Other issues intersecting of health services, policy, epidemiology, behavioral health and others

Partnerships

Center researchers work with a range of partners, including research teams at other universities (UCSF, Columbia, NYU, University of Missouri); consumer and other stakeholders; state agencies across multiple states; and other partners, to facilitate stakeholder-engaged, well-informed, policy-aware research. Additional partnerships are being developed through the Center's role leading the Special Populations component of Rutgers' CTSA (NJ ACTS).

Opportunities for Future Collaborations and Research Initiatives

- Big Ideas center building strong Rutgers core for addiction health services research; broadening of potential funding sources including private donors.
- Further projects on opioid use, outcomes and treatments, including mortality outcomes.
- Substance use issues in perinatal period, including neonatal abstinence syndrome and prevention;
- Building on CTSA collaborations, including cross-CTSA Hub collaborative initiatives in opioids and in incorporation of environmental variables into clinical and translational research studies.

- Building on established lines of work on pediatric psychopharmacology;
- Strengthened collaborations with state agencies in NJ and beyond;
- Building on new Rutgers-Barnabas system with new collaborations;
- Integration of EMR and claims data;
- Collaboration with DOH, NJ Health Information Exchange, etc. on use of all-payer data systems;
- Studies and collaborations leveraging opportunities created by iPHD;
- Further development of mixed-methods strategy for integrating policy analysis and claims data analysis, building on successful models from PCORI, SMINET and other initiatives;
- Partner strongly with Rutgers schools NB units, strengthening their missions as well as IFH's mission

Next Steps

- Extending Medicaid lines of research to Medicaid populations.
- Develop robust substance abuse HSR program building on Big Ideas initiative.
- Continue to develop stakeholder-engaged studies of effects of health policy choices nationally and in NJ
- Recruitment of strong faculty including mid-level/senior positions to future develop the HSR enterprise;
- Strengthen mentorship and training, engaging outstanding pre/postdoctoral and developing faculty;
- Expand and diversify funding portfolio including NIDA, NIA, other NIH, AHRQ, foundation
- Strengthen partnerships across Rutgers; and within IFH with CHSR, PETS, and other collaborators.
- Contribute to important Institute initiatives including iPHD, cohort study, new center applications, etc
- Strengthen CHSR investigative and analytic staff including contributors at multiple levels

Metrics for Success

- Strong policy and citation impact of work on critical public health issues.
- Influence on development of effective health policy interventions and better understanding of critical national population health issues;
- Maintenance and development of strong Center infrastructure supporting researchers;
- Recruitment of outstanding investigators at multiple levels;
- Contributions to mentoring and development of developing faculty at collaborating Rutgers units'
- Continued strong stakeholder partnerships;
- Expansion of Center core faculty
- Contribution to key IFH initiatives such as iPHD
- Dissemination of new perspectives on effective societal action on major pop. health challenges;
- Production of strong, actionable evidence to support improvement of care processes