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Center for HOPES |
2021 Annual Report |

Engagement and Evidence for Action



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR HEALTH OUTCOMES AND
POLICY EVALUATION STUDIES



The Center for HOPES

Leveraging research for health and equity

Mission

Our mission is to support health equity and social justice through rigorous and innovative policy research and evaluation.



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Letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Supporters,

The Center for HOPES continued to grow in 2021, providing evaluation services for community health as well as professional support of health policy research across the university. Social determinants of health have intersected with public health challenges including COVID-19 and substance use disorder. The Center for HOPES was uniquely positioned to add to the conversation and to the solutions being tested in 2021.

The Center takes an interdisciplinary approach to health and health care systems. Our team brings evaluation, economic, and policy expertise to complex issues facing our communities. In addition, we are reintroducing the Center to the university community, as our capacity and expertise have expanded over the past year. In particular, the Center staff is growing its capacity in community engagement to continue partnering with community organizations to support innovative programs with rigorous evaluation.

The Center's new projects in 2021 include evaluating the use of community health workers in implementing COVID vaccines, providing technical assistance and research support for a central Ohio harm reduction organization, supporting efficient payment strategies for behavioral health care in Ohio's Medicaid managed care system, and cutting-edge research measuring the health impact of intersectional identities of LGBTQ+ persons of color. We believe a deep and wide understanding of the issues facing health systems and our communities can provide the most actionable information to decision makers.

Our goal is to help governments, communities, and organizations better understand the impact of programs and policies. The Center's staff co-authored 11 publications during 2021 on a range of issues. In addition, the Center's resources include expertise in translational communications, which can facilitate decision-makers' access to the high-quality research conducted at Ohio State.

As we continued work in the areas of substance use and the opioid epidemic, global health, and reproductive health, we established new partnerships and initiatives to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and address racism as a public health crisis. To enhance our visibility and reputation as The Ohio State University's home for health policy and evaluation research, we focused on engagement and communications. To strengthen



our role in public health professional education, we developed a non-degree Evaluation Certificate Course.

As we look forward to another productive and fruitful year, we are establishing an oversight committee in early 2022, developing a research affiliate network to facilitate health policy and health outcomes research partnerships across the university, and continuing to apply for awards. Please feel free to [reach out](#) with any questions, or if you are interested in partnering with the Center for HOPES.

Sincerely yours,

Eric Seiber



Director, Center for HOPES
Professor, Health Services Management and Policy
The Ohio State University College of Public Health



Center Growth and Personnel

The Center for HOPES, a university center located within The Ohio State University's College of Public Health, was established in 1994 to respond to the needs of health policy decision makers at local, state, and national levels. For most of its history, the Center has been a director-driven entity, operating around the research interests and capacity of its faculty leadership. In recent years, we have shifted towards community-driven and collaborative work that supports our mission to advance health equity and justice. This shift is reflected in our staff, which has continued to grow to carry out this work with an eye towards engagement, outreach, and sustainability. This growth continues in 2022 as we add three new [staff](#) members to our evaluation team: Ashley Short Mejia, M. Ella Lewie, and Ian Bryant.

Budget Summary

The Center for HOPES receives \$163,000 per year in core funding from the Board of Trustees. Due to Center growth, payroll expenditures increased by approximately one third, from \$450,000 in 2020 to \$560,000 in 2021. Even with this growth in payroll expenses, we were able to increase reserves by approximately \$40,000. In 2022, the Center for HOPES plans to continue building its reserve account/bridge fund of approximately 6 months of personnel costs to cover potential funding shortfalls, as well as implement an earnings unit to fund health policy work.

Digital Presence



The Center for HOPES launched our [Twitter](#) account in January 2021. Through daily posts about health policy research and news connected to our work, we're engaging with both established and upcoming health policy scholars. We averaged 10 new followers per month over the course of the year. Notable followers include the *Health Affairs* and *Policy Studies Journal* accounts, the American Public Health Association, the de Beaumont Foundation, Tiffany Doherty of the Incidental Economist blog, Ryan Petteway, and Rachel Hardeman.



We also launched a quarterly [newsletter](#) in 2021. Aimed at stakeholders and partners both in- and outside the university, each newsletter shares significant project news and updates, a staff or partner spotlight, policy updates, and recommended reading on a selected theme. In 2022, we aim to grow our subscriber list by continuing to share updates of high-impact work and promoting the newsletter through our social media and personal partnerships.

