

FACT SHEET

AHRQ's Health Services Research Dissertation Grant Program

New Starts – Fiscal Year 2012

The mission of AHRQ is to improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care by:

- Using evidence to improve health care.
- Improving health care outcomes through research.
- Transforming research into practice.

Introduction

The mission of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is to improve the safety, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care for all Americans. To help achieve the Agency's mission, AHRQ supports extramural research grants and contracts, research training, conference grants, and intramural activities.

AHRQ is committed to fostering the next generation of health services researchers who will focus their time and expertise on some of the most important problems facing our Nation's health care system. An important component of this effort is AHRQ's dissertation research grant program, which provides 1-year awards to full-time predoctoral students enrolled in accredited research doctoral programs in the United States, including Puerto Rico and other U.S. Territories and possessions.

To qualify for dissertation awards, students must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents by the time of the grant award and must have completed

all of their pre-dissertation doctoral requirements by the time they submit a dissertation grant application.

This fact sheet provides brief descriptions of the 14 dissertation grant awards funded by AHRQ in fiscal year 2012. Each entry includes the project title, grantee's name and institution, his or her degree program, the grant number and project period, a short description, and the goal of the project.

Project Descriptions

Access to Care in Asian Americans: Assessing Determinants of Usual Source. Eva Chang, doctoral candidate in Health Services Research and Policy, Johns Hopkins University. AHRQ grant HS021079; project period September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013. This research will explore whether the determinants of usual source of care differ for Asian Americans with a specific focus on how acculturation and other predisposing and enabling resources impact usual source of care, and whether Asian American ethnicity influences the relationships of these



Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Advancing Excellence in Health Care • www.ahrq.gov

factors to a usual source of care. The goal of the project is to broaden the understanding of variations in access to care by assessing key determinants among Asian American adults.

Comparative Effectiveness of Group Prenatal Care on Women's

Psychosocial Health. Emily Heberlein, doctoral candidate in Public Health, Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior, University of South Carolina, Columbia. AHRQ grant HS021975; project period September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013. This research will investigate the psychosocial outcomes for women participating in group prenatal care, compared to individual prenatal care in a racially diverse, low-income and medically underserved population in South Carolina. The results of this research will support efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of prenatal care services in promoting positive birth outcomes, infant development, and maternal well-being.

The Effect of Specialty Tier Placement on Enrollment and

Utilization of Medicare. Erin Taylor, doctoral candidate in Health Economics, University of Pennsylvania. AHRQ grant HS021604; project period September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013. This project will use plan-level aggregate data and individual Part D claims data to examine the effect of specialty tier placement on enrollment and utilization decisions by Medicare beneficiaries as well as expenditures by both beneficiaries and plans. The results will provide additional information regarding the extent to which specialty tiers shift costs to patients, as well as whether Part D protects patients from very high spending.

Evaluation of a Patient-Centered Medical Home Pilot in New

Hampshire. Signe Flieger-Peterson, doctoral candidate in Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University. AHRQ grant HS021385; project period February 1, 2012 – May 31, 2013. This research will evaluate the New Hampshire Citizens Health Initiative Multi-Stakeholder Medical Home Pilot, a multipayer demonstration of the patient-centered medical home (PCMH) model in nine health care organizations in New Hampshire, to better understand if and how the PCMH model can improve quality and reduce costs. This study is an empirical evaluation of the process of practice redesign, and the impact of four key elements on utilization, costs, and quality – the PCMH itself, the level of medical homeness, site-level relational coordination, and organizational characteristics. The results of this study will offer insight into how the PCMH can be adapted in different contexts.

Evaluating Psychotropic Oversight on the Safety of Children in Foster

Care. Thomas Mackie, doctoral candidate in Health Management and Policy, Brandeis University. AHRQ grant HS021985; project period September 30, 2012 – December 31, 2013. This study proposes a national examination of state psychotropic medication oversight programs, both the policies (i.e., universal mental health evaluation, prior authorization, mandatory secondary opinion, and drug utilization reviews) adopted and organizational resources (i.e., interagency linkages and mental health expertise) deployed. The goal is to understand better whether these programs improve the safe use of psychotropic medications.

Hospital and County-Level Predictors of Immediate Breast Reconstruction Post-Mastectomy.

Catherine Richards, doctoral candidate in Epidemiology, Columbia University. AHRQ grant HS021709; project period September 30, 2012 – September 29, 2013. The proposed research is aimed at identifying the hospital- and county-level factors that influence the receipt of immediate post-mastectomy breast reconstruction. The results of this research project will inform policymakers about how to reform existing policies, such as the Federal Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998, in order to improve the access and utilization of breast reconstruction following mastectomy.

