

2019-2021 Report



THE THINKER
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**COMMONWEALTH
INSTITUTE OF KENTUCKY**

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Our **vision** is to serve as a leader in advancing equity through high quality, inclusive research, in support of social action.

CIK's **mission** is to inform policy and practice that will improve the health of populations in Kentucky and beyond by facilitating and supporting transdisciplinary collaborations for research and data analytics.



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS



Liza Creel, PhD, MPH



Monica Wendel, PhD, MPH

What a couple of years! The work of CIK, and our partners, has continued to grow and evolve since our last report. CIK has thirteen new Commonwealth Scholars, supports sixteen graduate students, has expanded our repository of databases for research, and now houses five State-University Partnership projects in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Medicaid Services. Building on the commitment of those involved in CIK, we strive to add research to both the growing body of literature around health equity and population health. Additionally, we and our partners prioritize translating those research findings into recommendations for meaningful policy and practice change. We have also experienced some internal transitions, with the retirement of Deputy Director Sherry Duffy and the transition from Co-Directors to Liza serving as Director of CIK starting in July 2021.

Never in our lifetimes has the importance of this work been more apparent than now. Spring of 2020 hit all of us hard – professionally and personally. The Coronavirus Pandemic has tested our institutions, communities, and leaders, and has brought the work of public health professionals to the forefront. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and too many other people of color launched nationwide protests and calls to finally address the systemic barriers that restrict, often intentionally, health equity. We, and many others, have acknowledged that racism is a public health issue and outlined ways our leaders can pave a pathway for change.

The dedicated Commonwealth Scholars and students, and the leadership within our school and this university, offer evidence that we can, together, work to address these great challenges and to advance health equity in our community, state, and the nation. The pages that follow demonstrate this good work and provide a lens through which we hope to affect change. Looking forward, we are confident that the work within CIK will continue to grow and strengthen. This work can change the world, and it has already begun.

Liza Creel, PhD, MPH

Co-Director

Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky
Associate Professor, Health
Management and Systems Sciences

Monica L. Wendel, DrPH, MPH

Co-Director

Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky
Associate Dean for Public Health Practice
Professor & Chair, Health Promotion and
Behavioral Sciences



CIK PROJECTS FY2020

Projects FY20	Amounts	Leads
KYOne - Training and Development Jackson Funder: Pivot to Peace Residuals	\$24,000	Jackson
KYOne MHA Funder: KY One Startup Funds	\$155,977	Bewley
Behavioral Parent Training for Families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Preschoolers Funder: UK / NIH National Institute on Deafness & Other Communication Disorders	\$31,695	Creel
Bridge Kids Evaluation Funder: Bridge Kids International	\$10,000	Brown
Communities Helping the Hearing of Infants Funder: National Institutes of Health	\$23,177	Creel
Increasing Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis among High-risk African Americans in Louisville, KY Funder: Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence	\$109,518	Kerr
Kentucky Medicaid Monitoring Funder: Kentucky Voices for Health	4,583	Buchino
KY EHDl Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Project Evaluation Funder: Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services / Maternal Child Health Bureau Human Resources Services	\$31,500	Creel / Buchino
KY EHDl Information Systems Maintenance and Enhancement Funder: CDC National Center for Injury Prevention & Control	\$47,302	Creel
Louisville Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Pilot Evaluation Funder: Louisville Metro Government / Bureau of Justice Assistance	\$19,495	Creel / Buchino
MSGRN Evaluation Funder: Mountain States Genetics Regional Network / HRSA	\$45,833	Creel
Nourishing Food Literacy Funder: The Food Literacy Project / USDA	10,666	Brown
Preparing for Value-based Purchasing Quality Funder: KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services /Department of Health and Human Services	\$89,841	Jennings
Project Uncaged: Youth Detention Services Programming Funder: UofL Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research	5,500	Buchino/Brown
University Partnership—Study on Type 2 Diabetes Funder: KyCabinet for Health and Family Services /Department of Health and Human Services	\$138,735	Little
Youth Violence Prevention Research Center Funder: CDD National Center for Injury Prevention & Control	\$1,165,247	Wendel / Ingram
Total Funding	\$1,913,069	



CIK PROJECTS FY2021

Projects FY21	Amounts	Leads
Louisville Metro Homeless Services Evaluation Funder: Louisville/Jefferson Co Metro Government	\$50,000	Buchino
Louisville Metro Emergency Services Deflection Planning Funder: Louisville/Jefferson Co Metro Government	\$231,056	Buchino
Communities Helping the Hearing of Infants Funder: National Institutes of Health	\$10,918	Creel
FY21 - Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) Funder: Kentucky Cabinet for Health & Family Services / Maternal Child Health Bureau	\$46,000	Creel
Identifying and Removing Barriers to Treatment of Hepatitis C Funder: KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services / Department of Health and Human Services	\$192,952	Little
FY21 - Predictive Analytics for Type 2 Diabetes with Social Determinants of Health Funder: KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services / Department of Health and Human Services	\$215,096	Little
The Effect of Market Changes on Kentucky Medicaid Funder: KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services / Department of Health and Human Services	\$144,748	Karimi
FY21 - Study on Systemic Complications of Oral Diseases Funder: KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services / Department of Health and Human Services	133,244	Vu
Alcohol Use Disorder: Its Risk Factors, Comorbidity, And Long Term Care Cost Funder: KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services / Department of Health and Human Services	\$121,599	Kong
Advancing Cities-Digital Inclusion and Economic Resilience Funder: UofL Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research	216,307	Buchino
Evaluation Services for the Mountain States Genetics Regional Collaboration Funder: Mountain States Genetics Regional Network /HRSA	\$46,000	Creel
Youth Violence Prevention Research Center Funder: CDD National Center for Injury Prevention & Control	\$1,165,247	Wendel
Examining HIV-related Stigma and HIV Testing Funder: National Institutes of Health	\$158,880	Kerr
Russell Technical Business Incubator Evaluation (RTBI) Funder: Academy for Educational Development	\$71,989	Buchino
Total Funding	\$2,804,036	



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Urban Policy and Program Surveillance Project



Liza Creel, PhD, MPH

The Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky (CIK), housed within the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences, is a partner in the expansion of Drexel University's Urban Policy and Program Surveillance Project. The project serves as a way to identify best practices at the local level in policy, programmatic, and budgetary initiatives to promote health equity. A total of seven cities are included in the project: The original four cities – Philadelphia, New York City, Washington DC, and Los Angeles – which were joined by Louisville, St. Louis, and Birmingham (AL) in 2019. Schools of public health in each city lead local surveillance efforts.

CIK and its research team receive technical assistance from Drexel on their surveillance approach focusing on local policies and programs in the areas of health, education, housing, and the environment - all of which are key to achieving health equity. In the last year, the project also added policing and criminal justice policy as areas of focus. Through cross-city policy briefs and community engagement, the project seeks to identify best practices in local policymaking and programming that could translate to

and inform decision-making in Louisville and other urban communities. Liza M. Creel, PhD, Associate Professor, Director of CIK, serves as the project lead along with SPHIS graduate student Kaila Washington. For more information on CIK or CIK projects, please visit <https://louisville.edu/sphis/departments/cik>.

Communities Helping the Hearing of Infants by Reaching Parents (CHHIRP)

Though delayed some by the Coronavirus Pandemic, work continues to test a parent navigation intervention to improve rates of diagnostic testing for children who fail their newborn hearing screen, Led by Dr. Matthew Bush at the University of Kentucky, the study is funded by the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Creel's work on this project includes a cost-effectiveness analysis, that will offer evidence of the value of such interventions and possibilities about paying for non-typical services such as patient navigation.

Fiscal Year 2021—Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI)

CIK maintains a strong collaboration with the Kentucky Office of Children with Special Healthcare Needs and the Kentucky Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program. Currently we are partnering with EHDI on a CDC-funded grant to improve data systems for the newborn hearing screening program.

Evaluation Services for the Mountain States Genetics Regional Network

Dr. Creel continues to serve as External Evaluator for the Mountain States Genetics Regional Network (MERGN), a HRSA-funded program designed to improve access to genetic services for underserved populations. In addition to data collection and reporting for a set of national performance measures, Dr. Creel is also leading a multiple case study examining the MSRGN State Team Model.

Behavioral Parent Training for Families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Preschoolers

Though delayed some by the Coronavirus Pandemic, work continues to test a parenting intervention for families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing, a study funded by the National Institutes of Health and led by Dr. Christina Studts at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Dr. Creel collaborates with the research team on cost-related data collection and analyses.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The Strengthening Health Equity in Recovery Outcomes (SHERO) Study

The Strengthening Health Equity in Recovery Outcomes (SHERO) Study is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded project focused on measuring and understanding cross-sector alignment among organizations that serve pregnant and parenting women in recovery in two Kentucky communities. The study prioritizes community engagement through a strong partnership with Volunteers of America Mid-States, who operates a Freedom House program in both communities, and a Community Advisory Board of community members who help guide design, translation, and dissemination. Dr. Creel leads this work in collaboration with Commonwealth Scholars from the School of Medicine, Drs. Deborah Davis Winders and Scott Duncan.