Our [YouTube](#) channel and [website](#) continue to be important mechanisms to disseminate our content and expand our reach. Our website user base and pageviews continued an upward trend, increasing again in 2021 compared to 2020.

Staff

Director | Eric Seiber, PhD

Dr. Seiber is an expert in the areas of health economics and policy and is a professor in the Division of Health Services Management and Policy. He specializes in health care financing, especially for vulnerable populations; public and private insurance markets; and cost-effectiveness analysis. In the fall of 2020, Dr. Seiber accepted Governor DeWine's invitation to serve as a member of the Ohio Economic Roundtable focusing on State revenue forecasting models specific to pandemic effects.

Associate Director | Kristin J. Harlow, PhD, JD, MSW

Dr. Harlow brings expertise in public policy and management, data analytics, and applied policy research. Dr. Harlow also serves as Ohio's Project Director for the National Institutes of Health's HEALing Communities Study. She previously worked as a research associate at the Center for Human Resource Research at Ohio State focusing on workforce research, and as a health care attorney in private practice.

Research Scholar | Wilson Figueroa, PhD, MS

Dr. Figueroa brings expertise in health psychology, social science research design, and data analytics. He previously worked as a research associate at the School of Health and Rehabilitation Science in the College of Medicine and Department of Extension in the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences at Ohio State.



Research Scholar | **Lisa A. Frazier, PhD, MPH**

Dr. Frazier brings expertise in public administration, applied policy research and communication, computational social science, and public health to the team. She previously worked as a professor of political science at Miami University and as a research and policy analyst at the Health Policy Institute of Ohio. Dr. Frazier provides policy and analytical support on several of the Center's projects and manages the Center's strategic communications and dissemination needs.

Research Evaluator | **Saira Nawaz, PhD, MPH**

Dr. Nawaz's expertise lies in health services research, health insurance claims data, and program evaluation. She provides methodological support in claims research, evaluation, and cost analysis. Dr. Nawaz previously worked as a biostatistician at Nationwide Children's Hospital and as an evaluation specialist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Evaluation Program Manager & Community Engagement Specialist | **Anne Trinh, MPH**

Ms. Trinh brings expertise in public health, epidemiology, evaluation, and collective impact. She previously worked as a maternal and child health epidemiologist at Columbus Public Health and as a chronic disease epidemiologist at the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center, serving Tribes and American Indian populations in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. She serves as a board member for Harm Reduction Ohio and as the Chair for Data and Research for the Franklin County Suicide Prevention Coalition.

Research Associate & Data Analyst | **Francis Anagbonu, MS, MA**

Mr. Anagbonu has expertise in health care financing, applied policy research, and data analytics. He previously worked as a health care specialist for the United States Army, providing limited primary and emergency care for the COVID-19 response team, and as a venture analyst at Ohio University.

Administrative Associate | **Dev Singer**

Ms. Singer joined the Center in 2021. She brings expertise in event planning, project budgeting, and grants and project management. Prior to joining the Center, Dev worked as the events and space coordinator at the Ohio State University's Translational Data



Analytics Institute (TDAI) and the department manager for the Department of Dance. Prior to joining Ohio State, Dev had a career as a stage manager, working at theaters around the country, on cruise ships, and for international touring companies.

Students | **Bucky Foster & Kyle Moon**

Students bring new ideas and perspectives, and we greatly value their contributions to the Center. Conversely, our research and evaluation activities offer a rich environment for students to apply their skills and knowledge, as well as complement their fields of study and interests. We hope these experiences and connections with partners allow students to transition into successful careers. The Center hosted one graduate and one undergraduate student during the Summer and Autumn terms. Bucky Foster provided analytical and operational support for Dr. Figueroa's RISE Study; Kyle Moon supported the evaluation team on a number of projects and publications.



New Project Highlights

In 2021, the Center for HOPES experienced exciting growth in funding and collaboration through Center-led, community-driven, and university-wide projects, demonstrating our deep and diverse partnerships across Ohio State and Central Ohio.