Impact of Health Information Technology and Quality of Patient

Care. Amanda Hessels, doctoral candidate in Nursing, Rutgers University. AHRQ grant HS021988; project period September 1, 2012 – December 31, 2013. This cross-sectional study will empirically examine levels of electronic health record (EHR) functionality and utilization and the association of EHRs with the delivery of nursing care. It will take into account a large number of patient characteristics as well as hospital characteristics including measures of nurse staffing and organizational climate. The results of this research project will contribute to a technology-based, multifaceted approach for reducing inpatient adverse events and enhancing patient satisfaction. The results should also assist key health care executives and policymakers in making decisions concerning valuable health care resources.

Latent Classes and Transitions for Brief Alcohol Interventions in Trauma Settings.

Gerald Cochran, doctoral candidate in Social Work, University of Texas, Austin. AHRQ grant HS021394; project period February 1, 2012 – October 31, 2012. This research study will identify subclasses of injured patients who received a brief alcohol intervention (SBI) in order to determine which patients experienced the greatest benefit from the intervention. The results of this research project will increase the ability of policymakers, health care administrators, and clinicians to make potentially necessary changes to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of medical centers delivering SBI services to injured patients.

The Long-Term Impact of Medicaid in Childhood on Health and Socioeconomic Status.

Michel Boudreaux, doctoral candidate in Health Services Research, Policy and Administration, University of Minnesota. AHRQ grant HS021690; project period September 7, 2012 – December 31, 2013. This research study uses Medicaid data to examine the long-term effects of health insurance coverage between ages 0 and 5 on health, income, and educational attainment at ages 19-43. The results of this project will provide important information to policymakers by filling an important gap in the literature on the long-term impacts of health policy and health insurance.

Medication List Consistency When Patients Transition From Hospital to Community.

Korey Kennelty, doctoral candidate in Social and Administrative Sciences, University of Wisconsin. AHRQ grant HS021984; project period September 1, 2012 – July 31, 2013. This study seeks to examine

where, why, and what types of medication discrepancies occur when patients transfer from the hospital to community care, with an emphasis on the community pharmacy. The results will help future interventional studies to develop and evaluate communication tools to provide timely and complete medication data to community pharmacies and physicians.

Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Mental Health Service and Medical Care Expenditures.

Audrey Jones, doctoral candidate in Health Services Research, University of California-Los Angeles. AHRQ grant HS021721; project period September 1, 2012 – January 31, 2014. This research study will attempt to answer questions of inequity in the delivery of mental health services (MHS) among racial/ethnic minority populations at-risk for mental illness. The results of this study may identify particular subpopulations disadvantaged by the health care system that may benefit from initiatives to improve the quality of MHS, particularly in the primary care setting.

Strategic Liver Allocation by Stochastic Game

Models–Competition vs.

Cooperation. Zhe Li, doctoral candidate in Industrial Engineering, Northwestern University. AHRQ grant HS021609; project period June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2013. This research project will explore the comparative effectiveness of the current practice of competition for organs across transplant centers versus alternative collaborative strategies, accounting for both patient outcomes and economic objectives. The framework for the proposed investigation is the mathematical theory of games, which has been used to model competition in a wide variety of social, political, and





economic settings. The results of this research project could foster an environment of cooperative decisionmaking in liver allocation.

User Interfaces for Communicating Inpatient Medication Therapies.

Lauren Wilcox, doctoral candidate in Computer Science, Columbia University. AHRQ grant HS021393; project period March 31, 2012 – July 31, 2013. This research will deploy and evaluate a custom personal health record portal providing access to real-time medication information for hospitalized patients. The results of this research will advance scientific knowledge in the field of patient-clinician communication, demonstrate new technical capabilities for sharing information among patients and their care team, and explore potential improvements to patient engagement, knowledge, and satisfaction.

Whose \$800 Billion: Risk Adjusted Subsidies in Medicare Part D.

Colleen Carey, doctoral candidate in Economics, Johns Hopkins University. AHRQ grant HS020881; project period July 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013. This research project will investigate how the system of subsidies used to support Medicare Part D affects the incentives of insurers and pharmaceutical firms negotiating over the price and out-of-pocket costs of branded drugs. The results could promote efficiency-enhancing or cost-saving improvements to the Part D program. It can also shed light on the relative bargaining power of insurers and pharmaceutical firms.

More Information

For more information about the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, please visit the AHRQ Web site at www.ahrq.gov.

For specific regarding the dissertation grant program, please contact:

Brenda A. Harding, M.A.
Health Scientist Administrator
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
540 Gaither Road, Suite 2006
Rockville, MD 20850
301-427-1527
Brenda.harding@ahrq.hhs.gov