Parent Power Project: An Exploratory Study of Black Parents Experiences with Social Service Providers



Aishia Brown PhD

Dr. Aishia Brown and graduate research assistants Tanisha Howard and Nicole Ford are working in partnership with Play Cousins Collective, a local non-profit organization in Louisville focused on building strong support systems around Black parents and their children to conduct a study examining experiences Black parents have with social service providers in Louisville. The study employs Critical Race Theory and the framework of Intersectionality to examine how Black parents navigate barriers experienced while accessing social service providers such as pediatricians, teachers, counselors, social workers, and police officers. This study also examines how Black parents are accessing services during the COVID-19 global pandemic and uprisings occurring as a response to the murder of Breonna Taylor in Louisville. Results from the study will be used to inform a Parent Resource Guide and Directory being developed by Play Cousins Collective and trainings for parents and social workers. Graduate research assistant, Nicole Ford, disseminated study findings at the 2021 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo.

The research team and Play Cousins Collective staff hosted a social work review report out meeting on Friday, November 12, 2021 to develop action steps and strategies to address the most pressing issues experienced by Black parents in Louisville. These action steps and strategies will be implemented in 2022 and beyond.



EVALUATIONS

Food Literacy Project Evaluation



The Food Literacy Project (FLP) provides farm-based experiential education and entrepreneurial youth development programs that bring the Field-to-Fork experience to life for local youth. Commonwealth scholars Drs. Aishia Brown and Kristi King, along with graduate research assistant Shakeyah Elmore, led program evaluation efforts for the Food Literacy Project. The goal of the evaluation was to assess the impact Food Literacy Project activities and programs have on the community they serve. The evaluation assessed the programmatic impacts of FLP's Youth Community Agriculture Program using photovoice methods. Results from the photovoice project showed that the agricultural farm-based experiential education curriculum influences youth's ability to recognize and engage in forms of social action that attempt to address the structural inequities surrounding

food justice, food access, and food sovereignty. Below is a photo from the photovoice project that shows how youth conceptualize issues of food justice in Louisville.

"Cheated"

Watermelon: This was the inside of a Taco Bell by St. Matthews it was the best one I had ever seen. The Taco Bell I go to, there's trash outside, the trash inside, the trash cans filling up. You can tell that there's not money put into the Taco Bell in my neighborhood. YCAP has made me think more closely and into depth about how this isn't okay. Why is it so nice out here, and why can't we have the same things? I don't know. I guess there's just more money out in St. Matthews. We all know how pretty it is, and there's all these stores around there. There's a Whole Foods. I've never even been to a Whole Foods. Yeah. There's not a lot of black people, so...

Chico: Because basically white privilege.

Watermelon: I mean, it just angers me so much because I went in there, and I was like, "Wow. It's like so beautiful here." Why can't I say that in my own neighborhood? Why can't my neighborhood be beautiful too.



EVALUATIONS

Bridge Kids International Evaluation



Dr. Aishia Brown conducted a program evaluation for Bridge Kids International, a global non-profit organization helping young people of Africa and the African Diaspora unleash their social entrepreneurial spirits to solve challenges in economic development, education, environment, girls' rights, and health to build sustainable communities. This three year evaluation project focused on assessing the programmatic outcome of Bridge Kids' Seven Generation African Heritage Summer Camp. Results showed that youth enrolled in the summer camp increased their knowledge of African heritage history and cultural practices. Additionally, Dr. Brown found that youth participants also reported more confidence in their ability to express

themselves through multiple art forms. Results from the summer camp evaluation were presented at the 2020 American Camp Association Conference Annual Meeting.



EVALUATIONS

AdvancingCities



Susan Buchino, PhD, OTR/L

Drs. Susan Buchino and Gabe Jones, along with CIK graduate research assistant Kaila Washington, serve as the local evaluators for Louisville's *AdvancingCities* grant. The three-year funding, offered by JPMorgan Chase & Co, was awarded to Metro United Way and seven partner organizations to offer technology and career training, post-secondary student success coaching, and financial literacy training. Partners also engage in outreach and make referrals to wraparound supports.

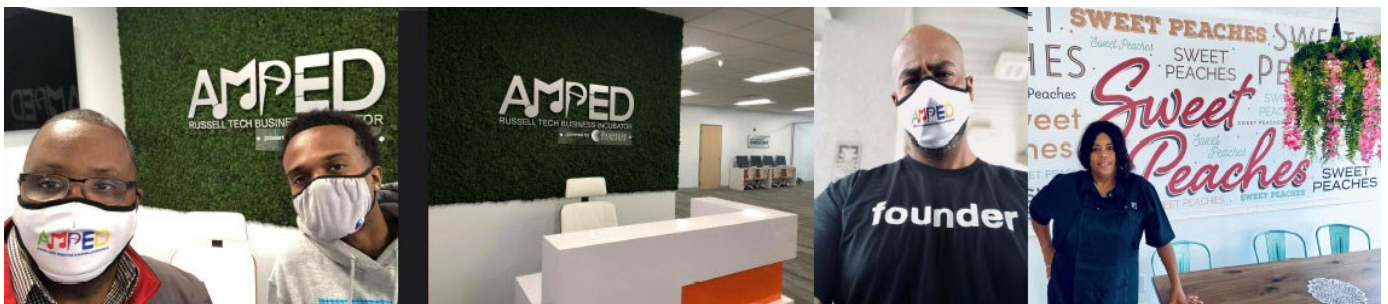
After a thoughtful program planning period, the project was fully launched in Spring 2020 and served 245 clients from six targeted neighborhoods by the end of its first grant year, March 30, 2020.

Since then, the community partner organizations, AMPED, Catholic Charities, Goodwill Industries, Evolve502, OneWest,

Russell: A Place of Promise, and Tech Louisville, have been dedicated and creative in continuing their services, despite restrictions on face-to-face interactions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most impressive outcomes of the project's first year, aside from the remarkable enrollment, has been the group's increased collaboration in service delivery, and how the partnership has led to the exploration of other opportunities for joint efforts and improved service to the Louisville community.

Russell Technology Business Incubator Evaluation

In early 2020, community partner AMPED launched the Russell Technology Business Incubator (RTBI), a program to support Black and Latinx entrepreneurs to grow their small businesses. RTBI, in part, is funded by The Rockefeller Foundation. Commonwealth Scholars Drs. Susan Buchino and Gabe Jones have been contracted to design and execute a full evaluation plan, examining the progress of founders, their businesses, and RTBI programming. In its inaugural year, RTBI has facilitated access to training, mentoring, and capital for 33 founders operating 30 businesses, who will conclude their year-long journey in February 2022. During this timeframe, 11 nascent businesses have established themselves, and the 14 businesses who were fully operational at the start of programming have increased revenue by an average of 6%. Additionally, founders have reported that their participation in coursework and the programming offered by RTBI has increased their confidence in their accounting, bookkeeping, and marketing skills.



Picture 1: AMPED Executive Director and Founder Dave W. Christopher Sr. and an RTBI walk in client. The young man is a student at Bellarmine University majoring in Business Management. **Picture 2:** Dave W. Christopher Sr. with RTBI cohort member LaVon Clack, President and CEO of the nonprofit youth program Prominent Youth of America. **Picture 3:** RTBI cohort member Pamela Haines, owner of Sweet Peaches restaurant.

STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Evaluation of the Performance Measures Alignment Committee (PMAC)



J'Aime Jennings, PhD



Christopher Johnson, PhD

In 2018, faculty members affiliated with the Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky and the Center for Health Organization Transformation (Dr. J'Aime Jennings, Principal Investigator, and Dr. Chris Johnson, Co-Principal Investigator) contracted with the Kentucky Department of Medicaid Services (KY DMS) on a State-University Partnership project. The CHOT Program Manager and graduate research assistants also participated in the completion of the project.

This two-year study focused on evaluating the readiness of health systems in Kentucky, as well as KY DMS, to implement core quality measures as outlined by the Performance Measures Alignment Committee. Further, the study set out to gain a better understanding of provider readiness for value-based purchasing (VBP) incentives within Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) contracts and to offer KY DMS a comprehensive view of factors to consider in its VBP efforts.