Daily stressors for racial, sexual, and gender minorities

In the spring of 2021, the College of Public Health awarded Center for HOPES Research Scholar Wilson Figueroa one of its highly competitive Racial Justice Seed Grants to fund his novel research. The Examining Race, gender Identity & Sexual orientation for health Equity (RISE) Study examines the effects of daily minority stressors in queer persons of color. The pilot study builds on previous research, including Figueroa's dissertation, which indicates that daily minority stressors related to identity (i.e., experiences of discrimination and stigma) are associated with elevated cortisol levels, which are ultimately associated with increased incidence of chronic disease. By empirically investigating the relationship between discrimination and hormone dysregulation, Figueroa's team stands to make important contributions to our understanding of the structural origins of health outcomes disparities in racial, sexual, and gender minorities.



Examining Race gender Identity, & Sexual orientation for health Equity

Cost of care for first episode of psychosis

The Center for HOPES is part of a collaborative team of researchers led by Dr. Nicholas Breitborde of The Ohio State Wexner Medical Center's Harding Hospital that will develop validated estimates of the cost of care for individuals with first-episode psychosis in Ohio. This work is funded by a mental health block grant from Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services, which is concerned with both the behavioral and physical health care costs associated with uncoordinated care. Data from Ohio Medicaid, MarketScan, and OSU EPICENTER (a coordinated specialty care (CSC) program developed by Dr. Breitborde) will allow the team to develop benchmark estimates essential to evaluating the cost savings and informing the expansion of the CSC approach. Estimates will be vetted through discussions with other Ohio stakeholders, including Ohio CSC teams and the NEOMED BeST Center.



Building community capacity for health equity

The Center for HOPES, along with Health Impact Ohio, were selected as the lead subgrantees for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Community Health Workers (CHWs) for COVID Response and Resilient Communities (CCR) Grant* to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). The aim of the program is to reduce health disparities and improve health equity in the state of Ohio by expanding use of CHWs to address COVID-19 disparities. The Center for HOPES will serve as the lead evaluator, collecting performance data throughout implementation of the grant to conduct both process and outcomes evaluations of the training and deployment of CHWs and their contribution to building community resilience. Through our work with AltaMed (see below), Center evaluators have demonstrated skill and capacity for supporting grassroots efforts to improve health equity through CHW programs. We provide a broad range of services for community-driven work, from helping with proposal development to project and data management, and data analysis and dissemination. Center evaluators will build on their experience using human-centered design principles to assess and improve ODH's CHW activities, using evaluation as a bridge between communities and funder.

The Center was also selected as a CDC subgrantee on a project with the City of Columbus. Our work with the Center for Public Health Innovation on a racial justice grant proposal in 2020 has grown into a contract to provide support for strategic planning and evaluation of community partnerships in service of enhancing the city's response to racism as a public health crisis. We will be working directly with the Executive Officer, who provides recommendations to the Mayor of Columbus.

Supporting community engagement in research

The Center for HOPES is excited to be serving on the Wexner Medical Center's Community Engagement Workgroup (CEW). Dr. Joshua Joseph convened the group, which is made up primarily of clinicians, to improve the relevance of clinical trials by incorporating community engaged research practices. Dr. Joseph invited the participation of the Center because of our track record in working across the university *and* with communities to conduct community-informed and -driven projects. The CEW provides a setting in which Center staff help clinicians understand how to engage communities in trials in ways that prioritize the agency and values of the community itself while maintaining the integrity of the research process.



Analyzing harm reduction program data

In an extension of our work with addiction treatment and recovery programs, the Center for HOPES entered into an agreement with Safe Point, a comprehensive harm reduction program, to analyze client intake data and provide technical assistance on data use. Using latent class analysis, Center researchers will develop client profiles to inform Safe Point stakeholders about who the program serves. We will also develop risk scores for overdoses, soft tissue infections, and blood-borne infections; support staff training in evaluation methods; and provide technical assistance in designing a program dashboard. The partnership exemplifies how the Center invests in long-term relationships to build trust with community-serving organizations. Years of working together on other grants and projects drove Safe Point to ask the Center to assist in its application for the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) *Harm Reduction Grant*, from which this work is funded.

Publications

Center for HOPES researchers co-authored eleven [publications](#) in 2021 on a wide range of health and health policy issues.

