

A banner with an orange background and a grid pattern. It features three circular images: a microscope on the left, a hand in a blue glove in the center, and laboratory glassware on the right. The text "Health Care Systems Research Network" is centered above the word "NEWSLETTER" in a large, white, serif font.

Health Care Systems Research Network
NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022 Issue

State of The Network Recap

Robert Greenlee, PhD, MPH, senior research scientist at Marshfield Clinic Research Institute and 2021-2022 Chair of the HCSRN Governing Board.

On day two of the annual conference held in Pasadena, I provided the annual State of the Network address and was pleased to announce the winners of several of the annual network awards (see the Conference Recap for more detail). Highlights of the address included a very brief history of the network from its founding in 1994 and the first annual conference the following year, with gratitude toward the founders and early leaders, and a recognition that their inspiration for our partnership and our annual gathering remain very relevant today.

A section on *What's New in the Network* since the last in-person conference in 2019 featured the recent expansion of the network to 20 member sites with the addition of Advocate Aurora Research Institute. Advocate Aurora Health is a top system from Wisconsin and Illinois, with solid research infrastructure and interests well-aligned with HCSRN capacities and has emerged as a national destination for patient-centered bench, translational and clinical research. Denise Angst, PhD, RN, vice president of academic research and strategic partnerships at the Research Institute is the organization's representative to the Governing Board.

Another particularly important network development that generated the most discussion during the Q&A session after the presentation was the recent transition of executive/operational leadership from a hired executive director model to an Association Management firm, to increase operational efficiency and capabilities for the network. The HCSRN's new central office is managed by Capitol Hill Management Services (CHMS), and their support includes headquarter staffing, leadership and operational support, membership services, strategic planning, financial management, communications and web support, and education and event planning. They are also working closely with our existing VDW Operations Committee leadership team to provide a seamless interface with all Network operations. In parallel, the Network has asked CHMS to assist in our desired move from an informal membership coalition structure to a formal not-for-profit corporation structure, critical to assure that the HCSRN can continue to manage its

own finances, contracting, etc.

Key items on the horizon included a brief preview of the web redesign for the HCSRN public website, the launch of which is planned for later this year. The new site is intended to be a robust online resource for HCSRN members and supporters. It will feature new content, improved functionality and navigation, and more modern technology will allow the site to be kept up to date more efficiently by the central office team. Be sure to watch this newsletter for the latest news about our progress.

Finally, I asked attendees to plan to attend the 2023 HCSRN Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado next February 21-23. Be sure to share this information with your colleagues. We hope to see you there.

2022 HCSRN Conference Update

Suzanne Simons, MS, Interim Executive Director, HCSRN

Nearly 275 registrants attended HCSRN's 28th Annual Conference in Pasadena April 12-14 after a two-year hiatus of in-person gatherings. Overwhelmingly, attendees stated how great it was to be back together to reconnect and network during the two-and-a-half-day conference.

Ben Broder, MD, PhD, CPPS, Interim Senior Scientific Director, Department of Research & Evaluation and Regional Assistant Medical Director of Quality and Clinical Analysis at Kaiser Permanente/Southern California Permanente Medical Group welcomed HCSRN to Pasadena and noted that a welcome reception was planned for Tuesday evening at the state-of-the-art Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine (KPSOM), offering an opportunity to network with students, faculty and other researchers from the KP system.

Kicking off the meeting was an inspiring plenary session titled, *Are You Really Ready to Do the Work? Shifting the Research Paradigm through Meaningful and Equitable Collaborations* with Lori Carter-Edwards PhD, MPH, Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine, CA as the main presenter. This topic tied into the overall theme of the conference, *Promoting Collaboration and Partnerships to Advance Health Equity*. Dr Carter-Edwards shared her deep experience in meeting people where they are to advance health and healthcare. She cited the recent success of a community-engaged implementation science pilot study on COVID-19 risk communication strategies that demonstrated a shift in the collaborative research paradigm. Throughout the remainder of the conference, other presenters referenced this session and the wisdom and expertise that Dr. Carter-Edwards imparted.

Panel sessions were held on Tuesday, April 12 and covered topics including *Promoting Partnerships to Develop Culturally-Relevant Patient Outreach to Advance Health Equity in Colorectal Cancer Screening in Latino Populations; Screening for Social Needs within Health Systems: Feasibility of Screening, Patient Preferences; and Prevalence of Needs, Toward Universal Return of Aggregate Research Results to Study Participants*, among others.