In Year 1, the research team critically reviewed a survey of health providers across Kentucky that was previously administered by KY DMS. A series of suggested amendments to future iterations of the survey and additional statistical analyses of the current results were provided to assist in further assessing enabling factors and barriers to providers' participation in value-based purchasing. In Year 2, the research team interviewed Medicaid MCO Medical Directors and associated team members, as well as DMS officials regarding their organizations' ability to implement new core quality measures. Information from these interviews were used to identify the strengths and resource needs of each organization and their provider network as it relates to the tracking and reporting of core quality measures. Then, a SWOT analysis was conducted and a series of suggested actions were presented that may serve as solutions to overcoming some of the identified weaknesses and threats to VBP participation throughout Kentucky. Considering successful value-based purchasing programs in other states, the project culminated in the research team offering strategic recommendations for KY DMS to consider as it pursues value-based purchasing in the future. A final report was provided to KY DMS that contains all of the deliverables described within this summary.



STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Type 2 Diabetes among Medicaid Beneficiaries in Kentucky

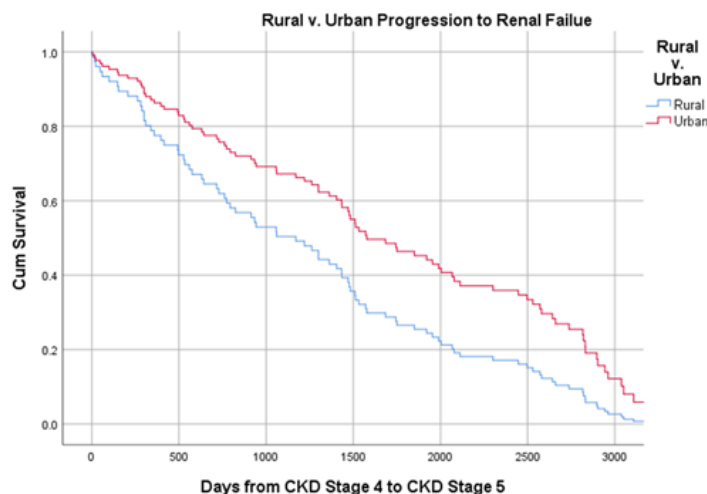


Bert Little, PhD and Giang Vu, PhD

Drs. Bert Little and Giang Vu concluded their work on the *Type 2 Diabetes among Medicaid Beneficiaries in Kentucky* project. They constructed a longitudinal data warehouse and used predictive analytics to identify type 2 diabetes patients who are at high risk of developing renal failure or developing peripheral artery disease (PAD) that results in limb amputation. Identification of high-risk patients enables patient navigators to develop individual disease management plans (i.e., personalized medicine) that help patients and caregivers take protective action years ahead of the end stage disease outcomes (renal failure, amputation). This novel approach to identification of high-risk type 2 diabetes patients can save medical costs, improve population health, and enhance individual quality of life.

One of the major findings of this project was the significant difference in disease progression of diabetes patients progressing to renal failure depending on whether they reside and receive treatment in urban versus rural areas of the state. This prompted researchers to

augment their longitudinal data warehouse by including social determinants of health data indicators to identify patients most at risk of diseases progression, and in identifying more intense chronic disease management plans to help implement by patient navigators. Starting in July 2020, Drs. Little and Vu began a new State University Partnership project that will incorporate social determinants of health data in the predictive analytics model. This will enhance the personalized medicine approach to chronic disease management that is possible from Medicaid claims data, and achieve the ‘holy grail’ of improved health at a reduced cost.



STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky scholars engaged in five 2-year State University partnership projects starting in fiscal year 2021.

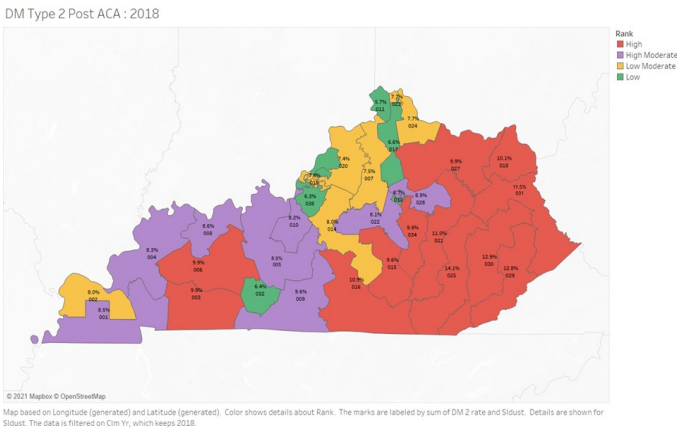
Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

In fiscal year 2021, Dr. Little and Dr. Vu continued their work that explores the incidence of Type II Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) and its complications among Medicaid beneficiaries. Their current research aims to show the detailed geo-spatial data distribution of type 2 diabetes (T2DM) and its complications across Senate Districts in Kentucky. This will help policy makers at the state level understand the problems they may be able to work on in their home districts.

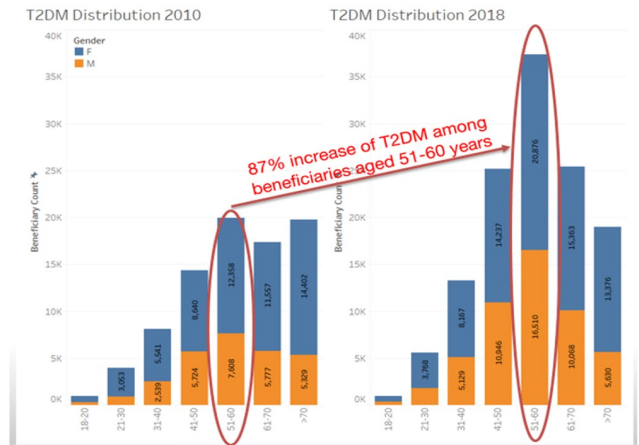
Preliminary results indicate geographic distribution of T2DM and its five major complications (nephropathy, diabetic heart disease (indicator = heart attack), peripheral artery disease, diabetic retinopathy, neuropathy). The comparison of data available for 2010 and 2018 has revealed a 87% increase in the incidence of T2DM for the 51 to 60 age group, as well as an alarming increase in co-morbidities, specifically with regard to myocardial infarction, retinopathy, and neuropathy. On the other hand, data also showed a 46% decrease in chronic kidney disease in 2018 compared to 2010 in the 70 years and older (i.e., dual eligible beneficiaries) age-group.

Diabetes and Oral Health in Kentucky Medicaid

Prevalence of T2DM in 2018 by Senate District



Prevalence of T2DM among Medicaid Beneficiaries: 2010 v. 2018



Besides studying the geo-spatial distribution of T2DM among Medicaid beneficiaries, Drs. Vu and Little have also engaged in a study that analyzes the association between oral health and systemic disease among Medicaid Beneficiaries who have type 2 diabetes (T2DM).

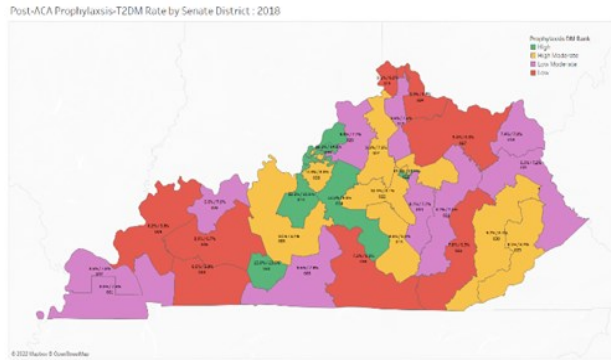
Their findings indicate that use of dental prophylaxis by Medicaid Beneficiaries who have type 2 diabetes (T2DM) is lower than in the general non-diabetic population by 2-3%. On average, the uptake of dental services is low at 9%, while the highest number was 12% in several counties. Dental prophylaxis is inversely related to tooth extraction and periodontitis distributions because where prophylaxis is higher, rates of these dental complications is lower.

They study revealed a very strong correlation between lack of dental prophylaxis and the risk of myocardial infarction (MI). Specifically, results indicate that the lack of dental prophylaxis increased the risk of MI by 200%, and tooth extraction increased the risk of MI by 7%. Preliminary results, still under study, indicate a similar possible correlation for COPD, asthma, pneumonia, stroke, and other medical conditions.