Medicaid Prescription Limits and Their Implications for Naloxone Accessibility	<i>Drug and Alcohol Dependence</i>
The Ohio COVID-19 Survey: Preliminary Findings and Their Use During the Pandemic	<i>Ohio Journal of Public Health</i>
The Design and Methodology of the Ohio COVID-19 Survey	<i>Ohio Journal of Public Health</i>
Queremos Tranformar Comunidades: Incorporating Civic Engagement in Promotor-led COVID-19 Response Efforts in Latinx Communities	<i>Journal of Hispanic Policy</i>
The Ohio COVID Survey Provides an Intimate Portrait About the Impact of the Pandemic on Ohio’s Households	Center for HOPES Research Memo
Addressing Emotional Wellness During the COVID-19 Pandemic: the Role of <i>Promotores</i> in Delivering Integrated Mental Health Care and Social Services	<i>Preventing Chronic Disease</i>
La Equidad en Tiempos de Pandemia: A Case Study of Promotores on the Frontline of COVID-19 Response in Latinx Communities in Orange County, California	<i>Border-Lines</i>



COVID-19 Surveillance for Local Decision-Making: An Academic, School District, and Public Health Collaboration	<i>Public Health Reports</i>
Use of Non-Preferred Contraceptive Methods Among Women in Ohio	<i>Contraception</i>
Daily Stressors and Diurnal Cortisol Among Sexual and Gender Minority Young Adults	<i>Health Psychology</i>
Rebuilding with Impacted Communities at the Center	<i>Family & Community Health</i>



Continuing Efforts

ADDICTION
prevention
&
treatment

HEALing Communities Study (HCS)

The National Institutes of Health funds a four-state research study, including Ohio, to test the impact of an integrated set of evidence-based interventions across health care, behavioral health, justice, and other community-based settings on addiction called the Communities That Heal (CTH) approach. The goal of the study is to treat opioid use disorder within highly affected communities and reduce opioid related deaths by 40 percent over three years. The Center for HOPES provides support for project direction and management and serves as the Ohio lead for the study's Policy Tracking activities and for the Health Economics core, for which we coordinate a cost-effectiveness analysis for Ohio's implementation of the CTH. We work closely with the Wexner Medical Center, University of Cincinnati, Case Western Reserve University, Research Triangle Institute, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse. In 2021, Center staff were in the thick of the intervention, coordinating teams, documenting project milestones, and collecting costing and policy data from Ohio's Wave 1 communities. In 2022, the study will transition to implementing the CTH intervention in the comparison Wave 2 communities.

Overdose Data to Action (OD2A)

The Overdose Data to Action grant was awarded to Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In year 2 of the grant, the Center for HOPES established data use agreements between the City of Columbus and various emergency medical services agencies to streamline overdose data downloaded to the Franklin County Opioid Crisis Activity Levels (FOCAL) Map. Dr. Ayaz Hyder facilitated a geocoding training, including data preparation, uploading, geocoding options, understanding geocoding results, and troubleshooting, for Franklin County Children Services (FCCS) staff. Several improvements were made to FOCAL map to facilitate end user experience, including improvement in the organization of layers and increased automation of data pipeline to reduce the amount of manual effort required to ingest new data.



Generation Rx

The Generation Rx program educates people of all ages about safe prescription medication use. In the final year of this partnership, we continued to assist the team with developing evaluation tools and protocols and building an evidence base for program outcomes.



Community Health Worker Equity Response

In 2021, the Center for HOPES continued its partnerships in southern California to evaluate efforts to increase COVID-19 vaccinations among the Latinx community through a community health worker, or *promotora*, -led model. This work is led by AltaMed, the nation's largest federally qualified health center, and supported by multiple community-based clinics and organizations throughout the state, including Latino Health Access (LHA), a community-based nonprofit in Orange County. New funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration in 2021 is providing essential funding for community health worker efforts and workforce development. During site visits, Center evaluators observed first-hand how *promotores* operate as trusted partners in their community and stand to make valuable contributions to evaluation and sustainability efforts, despite the instability they face as a workforce. Highlighting the value of community health workers is the focus of several articles the team published in 2021.