Robert T. Greenlee, PhD, MPH, HCSRN Governing Board Chair, and Senior Research Scientist, Marshfield Clinic Research Institute at the Marshfield Clinic Health System, presented the State of the Network address on Wednesday, April 13. The highlights of his presentation are contained in the story above. Oral Abstract presentations took place on Tuesday and Wednesday and added to the robust content of the program. Topics areas included Behavioral Health, Chronic Conditions, Multi-Morbidity & Aging Populations, COVID-19, Health Equity & Social Needs, Health Care Delivery & Coverage and Technology and Digital Health.

Closing out the meeting was a plenary session entitled, "AHRQ Funders Session and

Investigator Q&A. The program included Katherine Sanchez, PhD, LCSW, Teaniese "Tina" Davis, PhD, MPH and Brent Sandmeyer, MPH. Presenters covered the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) funding priorities, tips for navigating the grant application process, what to expect after your application has been received and is undergoing review, the process for submitting a Research Grant 1 (R01) and NIH diversity supplements which are available to "enhance the diversity of the research workforce."

In addition to the main conference programming, several ancillary meetings and the NIH Pre-Conference Workshop were held. Further down in the newsletter, you will find individual report-outs from these meetings.

We look forward to seeing you in Denver February 21-23, 2023!

2022 Conference Award Winners

HCSRN celebrated the work of their colleagues with six awards which were presented during the conference. The following recognitions were presented:



Scientific Manuscript of the Year

Nicola Klein NP, Lewis N, Goddard K, et al.
Surveillance for Adverse Events After COVID-19
mRNA Vaccination. JAMA. 2021;326(14):1390–1399.
doi:10.1001/jama.2021.15072

Multisite Collaborator of the Year

Nicola Klein, MD, PhD
Kaiser Permanente Northern California

Collaborative Sites included in the study:
Kaiser Permanente Northern California
Marshfield Clinic
HealthPartners
Kaiser Permanente Northwest
Kaiser Permanente Washington
Kaiser Permanente Southern California
Kaiser Permanente Colorado



Mentor of the Year

Alanna Kulchak Rahm, PhD, MS
Associate Professor
Geisinger (Genomic Medicine Institute)

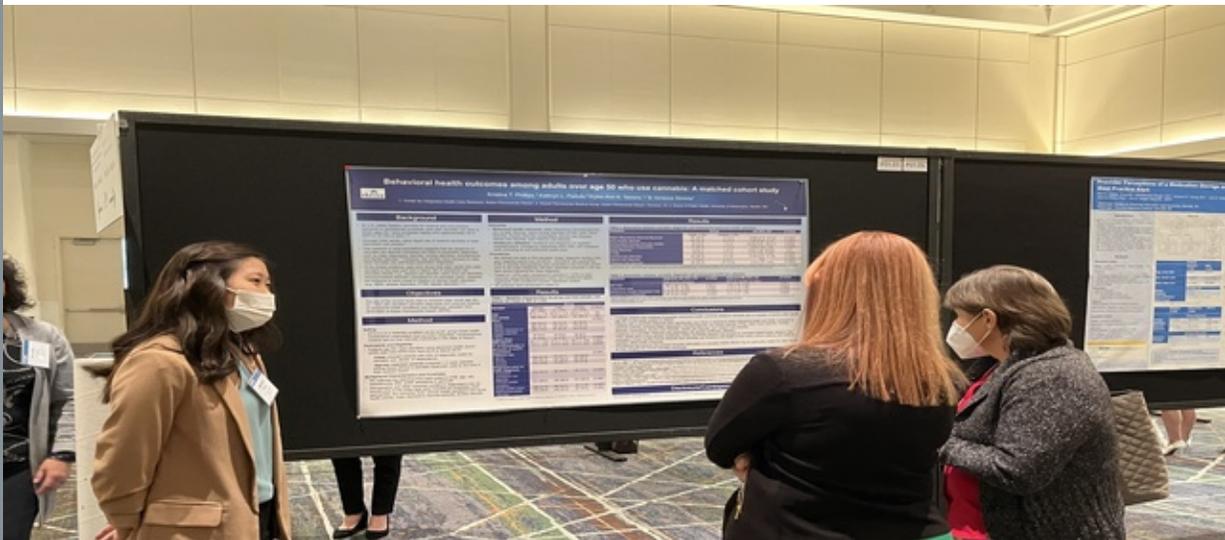


Early Career Investigator

Julie Richards, PhD, MPH
Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research
Institute, Seattle, WA