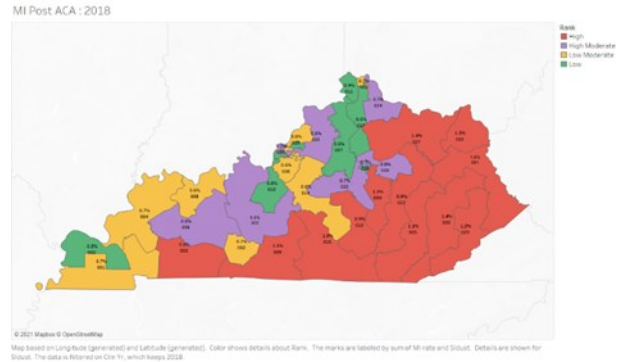


STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Dental Prophylaxis among T2DM



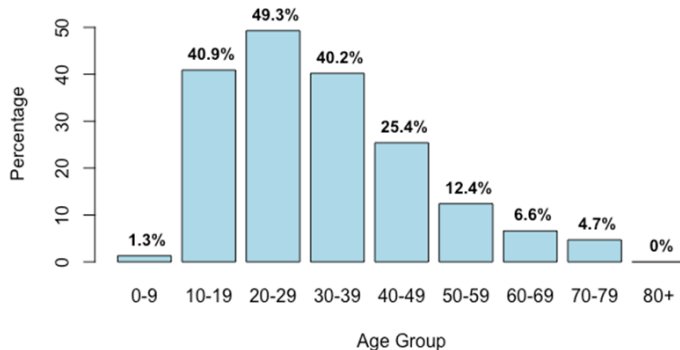
MI among T2DM



The red/magenta districts on the left indicate the lowest rates of dental prophylaxis uptake among T2DM beneficiaries. The red/magenta districts on the right indicate the highest rates of MI (Figure 11B). Visually, the concordance between low uptake of dental prophylaxis and high frequency of MI is qualitatively apparent.

Barriers to Treatment of Hepatitis C in Medicaid Beneficiaries

Opioid Use and/or Dependence: Acute and Chronic HCV Patients



Researchers at the School of Public Health have also studied the detailed geo-spatial data distribution of Hepatitis C across Senate Districts in Kentucky. Results of this study will help policy makers at the state level understand the problems they may be able to work on in their home districts.

The study revealed that Hepatitis C prevalence has nearly tripled from 2010 to 2018, increasing from 1.3% to 2.96% during this time period. The range of prevalence between Medicaid Regions is between 1.71% to 4.67%. Senate and House Districts that are in the east (Mountain) and the west (Jackson

Purchase) have the highest rates of Hepatitis C in the State. The US national rate of Hepatitis C is approximately 1%, which means that Kentucky rates are about three times higher than the national average.

Disease positivity has been inversely related to the rate of Hepatitis C testing. With direct acting antivirals (DAAs) now available to Medicaid beneficiaries, it is practical to screen those with at least one risk factor (i.e., IV drug use, sex with an IV drug user, opiate use).

Previously it was cost prohibitive to offer curative DAA treatment, but in recent years the cost of offering treatment has decreased to about one tenth of the prior cost. Consequently, policy changes that followed the cost decrease have made it possible to treat Hepatitis C infection curatively rather than only offering palliative or symptom treatment.

Kentucky Medicaid is currently making huge forward strides in treating Hepatitis C. Barriers to offering DAA treatment have been removed along with administrative barriers (i.e., prior authorization). Treatment of Hepatitis C has been steadily increasing in Kentucky. More screening options would help identify more infected persons and with increased rates of treatment, a full control of the Hepatitis C epidemic is possible.



STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Alcohol Use Disorder: Its Risk Factors, Comorbidity, and Long-term Care Cost



Maiying Kong, PhD

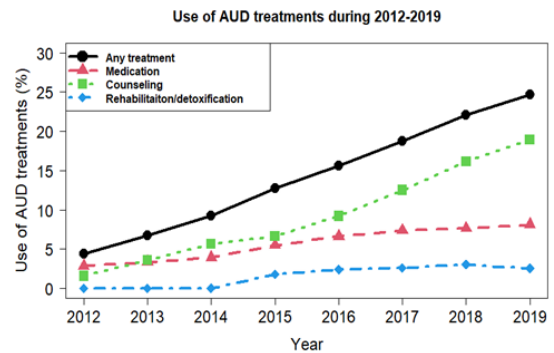
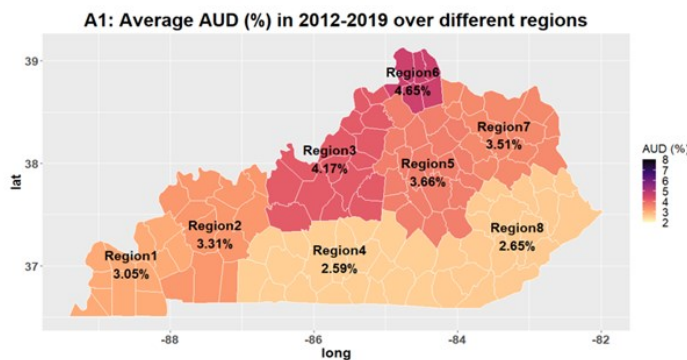


Karunarathna B. Kulasekera, PhD

Drs. Maiying Kong and K.B. Kulasekera worked on *Alcohol Use Disorder: Its Risk Factors, Comorbidity, and Long-term Care Cost*. They first constructed yearly patient-level data, where ICD-9-CM and ICD-10-CM codes were used to identify patients with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) and their comorbid conditions. National Drug Codes were used to identify medication treatments, and procedure codes were used to identify psychosocial and behavioral therapies.

They were able to identify the factors which were significantly associated with AUD cases as well as mental illnesses (depression and anxiety), and identify the factors associated with treatment utilization. Drs. Kong and Kulasekera also constructed a longitudinal data warehouse and used modern causal inference tool and predictive analytics to identify treatment effects for AUD as well as risk factors for patients not getting treatment. They also identified risk factors for patients for developing deleterious health outcomes, such as alcohol associated liver diseases, from AUD. Identification of high-risk patients enables patient navigators to develop individual disease management plans (i.e., personalized medicine) that help patients and caregivers take protective action years ahead of the deleterious health outcomes.

The major findings of this project were that (1) the prevalence of AUD trended up over years and showed a significant geographic variation, and that (2) treatment utilization for AUD was trended up but was still lower than 25%, even in 2019. We plan to use the longitudinal data to evaluate treatment efficacy and develop personalized treatment options for patients with AUD. We also intend to investigate risk factors for patients not getting treated and risk factors for patients to develop deleterious health outcomes from AUD.



STATE UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Kentucky Medicaid Market Changes and Utilization and Cost of Care for Beneficiaries with Chronic Diseases



Seyed Karimi, PhD

Dr. Karimi is the Principal Investigator of a project that aims to measure the effect of changes in the Kentucky Medicaid market on the utilization of care for beneficiaries with three high-cost chronic conditions: cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. Co-investigators of this project are Drs. Bert Little, Giang Vu, Michael Goldsby. Naiya Patel and Hamid Zarei are the project's graduate research assistants.

In the 2010s, the State of Kentucky fundamentally changed the structure of the delivery of health care services to Medicaid beneficiaries. It terminated the traditional fee-for-service Medicaid program named KenPAC/PCCM (Kentucky Patient Access and Care/Primary Care Case Management) and started outsourcing Medicaid health care services to private health insurance companies (aka, managed care organizations or MCOs) in all Kentucky regions. The state paid the MCOs on a capitation basis, and the MCOs were responsible for organizing providers' networks and arranging the delivery of care.

In this study, the researchers follow adult Medicaid beneficiaries with one of the three chronic diseases over time and assess changes in their medical care utilization in response to changes in the Medicaid program, notably, the expansion of Medicaid managed care to the state level in 2011. By relying on longitudinal data and a difference-in-difference research design, they attempt to isolate market-induced factors from individual-specific factors (e.g., individuals' underlying health status and unobserved socioeconomic characteristics) and state-specific time-varying factors.

Their preliminary/descriptive results show that, in comparison to Region 3 (where no Medicaid market change occurred during 2010–2013), the introduction of for-profit MCOs to other regions in 2011 was correlated with a decrease in the utilization of ambulatory medical services among all Medicaid beneficiaries. The introduction of for-profit MCOs in 2011 was not correlated with a decrease in the hospitalizations claims among Medicaid beneficiaries. The results of this preliminary analysis confirm this study's statistical identification strategy. This descriptive analysis can be significantly improved by concentrating on the utilization of care by beneficiaries with the chronic diseases of interest—cancer, health disease, and diabetes.

The results of this study will help the State of Kentucky identify Medicaid market changes that will lower costs without negatively affecting health and close gaps in utilization. Hence, the state can predict the budget consequences of future changes in the Medicaid managed care program.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Projecting COVID-19 Hospitalizations and Deaths for Kentucky Regions

Background

From April 2020, Dr. Seyed Karimi has led a team of interdisciplinary researchers at the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS) to analyze and project COVID-19 trends in the City of Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky. The other core members of the team are Drs. Bert Little, Paul McKinney, Natalie DuPre, and Riten Mitra. The team, joined by other SPHIS faculty and numerous graduate and undergraduate students, has developed novel pandemic models and projected COVID-19 deaths and hospitalizations for Jefferson County, Kentucky, in five different technical reports. In their [latest report](#), COVID-19 hospitalizations in the county were projected under scenarios of vaccination for 5 to 11 year old children. They also conducted three observational surveys of mask use behavior in the county at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic from November 2020 to January 2021. The results of the first two surveys were published in the University of Louisville Journal of Respiratory Infections ([link to the article](#)) and PLOS ONE ([link to the article](#)). The team's web page address is <https://louisville.edu/sphis/research/covid-19-projections>, where all their works can be found.