COVID-19 Analytics and Targeted Surveillance System for Schools (CATS)

Since July 2020, the Center for HOPES has been working with Dr. Ayaz Hyder, Assistant Professor in the Division of Environmental Health Sciences, to provide project management and community engagement support for the COVID-19 Analytics and Targeted Surveillance System for Schools (CATS) project. CATS is a syndromic surveillance system that helps schools and public health authorities work together to make data-informed decisions about learning modality (virtual, in-person, or hybrid) to prevent and control the spread of disease.

In its first year, CATS was funded by the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio with allocations disbursed via the Ohio Department of Education from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief funds. In a sustainability win for the project, CATS secured new funding from the Office of Outreach and Engagement in its second



year. The team has published several articles out of the community collaboration with more in the pipeline.

State of Ohio's Response & Recovery

In 2021, the Center for HOPES continued to proudly to serve the state of Ohio as part of a coalition tasked with monitoring the effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and to identify data-informed strategies for response and recovery. We worked with the Department of Health, Development Services Agency, Department of Medicaid, Office of Budget and Management, Department of Administrative Services, and Department of Job and Family Services to provide real-time analyses of Ohio's economy and households using a range of data sources. Our team published findings from the Ohio COVID Survey in a research memo and two journal articles in 2021.

REPRO

health
&
justice

Ohio Policy Evaluation Network (OPEN)

OPEN conducts rigorous and forward-thinking social-science research on the reproductive health of Ohioans with the goal of evaluating the reproductive health care landscape in the state in the context of federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. In 2021, the Center for HOPES continued to lead analysis of systems-level factors affecting access to and utilization of long-acting reversible contraception using insurance claims data. The Center was also proud to have Dr. Frazier serve as the interim chair of OPEN's Intersectional Equity and Inclusion committee.

HEALTH CARE

financing
&
access

Ohio Youth Resilience Collaborative (OYRC)

The Center for HOPES continues to serve as the lead evaluator for the Ohio Youth Resilience Collaborative (OYRC) (formerly Ohio PROSPER), a coalition of Extension Educators and researchers from Ohio State and Central State University, school districts across Ohio, and community stakeholders working to support youth and family mental health and well-being.



Global One Health Initiative (GOHi)

The Center for HOPES provides monitoring and evaluation technical assistance the University's Global One Health Initiative in Ohio and in Africa. GOHi works to build capacity in areas of global health, focusing on topics such as zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, maternal and child health, and food safety. In 2021, GOHi received new funding from the CDC to expand its efforts.

Evaluation Certificate Program

The Center for HOPES is committed to providing high-impact educational programming to sustain and advance the public health workforce. In 2021, the Center piloted its non-degree certificate program for public health and social service professionals and researchers. The aim of the self-paced, virtual courses is to address fear or resistance to program evaluation and empower the public health and social services work force to use data to assess programmatic needs and ultimately, to improve population health. Through a series of asynchronous modules and activities, supplemented by synchronous office hours and group discussions, participants learn about best practices in program evaluation and refine their skill in thinking critically about the connections between investments, practice, and outcomes. The inaugural cohorts for the Introductory and Intermediate modules of this program included students from diverse professional backgrounds, including community health workers, social workers, program managers, epidemiologists, and health services policy analysts. We will pilot the Expert modules in summer 2022 after which we expect to make the full set of courses available to a larger participant base.

2022 Forecast

Building a Home for Health Policy

In 2022, the Center for HOPES will take steps to expand our partnerships across the university through work in service of its land grant mission. We will continue to collaborate with community partners and university scholars on innovative, equity-oriented evaluation research. With support from our transdisciplinary Oversight Committee, we will also be launching our Center for HOPES Research Affiliate program. The Center Affiliates program will be the cornerstone of our efforts to convene and coordinate interdisciplinary health policy research projects; to translate, disseminate, and advocate for the use of health policy evidence in decision making; and to build a pipeline of health policy scholars and provide a home for high-impact health policy and evaluation research.

Supporting Our Work

To become the home for health policy at The Ohio State University, we need your support. If you're a university researcher, join us as an affiliate. If you're a community stakeholder, consider enlisting us on proposals and projects. Anyone can donate to our general fund to support events, research collaborations, dissemination and advocacy efforts, and health policy mentorship. You can even tell us where you'd like your contribution to go. We invite you to join us, in whatever way you can, in the pursuit of evidence-based health policy that advances health equity and social justice for Ohioans.

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