Abstract

How Patients Answered "Do you have access to guns? Yes/No" Prior to Suicide Death



Poster Session Winners

Poster Session 1 Winner

12.03 Recruitment of Adolescents with Mild Depression from Primary Care Settings: Lessons Learned from a Multi-Site Comparative Effectiveness Trial

Cheryl Lefaiver, Ashley McHugh, Cathy Joyce, Jen Sanchez-Flack, Amanda Knepper, Rebecca Feinstein, Marian Fitzgibbon, Tracy Gladstone, Benjamin Van Voorhees

Poster Session 2 Winner

P13.06 Cancer and Mental Health Diagnoses in the Year Preceding Suicide

Your Input is Needed for the Success of the 2023 Annual Conference

In looking ahead to the Annual Conference being held in Denver February 21-23, 2023, we are exploring options to seek support in three different areas: Grants, Sponsorships and Exhibits. We are seeking the names of potential grantors or sponsors as well as developing a list of potential exhibitors.

If there are grantors or funders who you believe would be interested in the mission of HCSRN and supporting the annual conference, please provide their names and contact information. If you do not have contact information, the name of the organization is a great starting point.

As it relates to exhibitors, please share the name of companies or organizations and contact information, if available, that may have be of interest to annual conference attendees. We will then follow up to learn whether they would have an interest in participating in the annual conference in Denver.

Please take the survey via the button below to share your feedback.

[Click Here](#)

SIG Updates

Aging SIG: Current and Future Collaborative Opportunities

Submitted by Ivan Abi-Elias, Research Coordinator I, Meyers Health Care Institute

The Aging SIG Ancillary meeting targets engagement of investigators at all career levels who are interested in advancing the science of aging, learn more about current activities of other researchers in the field, and discover opportunities to collaborate on future studies focused on older adults. Opportunities and ways to engage with the AGING Initiative, which focuses on the development of an interdisciplinary research agenda focused on older adults with multiple chronic conditions, included updates on the MCCs Scholars Program for early-career investigators, the AGING Pilot Program, and resources for investigators to engage with patient/caregiver advisors in their research. Opportunities for funding and engagement with the NIA IMPACT Collaboratory including included career development awards, demonstration projects, the health care systems scholars program, and others were also discussed. A brief presentation was provided by the Adult Changes in Thought (ACT) Research Program, which described current efforts as well as future directions and opportunities to engage and collaborate with the program.

The ancillary meeting provided an opportunity for several junior investigators to present their work related to older adults or multiple chronic conditions. It was also an opportunity for members of the MCCs Scholars program from non-HCSRN based institutions to present their work and look for potential collaborations with this group. Key presentations included a review of program policies and practices for TAVR, telemedicine visit effectiveness among heart failure patients during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of comorbid conditions in emergency room

visits for Parkinson's disease patients. In order to highlight future potential collaborations, the meeting also included a brief overview of current funding opportunities in the area; in addition, a presentation was provided by an investigator looking for partnerships on a grant that investigates vaccinations that reduce the risk of dementia. If you are interested in joining the Aging SIG and would like to hear about future opportunities, please reach out to hcsresearchnetwork@gmail.com.

Mental Health Equity SIG

Submitted by Melissa Harry, PhD, MSW, Research Scientist II, Essentia Health

The MHRN Health Equity SIG has started up again. We had our first "reboot" in person meeting at HCSRN 2022. We used our ancillary meeting time to get to know each other, as we had some new participants join us for the first time, talk about our research interests related to mental health equity and where those interests intersect, and discuss potential areas where we are considering pursuing funded research together. We would like to welcome new persons interested in joining the MHRN Health Equity SIG's monthly virtual meetings. Those interested in learning more and joining our SIG can contact Melissa Harry, PhD (melissa.harry@essentiahealth.org) to be added to the meeting invitation series.

Patient Engagement in Research SIG

Submitted by Deborah Ling-Grant, PhD, MPH, MBA Lead Senior Research Project Manager, Kaiser Permanente Southern California

The Patient Engagement in Research Special Interest Group (PER SIG) met on April 12, 2022 in an ancillary meeting as part of the national HCSRN conference. The meeting was attended by approximately 10 people from a variety of HCSRN sites, including representatives from the Kaiser Permanente Southern California Research & Evaluation Department, Sutter Health, Henry Ford Health System, and Health Partners. Three patient partners joined the discussion from the Southern California and Seattle, WA areas. Attendees shared introductions and their interests in patient engagement activities. They discussed timeline and plans for the quarterly webinars held on various topics via MS TEAMS. The group had opportunity for networking and sharing their perspectives on the recent national campaign and policy efforts spearheaded by Dr. Brian Mittman on the Return of Research Results to Partners. The PER SIG has an email listserv to communicate on a range of topics and interests related to stakeholder engagement. Please contact Debbie Ling Grant (deborah.s.ling-grant@kp.org), Sr. Lead Research PM, to be added to the listserv or to learn more about joining this group.