Collaborations with the State of Kentucky

In June 2020, Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) requested collaboration between the state and the SPHIS COVID-19 research team to explore modeling COVID-19 trends for regions of Kentucky's hospital preparedness program (HPP). In July 2020, a joint working team with the CHFS was formed and started to work on projecting COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths for Kentucky HPP Region 4, a group of ten counties in southern Kentucky that included the City of Bowling Green (Approximated 2020 population of the region was 309,000). At that time, the sharply increasing COVID-19 hospitalization in the region was suspected to reach the region's hospitalization capacity. The team analyzed COVID-19 transmission and clinical dynamics, mobility trends, and mask-wearing status in the region and constructed a COVID-19 epidemic model. The model was used to project COVID-19 hospitalizations under scenarios of potential changes in population mobility and mask-wearing behavior. The projection report was published in August 2020 ([link to the first report](#)).

The team's collaboration with the CHFS led to two other reports in which the team projected the impact of a set of [targeted COVID-19 protection measures](#) implemented by the Kentucky Governor in mid-November 2020 on COVID-19 hospitalization trends in three Kentucky regions where hospitalizations were sharply increasing: Region 2 (population 374,030; eleven counties western including the City of Owensboro), Region 3 (population 1,286,637; fifteen counties including the City of Louisville), and Region 4 (population 308,919; ten southern counties including the City of Bowling Green). The projections reports were published in November 2020 ([link to the second report](#); [link to the third report](#)).

Health Policy Impacts

The team's projections have informed public health policymaking at county and state levels and have been referred to by the state officials in their press conferences. For example, Dr. Steven Stack, the Commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH), [extensively discussed](#) the team's November 2020 projections for Kentucky Region 3 in Kentucky Governor's COVID-19 press briefing. In the following table, the technical projection reports for Kentucky regions are listed.

COVID-19 Projections' for the State of Kentucky			
#	Date Published	Title	Link
1	August 24, 2020	Projecting COVID-19 Deaths and Hospitalizations for Region 4 of the Kentucky Regional Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Coalition from August 18 to October 17, 2020	Link
2	November 24, 2020	Projecting COVID-19 Hospitalizations and Deaths for Region 3 of the Kentucky Regional Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Coalition	Link
3	November 30, 2020	Projecting COVID-19 Hospitalizations for Regions 2, 3, and 4 of the Kentucky Regional Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) Coalition during the Implementation of the State's "Targeted Measures"	Link

COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

SNAP! Photovoice Project with Office of Safe and Health Neighborhoods Youth Implementation Team

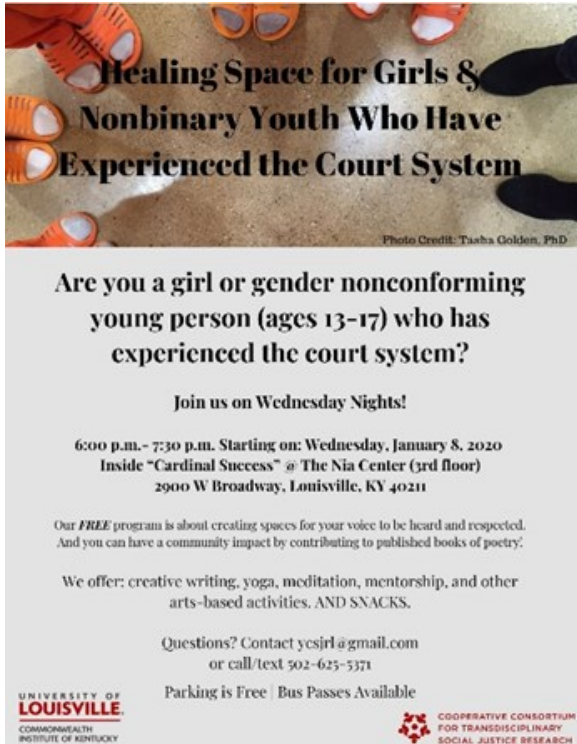
Dr. Aishia Brown along with researchers from the University of Louisville's Departments of Criminal Justice and Fine Arts partnered with the Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer's Youth Implementation Team (YIT) housed in the Office of Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods to investigate youth team members' views and perceptions of their Louisville neighborhoods. The research team taught the youth some of the key elements of photography and then tasked the youth with photographing elements of their neighborhood that were important to them (e.g., people, places, objects). Next, the youth selected a small number of photographs, wrote captions for them, and discussed them in either a one-on-one interview or focus group setting. The research team has used the photographs, captions, interviews, and focus groups to identify a series of themes that emerged. These themes include a range of neighborhood features that were relevant to the participants, including racism, violence, hopes and aspirations, and education.

A next step for the research team was to display the photographs and captions in a mobile gallery inside of a converted moving truck. As part of this gallery, there was a planned reception to which all of the youth photographers were to be invited along with leaders from the city and members of the public. The goal was to provide an opportunity for the young people's voices to be heard by the individuals with the most say in determining the structure and policies pertaining to youth violence. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 the mobile gallery and reception was cancelled. The research team is now making plans to transition this to a virtual gallery.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Radical Healing Project (formerly known as Youth Detention Services Programming)



As part of our ongoing research to advance well-being, safety, and health equity in Louisville, faculty and students from UofL have collaborated with Project Uncaged, Sarabande Books, UofL's Cardinal Success Program, and Louisville's Youth Detention Services (YDS) to provide programming for justice-involved girls while advocating for policies that enhance resources for this population. This multi-faceted project has received funds from the Collaborative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research in both 2018 and 2019.

Founded by CIK's own Dr. Tasha Golden, Project Uncaged offers a trauma-informed creative writing workshop designed specifically for girls in youth detention. The workshop schedule includes special events inside YDS to which facility staff and select community leaders are invited to celebrate girls' creativity and effort. Poems written throughout 2018 were published in an anthology, *One Day I'll Rise*, available for purchase from Sarabande Books, and were read aloud and set to music by local artists in an event open to the public in order to amplify girls' voices in local discourses. As an HSC Health and Social Justice Scholar and with the support of CIK faculty, Dr. Golden

measured outcomes of the program by examining links between creative expression and trauma symptoms. She also offered the course to UofL students, Art for Health and Social Justice, in the 2018 fall semester.

In 2019 and 2020, Dr. Aishia Brown worked to expand the program due to the closing of the detention center in December 2019. The goal was to program outside the walls of YDS for girls who have experienced detention in the past. Hosted at the Cardinal Success Program at the Nia Center, the weekly workshops include a variety of art forms, opportunities to learn about ways to cope during stressful time, and guest speakers who presented community resources and offer discussions on topics the girls have said were important to them. Unfortunately, this program came to a halt as a result of COVID-19. However, a policy brief was developed to identify strategies to support girls in detention in Louisville. Additionally, *The One Day I'll Rise* will be sent to policy makers, as the authors' words should inform future decisions—helping all of us reach our goals of healthier city and state.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Professional Health Care Chaplaincy: Exploring Efficacy and Strategizing Future Directions

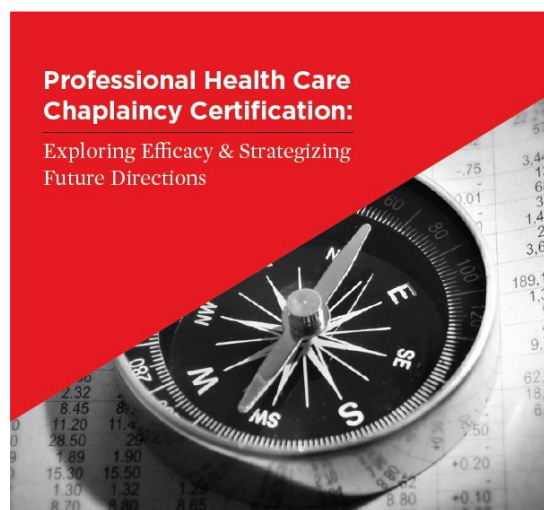


Ryan Combs, PhD



Kelsey White, PhD

The National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) and the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC) commissioned the Center for Health Organization Transformation (CHOT) at UofL SPHIS to research the current state of chaplaincy board certification. The Principal Investigator, Dr. Ryan Combs, and graduate students Kelsey White, Renae Johnson, and Imisha Gurung conducted a cross-sectional, observational, qualitative study to understand the strengths and challenges of the current chaplaincy certification processes. Interviews were conducted with chaplains who have applied for certification, who have served on certification committees, who have experience of the competencies required, as well as spiritual care department managers. The research team wrote up their findings in a report and, in April 2020, delivered their recommendations in a webinar for NACC and APC leadership.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Embrace the Journey: A study and campaign to improve LGBTQ Adolescent Health in Louisville

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) adolescents are more visible than ever but face stark health disparities due to factors such as social stigma, abuse, and inadequate access to health care. From 2017-19, Dr. Ryan Combs led a team of faculty colleagues and graduate researchers to conduct research to understand the health issues affecting local LGBTQ adolescents, determine the barriers to, and facilitators of, good health, and develop an intervention to improve their health. First, the research team conducted a mixed-methods study with LGBTQ youth and adult stakeholders. LGBTQ adolescents, ages 13-18, took a survey that asked about their identities, health experiences, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Then they took part in focus groups on their health and social environments. Adult stakeholders such as parents, educators, health care/mental health providers, and social workers were interviewed to explore health beliefs, experiences, knowledge, and local priorities. The study found that mental health is the most pressing concern for LGBTQ youth. To address this issue, the research team collaborated with Louisville Youth Group, Louisville Metro Public Health & Wellness, and other local stakeholders to develop a health communication campaign on LGBTQ adolescent mental health. This campaign, targeting parents of LGBTQ youth, was entitled *Embrace the Journey*. It was featured on electronic billboards, print ads, and social media. The campaign directed parents to a website, embracethejourneylou.org, which contained resources to help them support their LGBTQ children. The campaign was launched at Louisville Pride in fall 2019 and ran through late November.

Study Partners

Faculty: Dr. Ryan Combs (Public Health); Dr. Maurice Gattis (Social Work); Dr. Amber Pendelton (Pediatrics); Dr. Kendall Purcell (Pediatrics)

Students: Hallie Decker, Taylor Young, Kamau TiQi Brown, Tristan Riley

Community Partners: Louisville Metro Public Health & Wellness; Louisville Youth Group; JCPS LGBTQ Student Support Subcommittee; TSTAR; PFLAG; UofL Bayard Rustin LGBT and Social Justice Themed Living Community



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth are at higher risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide. **Supportive parents greatly reduce this risk.**

Learn how to support your child at:

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PUBLIC HEALTH
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Examining HIV-related Stigma and HIV Testing Among Formerly Incarcerated African American Youth



Jelani Kerr, PhD

In 2020, the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Mental Health awarded Dr. Jelani Kerr a \$643,160 grant that examines HIV vulnerability among African Americans young adults (age 18-24). Despite declining HIV rates nationally, African American communities continue to experience high HIV burden and account for the largest share of HIV-related deaths in the United States. African American youth with a history of incarceration are at heightened HIV risk. Early detection among this group is critical for linkage to prevention and care services, improving survival prospects, and reducing racial disparities in HIV. Despite the benefits of testing, HIV-related stigma remains a significant barrier to timely HIV diagnosis.

This study explores the impact of various stigmas (HIV-related stigma, justice system-involvement stigma, sexual and gender minority stigma) impacts HIV testing behavior. Online data survey collection is ongoing. The study will illuminate how various factors related to justice system involvement, HIV education, and sexual and drug use behavior may impact uptake of HIV testing services. The results of this study will be used to help develop interventions to improve HIV programming and testing for formerly incarcerated African American youth.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

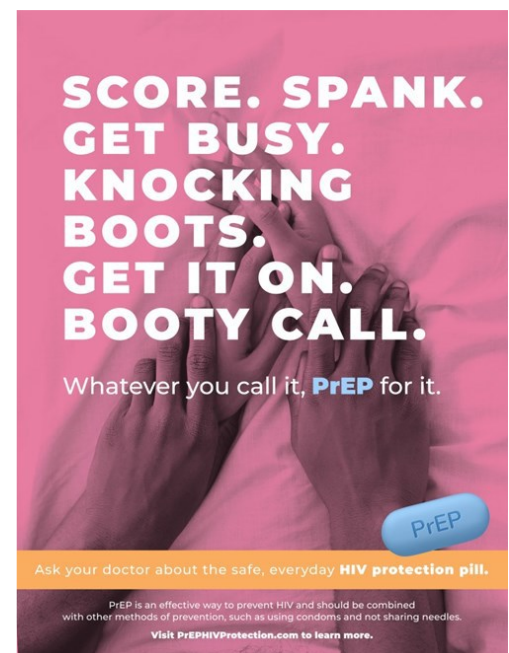
Increasing Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis among High-risk African Americans in Louisville, KY

Between 2017 - 2020, the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence has supported a CIK project led by Dr. Jelani Kerr. The project focuses on increasing access, awareness, and uptake of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) among priority populations in Louisville. PrEP is a prescription drug that helps reduce risk of HIV infection by over 90% when taken consistently. Although PrEP has been around since 2012, the people who are among the most affected by HIV in the United States (African American young adults) are not getting the benefit of it. This project attempts to address this by 1) providing PrEP education to medical providers, 2) creating initiatives to assist AIDS service organizations (ASO) with outreach, and 3) developing a multimedia campaign to in-crease PrEP awareness. The media campaign lasted for six months and included social media (Facebook, Instagram), internet radio (Spotify ads) digital media (Google ads), a website (prepHIVprotection.com), and print media (billboards, Tarc ads). The print and digital media were designed promote the website, which in turn, could link people to PrEP providers. This study team also participated in a number of outreach activities like health fairs, house balls, and podcasts during this period. Media and outreach strategies were developed based on results of eleven focus groups with African American young adults (age 18-29).

Over 80 medical providers received training on PrEP. Surveys with 204 African American young adults show an in-crease in PrEP awareness from 38% to 91% over the study period. Participants also observed a 15% increase in PrEP messaging from ASOs. It should be noted that multiple PrEP campaigns were occurring during this time. PrEP awareness increased during the period of this study from 40% to 92%. At least 80% of participants held a favorable view of this PrEP campaign and of those. Individuals with a favorable view of the campaign were also more likely to report intention to use PrEP. There were approximately 4300 page views of the website and 81 people actively sought PrEP after website visitation.



From left to right: graduate assistants Kelsey Burton, Frances Mican, Suur Ayangeakaa, and Nana Ama Aya Bullock.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Louisville Metro Homeless Services Evaluation

Following the CIK-sponsored report, *Solving Street Homelessness in Louisville, KY: Improving the Climate of Care for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness*, Louisville Metro Government allotted \$1M to new homeless services in both the FY20 and FY21 budgets. The original nine programs awarded funding aligned with the recommendations the UofL team made in the report. Additionally, Dr. Susan Buchino, along with Dr. Kelly Kinahan, Assistant Professor in the Department of Urban and Public Affairs, and Dr. Lora Haynes, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, were contracted to evaluate the funded programs and their impact on houselessness in Louisville.

Through the Homeless Initiative Recipient Model, participating organizations have provided services to an average of 3,000 individuals (approximately 2,700 households) each year. The services offered have filled in programmatic gaps that were not eligible for other funding streams, and thus have eliminated some of the many barriers to shelter and permanent housing that the houseless population faces. Additionally, the model has tightened the collaboration among the providers and Louisville Metro's Office of Resilience and Community Services and the Coalition for the Homeless as they collectively work to reduce the number of Louisvillians living on the streets. The UofL team will continue to evaluate the programs in the upcoming fiscal year.

Louisville's Alternative Responder Model: Research and Design

Research tells us that health disparities are exacerbated when emergency response resources (e.g., police, fire, EMS) are deployed to serve Louisville residents who have chronic needs related to behavioral health, homelessness, or other basic needs, when these needs could be effectively met, and should be addressed by, specialists who can de-escalate immediate crises and link individuals to the services and resources they need. In contract with Louisville Metro Government, CIK has convened a multidisciplinary team consisting of the Kentucky Department of Behavioral Health, Development and Intellectual Disabilities; Spalding's School of Social Work; Seven Counties Services; and community members that has collectively identified as Diversion Options: Voice and Empowerment (DOVE) Delegates to assess the feasibility and actual development an alternative response model that appropriately meets the need of Louisville's residents. This process included a review of police deflection activities in other U.S. communities; a series of interviews and focus groups with community members, behavioral health providers, and Metro Government leaders; observations of Louisville Metro Police Department responses to 911 calls that could potentially be deflected and activities in the MetroSafe 911 Call Center; and an extensive review of MetroSafe 911 data. A Community Advisory/Accountability Board also met routinely to provide oversight and recommendations to the research and planning that has occurred. The CIK team included Commonwealth Scholars Drs. Susan Buchino, Liza Creel, Seyed Karimi, and Brian Schaefer; Dr. Tony Zipple, a SPHIS Executive in Residence; and graduate assistant Heather Ness. Following final recommendations in Fall 2021, the project will move into an implementation phase in FY22.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Youth Violence Prevention Research Center (YVPRC)

The Youth Violence Prevention Research Center (YVPRC) concluded its social norming campaign activities at the end of 2019. Since then, a primary focus of this project year has been finalizing data collection, analyzing data, and disseminating findings to stakeholders. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the center's ability to engage as planned this spring, however, unique opportunities arose that allowed for the center's campaign message to be front and center, despite setbacks. The national and local racial unrest



surrounding the murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, once again, highlighted the realities of structural violence, the relationship between structural and interpersonal violence, and the need for institutional-level change. YVPRC's 2019 campaign focused on this explicitly, preventing youth violence from the perspective of structural risk and protective factors, where youth were intentionally addressing structural violence that happens against them and how it facilitates the everyday violence that we all see. Seeing this as an opportunity to be social agents of change for the community, the YVPRC Louisville Youth Voices against Violence (LYVV) organized and responded both locally and nationally.