Pharmacy Interest Group

Submitted by Eric Wright, PharmD, MPH, Geisinger

The Pharmacy Interest Group of the HCSRN met on April 11 in Pasadena California for an inaugural meeting of those interested in pharmacy and medication-focused research. Attendees from multiple HCSRN sites shared research interests and discussed the future direction of this newly formed Interest Group of the HCSRN. Hannah Anderson from Geisinger also shared her research findings (presented as a poster at the HCSRN meeting) of research presented from 2019-2021 at the HCSRN that related to pharmacy. A full quarter of papers presented in a three year period related to pharmacy. A survey will be developed by a task force of the Pharmacy IG and sent to participating HCSRN sites in the coming months. Please be on the lookout! All researchers and staff at HCSRN sites will be

eligible for participation.

The interest group will be meeting quarterly (virtually) throughout the year. To learn more about the Interest Group and to see the charter, please see the HCSRN website. If interested in receiving regular Pharmacy IG updates, please email

Workgroup Updates

Tumor Workgroup

Submitted by Aung Oakkar, MBA, MHA, Scientific Lead, Kaiser Permanente Mid-Atlantic

With the NAACCR version 18 implementation along with additional changes in version 21 and version 22, current VDW Tumor specifications are in need for updating. The changes include retirement of Collaborative Staging (CS) system and implementation of AJCC 8th Edition staging schemes as well as brand new radiation treatment variables and site-specific diagnostic indicators. The NAACCR based VDW Tumor structure is not an easily maintained subject area and needs leadership ready to create a more stable and rational structure.

The current data model structure would make it very challenging to implement the corresponding changes in the VDW. To address current and prepare for the future NAACCR changes, the workgroup will propose a new data table model with partially normalized the data structure to avoid adding dozens of fields every few years. The plan is to implement new NAACCR specs (v18-v22), redesign the data structure, create more documentation and implementation guidelines to aid users and construct a comprehensive quality assurance (QA) process. Attributes and variables that correspond to NAACCR items will be identified using the NAACCR XML ID.

VDW Tumor Workgroup meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesdays of the month led by Aung Oakkar of KP Mid-Atlantic States and Jenny Staab of KP Center for Health Research with Scientific Leadership by Lois Lamerato and Rick Krajenta of Henry Ford Health.

NIH Pragmatic Trials Collaboratory Presents *The Essentials of ePCTs*



**NIH PRAGMATIC TRIALS
COLLABORATORY**

Rethinking Clinical Trials®

Submitted by Marijo Mencini, Project Leader, Duke Clinical Research Institute

On April 11, 2022 the [NIH Pragmatic Trials Collaboratory](#) partnered with the Health Care Systems Research Network (HCSRN) to offer a free workshop on the *Essentials of Embedded Pragmatic Clinical Trials*. This pre-conference workshop was offered as part of the 2022 HCSRN Conference held in Pasadena, California.

The workshop introduced concepts in the design, conduct, and implementation of embedded pragmatic clinical trials (ePCTs). ePCTs are randomized trials conducted within healthcare systems that use streamlined procedures and existing infrastructure to answer important medical questions for patients,

providers, and healthcare system leaders. Such trials have the potential to inform policy and practice with broadly generalizable, high-quality evidence at lower cost and greater efficiency compared with traditional explanatory clinical trials.

The workshop focused on methods relevant to health service researchers, and provided firsthand ePCT experiences and case studies from the NIH Pragmatic Trials Collaboratory [Demonstration Projects](#) to support and illustrate the topics presented. [View all the workshop slides and additional resources](#) on the NIH Pragmatic Trials Collaboratory website.

VDW UPDATE



An update on our Virtual Data Warehouse (VDW)

Submitted by Mark Jurkovich, DDS, MBA, MHI, HealthPartners Institute, Reesa Laws, Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research and Celeste Machen, Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research

Our in person VIG meeting associated with our annual HCSRN research meeting returned after our two year pandemic related hiatus. It was great to see representatives from 13 of our sites at our meeting, but we all missed those of you from other sites that were unable to attend. The meeting went well and it was great to see folks “in person” again.