In partnership with the Office for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods (OSHN) Youth Implementation Team and other youth in the city, the LYVV Fellows used their power to galvanize change. They formed the Louisville Youth Coalition and have planned and executed a virtual youth conference platform, known as 502Con. With this platform, they have been able to engage with several local and national community and civic leaders to discuss the unrest and how best to create change with youth voice centered in the strategic planning. The LYVV Fellows have also organized and executed protests, utilizing all mediums to cultivate the conversations around the necessity of addressing structural violence. YVPRC has been of assistance to many organizations over the spring, helping to strategize and provide data for utilization in current intervention developments.

The center was also awarded supplemental funding for a 6th year. Since its inception, YVPRC has focused on structural violence against youth as a root cause of violence among youth. When initially funded in 2015, YVPRC's community-level intervention began with a 3-year media campaign to build positive racial identity and critical consciousness among Black youth and elevate a counternarrative across the entire community about Black youth. This campaign catalyzed a critical community dialogue about systemic racism and its effects on Black youth and their families.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

The national and local protests and demonstrations regarding the teaching of Critical Race Theory and accurate accounts of history, further highlighted the realities of structural violence, racism, and the need for educational reform. Seeing this as an opportunity to be social agents of change for the community, the YVPRC Louisville Youth Voices against Violence (LYVV) organized and responded both locally and nationally. Organizing and compiling information both locally and throughout the Commonwealth, the youth are critically engaging and cultivating conversations around the necessity of participatory approaches to increase awareness of, and dismantle white supremacist ideology and practice in public policy.

YVPRC has continued to be of assistance to many organizations across Louisville Metro by helping to strategize and provide data for utilization in current intervention developments. Since the conclusion of social norming campaign activities at the end of 2019, the primary focus of the research center has been to enhance the data analyses on data sets that were necessarily adapted in year five due to the pandemic, finalizing data collection, analyzing data, and disseminating findings to stakeholders.



COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Racism is a Public Health Crisis

In 2020, racism and its outcomes were magnified by COVID-19 and the ongoing issue of police killings of unarmed Black Americans. Resultantly, racism was central to some of the most popular local and national conversations that are still occurring; organizations including governments, financial corporations, and universities are attempting to facilitate more than the traditional “lip service” used to placate grievances against racism. In 2018, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin marked the first time that a municipality declared racism as a public crisis. After the Minneapolis and Louisville Metro Police Departments respectively murdered George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in 2020, declarations were rapidly passed across the country.

On July 15, 2020, Trinidad Jackson, PhD(c), MS, MPH, researcher with YVPRC, petitioned Louisville Metro Council’s Community Affairs, Health, and Education Committee to declare racism as a public health crisis. He had a “special discussion” entitled *Kill Racism. Kill White Supremacy. Or Keep Killing Humanity* wherein he (1) defined and contextualized violence and racism, (2) presented local administrative and community-generated data that illustrated the evidence of racism’s impact, and (3) cited other jurisdictions’ declarations all to compel Louisville Metro to act with urgency in declaring, and more importantly, prioritizing critical actions to address the issue. On December 1, 2020, Louisville finally joined other jurisdictions across the country in making the overdue declaration. Louisville’s Metro Government’s initial plan includes goals for public safety, children and family support, Black employment, Black wealth, affordable housing, health impacts, and voter participation.



CIK GRADUATE ASSISTANTS 2020 AND 2021

Name	Degree Program / School	Department	Work advisor
Fiscal year 2020			
Nicole Ford	PhD / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Monica Wendel
Malea Hoepf-Young	PhD / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Susan Buchino/ Dr. Ryan Combs
Tanisha Howard	MPH / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Monique Ingram
Gabe Jones	PhD / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Monique Ingram
Nefertia Mason	MEd/ CEHD	Counseling & Human Development	Monique Ingram
Baraka Muvuka	PhD / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Ryan Combs
Deborah Niyongabo	PhD / SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Liza Creel
Karrie Quenichet	PhD / CEHD	Educational Leadership, Evaluation & Organizational Development	Dr. Monica Wendel/Monique Williams
Alice Story	MPH / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Monica Wendel
Giang Vu	PhD	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Bert Little
Diane Zero	PhD / Public Health	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Susan Buchino
Fiscal year 2021			
Diane Zero	PhD / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Susan Buchino/ Dr. Ryan Combs
Alice Story	MPH / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Monica Wendel
Anish Mukherjee	PhD / SPHIS	Bioinformatics & Biostatistics	Dr. Bert Little
Aravind Reddy Kothagadi	PhD/SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Bert Little
Deborah Niyongabo	PhD / SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Liza Creel
Diane Zero	PhD / Public Health	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Scott LaJoie
Huirong Hui	PhD / SPHIS	Bioinformatics & Biostatistics	Dr. Maiying Kong
Kaila Washington	MPH/SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Susan Buchino
Karrie Quenichet	PhD / CEHD	Educational Leadership, Evaluation & Organizational Development	Dr. Monica Wendel
Madeline Shipley	MPH/SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Liza Creel
Naiya Patel	PhD/SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Seyed Karimi
Nicole Ford	PhD / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Dr. Monica Wendel
Rameez UL Hassan	PhD/SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Bert Little
Shaminul Shakib	PhD/SPHIS	Health Management & Systems Sciences	Dr. Bert Little
Tanisha Howard	MPH / SPHIS	Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences	Monique Ingram
Yuchen Han	PhD / SPHIS	Bioinformatics & Biostatistics	Dr. Maiying Kong

CIK GRADUATE ASSISTANT HIGHLIGHTS

Diane Zero



During my time in the PhD program at the University of Louisville, I feel fortunate to have been part of the work at the Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky (CIK). During my time in the program, I had the opportunity to present my work at regional, national, and international conferences, including at the Society for the Study of Addiction Symposium in the United Kingdom, at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, at the Kentucky Public Health Association Creating Healthy, Resilient Communities Conference, and at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry .

Over the past year, I worked with Dr. Scott LaJoie as the Project Manager for an in-patient nurse training program to reduce stigmatizing beliefs towards patients with substance use disorders at Norton Hospital Downtown. We created a series of training vodcast modules and accompanying materials for each. In previous years, I had the opportunity to work with Dr. Buchino on the interdisciplinary project, Improving the

Climate of Care for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness. I assisted with conducting an evaluation for local government, and my work included a literature review of national best practices, an assessment of the continuum of care for homeless individuals, and a gap analysis on current services compared to best practices for working with this population.

I graduated in August 2021 and now work as a post doctorate researcher for Drs. Combs and LaJoie as the Project Coordinator for a NIH funded national vaccine hesitancy study. We are creating a decision aid for LGBTQ+ individuals to use when making Covid-19 vaccination decisions. I am thankful for the opportunity to work on CIK funded projects with Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences faculty over the past four years and for the research experience I received while part of CIK.

Deborah Niyongabo



During my assistantship with CIK, I worked alongside with Dr. Creel on two projects: the Mountain States Regional Genetics Network (MSRGN) project and the Louisville Metro Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) pilot project.

The MSRGN project which includes eight states Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming seeks to facilitate connections between families experiencing genetic conditions and health care services in Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs). As a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), I assisted Dr. Creel with conducting a case study, data entry and analysis. I also attended monthly meetings and annual conferences. At the beginning of this project, I was glad to learn that its objectives coincided with my research interests which are access to healthcare among the underserved populations.

CIK GRADUATE ASSISTANT HIGHLIGHTS

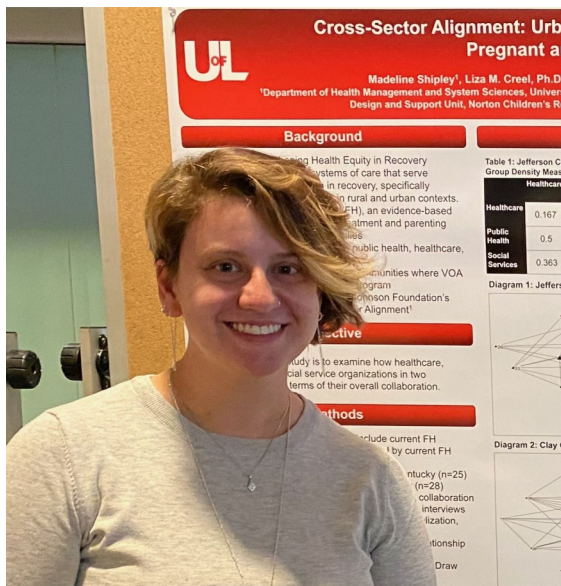
The LEAD pilot project consisted of redirecting individuals who suffer from a substance abuse addiction including opioids to community-based, harm-reduction organizations with the support of the police in the Russell and Portland neighborhoods. I assisted with literature reviews and attended meetings where I learned about the different proposed solutions to address the opioid problem at the community level.

I also had the opportunity to present posters at the American Public Health Association (APHA) in 2018, at the AcademyHealth conference in 2019, and at the upcoming virtual AcademyHealth conference in 2020.

Throughout my assistantship, I acquired quantitative, qualitative, teamwork, and leadership skills which will equip me for my future career as an independent researcher. I am grateful for this opportunity that I received as a PhD student and for my mentor Dr. Creel for making everything “look” easy especially during difficult times.

I am currently continuing my collaboration with Dr. Creel working as a Program Evaluator on a case study project for the Mountain States Regional Genetics Network (MSRGN). We are seeking to understand how the MSRGN state teams are designed and operate together with other state teams. I am also an adjunct faculty member for the Department of Healthcare Management at the College of Nursing and Health Studies (CONHS) at Colorado Technical University where I teach courses such as Introduction to IT in Healthcare and Global Systems.

Madeline Shipley



Being able to work as a GRA during my graduate school experience has given me the chance to work on two projects with Dr. Liza Creel (my PI) and engage with the coursework and strategies I’m learning in my classes. One project is analyzing cross-sector alignment among organizations that are serving pregnant and parenting women in recovery. My responsibilities have included data collection and even initial data analysis using social network analysis, which was completely new to me. I even got to present that initial data and results in a graduate student research symposium. Since COVID cut my undergraduate research experience short, and ultimately cancelled our final presentations, this was like my second chance to have that experience I missed out on.

I’m directly engaged with real-life research related to my field of study and career interest, which is public health and health policy, seeing what is being done

well and making suggestions for what could be done better. I even got to expand my own professional network as I’ve met people through the projects I am part of. I have enjoyed every minute of it and am grateful that it has helped me to perform well in my role as a student and how it will provide me with invaluable professional experience and connections for entering the job market as a new grad next year.



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COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARS

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Mollie E. Aleshire, D.N.P., M.S.N., assistant professor, DNP Project Coordinator, SON

Demetra (Dee) Antimisiaris, PharmD, BCGP, FASCP, associate professor, Dept of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Joseph Benitez, Ph.D., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Management & Policy, University of Kentucky

Craig Blakely, Ph.D., M.P.H., dean, SPHIS

Aishia Brown, Ph.D., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

Susan Buchino, Ph.D., OTR/L, assistant professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS; assistant director, Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky, SPHIS

Priya Chandan, M.D., M.P.H., Dept. of Neurosurgery, Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, School of Medicine

Ryan Combs, Ph.D., M.A., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

Liza M. Creel, Ph.D., M.P.H., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Scott Duncan, M.D., M.H.A., associate professor, associate director, Child & Adolescent Research Design & Support Unit; associate chief, director of clinical operations, Div. of Neonatal Medicine, Dept. of Pediatrics, School of Medicine

Jean Edward, Ph.D., R.N., C.H.P.E., assistant professor, College of Medicine, University of Kentucky

Michael Earl Egger, M.D., M.P.H., assistant professor, The Hiram C Polk Jr, Department of Surgery, Division of Surgical Oncology, SOM

Robert Esterhay, M.D., associate professor, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Clayton Tyler Ellis, M.D., M.S., adjunct assistant professor, Department of Epidemiology & Population Health, SPHIS; instructor of surgery, Colorectal Division, Hiram C. Polk Jr. MD Department of Surgery

José Fernandez, Ph.D., associate professor, Dept. of Economics, College of Business

Catherine Fosl, Ph.D., professor, Dept. of Women's and Gender Studies, College of Arts & Sciences; director, Anne Braden Institute; Co-Principal Investigator; Cooperative Consortium for Transdisciplinary Social Justice Research

Jeremy Gaskins, Ph.D., assistant professor, Dept. of Bioinformatics & Biostatistics, SPHIS

Martin Thomas Hall, Ph.D., M.S.S.W., assistant professor, Kent School of Social Work

Ghiyoung Im, Ph.D., M.S., associate professor, Department of Computer Information Systems

Vicki P. Hines-Martin, Ph.D., C.N.S., R.N., professor and director, Office of Health Disparities and Community Engagement, School of Medicine; director, Community Outreach, HSC Office of Diversity and Inclusion

J'Aime Jennings, Ph.D., M.P.A., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

V. Faye Jones, M.D., Ph.D., M.S.P.H., professor and assistant vice president for Health Affairs, Diversity initiatives, School of Medicine

Gabriel Jones, Ph.D., M.P.H., assistant professor, Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

Christopher Johnson, Ph.D., professor and chair, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Seyed Karimi, Ph.D., M.S., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Brandy Kelly Pryor, Ph.D., director, Center for Health Equity, LMPHW; assistant professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARS

Jelani Kerr, Ph.D., M.S.P.H., assistant professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

Kristi King, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.D.N., associate professor and program coordinator, Community Health, College of Education & Human Development

Maiying Kong, Ph.D., associate professor, Dept. of Bioinformatics & Biostatistics, SPHIS

Jing Li, M.D., M.S., assistant professor, Special Title Series, Dept. of Internal Medicine, University of Kentucky College of Medicine; administrative director, University of Kentucky Center for Health Services Research; deputy director, Office of Value and Innovation in Healthcare Delivery (OIHD), University of Kentucky HealthCare

Bert Little, Ph.D., professor, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Gilbert Liu, M.D., medical director, Kentucky Dept. of Medicaid Services; associate professor, Dept. of Pediatrics, School of Medicine

Cynthia Logsdon, Ph.D., professor, School of Nursing

Doug Lorenz, Ph.D., associate professor, Dept. of Bioinformatics & Biostatistics, SPHIS; director, the Statistical Consulting Center, SPHIS

W. Paul McKinney, M.D., associate dean for research; professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

Amanda Mitchell, Ph.D., M.Ed., assistant professor, Dept. of Counseling & Human Psychology, College of Education & Human Development

Sarah S. Moyer, M.D., M.P.H., Director, LMPHW; assistant professor, Dept. of Health Management & Systems Sciences, SPHIS

Elizabeth Munnich, Ph.D., assistant professor, Dept. of Economics, College of Business

Emily Noonan, Ph.D., M.A., research manager, Office of Undergraduate, Education and Research, SOM

Patrick Pössel, Dr. rer. Soc., Ph.D., professor, Dept. of Counseling and Human Development, College of Education & Human Development

Matthew Ruther, Ph.D., director, Kentucky State Data Center; assistant professor, Dept. of Urban & Public Affairs, College of Arts & Sciences

Brian Schaefer, Ph.D., assistant professor, Dept. of Criminology & Criminal Justice, Indiana State University

Michael Bradley Schuck, Ed.D., associate professor, Dept. of Educational Leadership, Evaluation, and Organizational Development, College of Education & Human Development

Michelle D. Stevenson, M.D., M.S., professor and chief, Division of Pediatric Emergency Medicine, Dept. of Pediatrics, School of Medicine

Janice Sullivan, M.D., professor, Dept. of Pediatrics, Pharmacology Research Unit, UofL; chief and medical director, Kosair Charities Pediatric Clinical Research Unit

Rui Z. Sundrup, Ph.D., M.S., assistant professor, Computer Information Systems, COB

Jeffrey Talbert, Ph.D., professor, Dept. of Pharmacy Practice & Science, University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy; director of Institute for Pharm. Outcomes and Policy; associate director, University of Kentucky Center for Clinical and Translational Science

Sara Watson, M.D., assistant professor, Dept. of Pediatrics, School of Medicine

Monica L. Wendel, Dr.P.H., M.A., associate dean for public health practice; associate professor, Dept. of Health Promotion & Behavioral Sciences, SPHIS

Deborah Winders Davis, Ph. D., professor, Dept. of Pediatrics, CAHRDS; School of Medicine; director, Louisville Twin Study

Marissa Ellen Yingling, Ph. D., M.S.W., assistant professor, Kent School of Social Work

CIK Executive Committee



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Grace Simrall, ME



Monica Wendel, DrPH, MA



CONTACT US

Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky

School of Public Health & Information Sciences
University of Louisville
485 E Gray Street
Louisville, KY 40202

Phone: (502) 852-8087

Fax: (502) 852-3291

E-mail: cik@louisville.edu

Website: louisville.edu/sphis

Link: [UL-Commonwealth Institute of Kentucky](#)

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