First and foremost, we welcomed two new members, SLU and Advocate Aurora. The VIG received an update on the many changes to the HCSRN and briefly discussed how it might impact our group. The HCSRN change in management may also impact the VIG. The HCSRN will become a 501c3 organization and that may open up other grant opportunities. On a different note, though it was expected as she closed in on her Informatics degree, Afton Dunsmoor has left her VOC role that provided significant support to the VIG and other HCSRN functions. Currently, our new management company, Capitol Hill, has stepped in and is providing support.

The VIG conducted some necessary business and had several informative presentations from various workgroups. The Enrollment and Demographics proposal for change was approved. PROs and Tumor are zeroing in on some key ideas that may require votes in the not-too-distant future. Utilization has seen tremendous activity only exacerbated by the pandemic. Discussion ranged from how we might make our model “fit” better with Epic to the variation among sites and how we need to make sure that all sites can do multisite research. These will continue to be topics during the regular meetings. A full meeting summary is

available on our internal website.

We are exploring how we might conduct a fall VIG meeting as well as how the VIG might begin to intersect more with our special interest groups. We have 3 new special interest groups in the past year and a fourth starting. All of these may need or want additional information available within our VDW.



We list faculty and staff positions at HCSRN research centers and academic institutions as a service to the research community.

Research Scientists and Senior Research Scientists

The Advocate Aurora Research Institute (AARI) at Advocate Aurora Health (AAH) invites Research Scientists and Senior Research Scientists with an established track record of success in one of the following areas to apply to one of our newly posted positions in the Division of Academic Research:

- Health equity
- Population health
- Health systems research
- Child and family research
- Aging
- Behavioral health
- Dissemination and implementation science

The ideal candidates are researchers who will bring an established program of research, thrive in a collaborative environment, and have a broad understanding of health care systems. Successful candidates should have a record of securing peer-reviewed extramural funding and demonstrate a high level of research productivity. Professional excellence and creativity with cross-disciplinary approaches are key selection criteria. Of particular interest are senior level scientists with current externally funded programs of research and experience with health systems data and collaborating in translational scientific environments.

Advocate Aurora Health (AAH) is one of the top 12 not-for-profit health systems in the country that cares for 3 million patients across 27 hospitals and over 500 sites of care. As a leading employer in the Midwest, Advocate Aurora Health employs more than 75,000 individuals. Advocate Aurora Health is engaged in hundreds of clinical trials and research studies and is nationally recognized for its expertise in clinical care and population health. With dedicated research scientists and clinician investigators engaged in over 1,000 unique research studies, the Advocate Aurora Research Institute (AARI) is providing actionable evidence to guide decisions in key areas of health and wellness. Aligned with a new research strategic plan, AARI is seeking to expand its cadre of research scientists to advance our growth and impact.

Application Instructions:

Applications must include a cover letter, statement of research interests, current

curriculum vitae, statement demonstrating a commitment to the principles of inclusion, diversity, and equity, and contact information for at least three professional references. Application reviews will begin immediately, and positions will be posted until filled.

Apply for Senior Research Scientist here
Apply for Research Scientist here

Diabetes Epidemiologist Research Scientist

The Division of Research (DOR) of The Permanente Medical Group of Kaiser Permanente Northern California (KPNC) seeks an early-stage investigator with research experience in the epidemiology of diabetes and other chronic conditions related to diabetes incidence and complications, including etiologic research on the interplay of environmental and genetic factors, social determinants of health, and health equity, and health services research.

This Research Scientist I position calls for relevant expertise in diabetes epidemiology, the epidemiology of related chronic conditions such as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), health equity research, social determinants of health, and health services research in people with diabetes and prediabetes. In addition to diabetes epidemiology, a candidate may also have expertise in other research areas and methods, including quantitative and biostatistical methods. The specific areas in which the successful candidate may work should complement content areas of interest to DOR investigators and promote collaborations with KPNC clinical and operations leaders. Preferred qualifications include a PhD or equivalent training in epidemiology, health services research, or a related field. A clinical degree along with a master's degree in a research field is preferred.

Please email a letter of interest and curriculum vitae to Suzanne Furuya at suzanne.furuya@kp.org by June 31, 2022.

Check out the other open positions within our member organizations
by clicking the link Below

[Click Here for Job Postings](#)

Save The Date

Mark your calendars for the 2023 HCSRN
Annual Conference!

