

PROGRAM BRIEF

AHRQ's Health Services Research Dissertation Grant Program New Starts - Fiscal Year 2009

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 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 the Agency'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 doctoral requirements by the time they submit a dissertation grant application.

This fact sheet provides brief descriptions of the 18 dissertation grant awards funded by AHRQ in fiscal year 2009. Each entry includes the project title, grantee and his or her area of focus, the grant number and project period, and a short description of the project itself.

Project Descriptions

Anxiety and Depression Among Elderly Public Housing Residents.

Adam Simning, doctoral candidate in Epidemiology, University of Rochester. AHRQ grant HS18246; project period September 30, 2009 – February 28, 2011. This research will examine anxiety and depression in elderly residents of public housing high-rise buildings. The study will evaluate syndromal and subsyndromal anxiety and depression prevalence and unmet needs for mental health care, as well as the correlates of anxiety and depression symptom severity. A secondary aim is



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to establish the sensitivity and specificity of brief anxiety and depression questionnaires in this setting.

Communication During Genetic Testing Disclosure Sessions: Impact on Patient Outcomes. Barbara Lerner, doctoral candidate in Health Services Research, Boston University. AHRQ grant HS17988; project period June 1, 2009 – August 31, 2010. The goal of this research is to characterize patterns of communication between patients and providers and examine how these characteristics influence patient outcomes.

Cost-Effectiveness of Long-Term Anticoagulation Care Versus Genetic Testing of CYP269 and VKORC1 Genes. Anna Teschemaker, doctoral candidate in Pharmaceutical Sciences Health Services Research, Howard University. AHRQ grant HS18097; project period August 1, 2009 – July 31, 2010. This project addresses a key issue in the treatment of deep vein thrombosis/pulmonary embolism and involves a cost-effectiveness analysis of the application of genetic testing in the treatment of this condition.

Diabetes Health Disparities Over the Life Course: Race, Class, and Gender. Emily Nicklett, doctoral candidate in Sociology/Health Management, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. AHRQ grant HS18276; project period September 30, 2009 – September 29, 2010. This research will focus on the improvement of health outcomes by identifying critical points for health interventions among disadvantaged populations, maximizing efficiency of the care provided to this population, and identifying strategies to deliver effective high quality services for an aging population with a high prevalence of chronic illness.

Disentangling Disparities in Trauma and Mental Health Service Use. Sarah Gaillot, doctoral candidate in Policy Analysis, Pardee RAND Graduate School. AHRQ grant HS18277; project period September 30, 2009 – September 29, 2010. This research will examine racial-ethnic and male-female disparities in posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) by exploring variation in trauma exposure and subsequent PTSD, barriers to mental health care, and use of mental health services. different health care settings.

The Effects of Age, Cognition, and Health Literacy on Use of Patient Electronic Medical Records (EMR). Jessica Taha, doctoral candidate in Ergonomics, University of Miami. AHRQ grant HS18239; project period September 1, 2009 – November 30, 2010. This study will focus on the ability of middle-aged and older adults with both low and high levels of health literacy to use a patient portal of an electronic medical record (EMR) to perform common health management tasks.

Effects of Early and Regular Preventive Dental Care on Treatment Use, Costs, and Dental Disease. Heather Beil, doctoral candidate in Health Policy and Management, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. AHRQ grant HS18076; project period August 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010. The aim of this study is to determine the effects of early initiation of regular preventive dental care on dental treatment, dental costs, and dental caries history in children aged 5 and younger.

The Effects of Neonatal Intensive Care Deregionalization on Treatment and Infant Health Outcomes.

Seth Freedman, doctoral candidate in Economics, University of Maryland, College Park. AHRQ grant HS18266; project period August 31, 2009 – August 30, 2010. This research seeks to estimate the causal effects of deregionalization on outcomes and treatment patterns for infants across the health distribution of mid-level hospitals and high-level regional care centers.

Factors Impacting Nurse Care Coordination for Hospitalized Patients.

Ingrid Duva, doctoral candidate in Nursing, Emory University. AHRQ grant HS17767; project period July 1, 2009 - April 30, 2010. This project will examine the relationship among patient and work environment characteristics and nurse care coordination activities to provide new insights on how to improve this critical part of nursing care for hospitalized patients.

The Impact of Health Information Technology on Demand for Inpatient Services.

Eric Barette, doctoral candidate in Health Services Research, Policy, and Administration, University of Minnesota. AHRQ grant HS18272; project period August 1, 2009 to July 31, 2010. This research project evaluates the impact that health information technology (health IT) systems at hospitals—for example, electronic medical records—have on a patient's decision where to seek care. It is hypothesized that when deciding where to receive inpatient services a patient is more likely to choose a hospital with health IT systems over a similar facility that does not have such systems.

Off-Shift Nursing and Quality

Patient Outcomes. Pamela de Cordova, doctoral candidate in Nursing, Columbia University. AHRQ grant HS18216; project period September 30, 2009 - February 28, 2011. This project will employ a unique, longitudinal, unit-specific dataset created by the mentoring team to examine the effects of staffing and the characteristics of nurses (e.g., education, experience, tenure, and so on) working off-shifts on nursing-sensitive patient outcomes.

Post-Acute Care in Elderly Trauma Patients: Use, Outcomes, and Costs.

Lok Wong, doctoral candidate in Health Services Research and Policy, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. AHRQ grant HS18068; project period June 1, 2009 – September 30, 2010. This research will identify and examine the factors that influence which elderly patients receive post-acute care after a trauma injury and where they receive care, identify patterns of post-acute care utilization and costs, and determine what types of post-acute care settings lead to improved functional outcomes.

Race and Cardiac Catheterization Use in the Setting of Acute Myocardial Infarction.

Saif Rathore, doctoral candidate in Epidemiology, Yale University. AHRQ grant HS18283; project period September 30, 2009 – November 30, 2010. This research will focus on racial variations in the use of cardiac catheterization in patients who have suffered a heart attack. In addition, the study will develop and validate a means for classifying patients according to the appropriateness of cardiac catheterization for their care after heart attack.



The Relationship Between Hospital Market Competition, Performance, and Mortality. Jared Lane Maeda, doctoral candidate in Health Policy and Administration, University of Illinois at Chicago. AHRQ grant HS17944; project period June 1, 2009 – August 31, 2010. This exploratory study will evaluate the relationship between hospital performance for heart failure on the evidence-based process measures of left ventricular assessment, angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor/angiotensin receptor blocker at discharge, smoking cessation counseling, and discharge instructions within the 306 hospital referral regions across the United States. The study also will examine whether market competition may mediate the relationship between hospital process measures and patient outcomes.

Role of Information in Medicare HMO Markets: The Interplay of Advertising and Report Cards. Ashwin Patel, doctoral candidate in Health Care Economics, University of Pennsylvania. AHRQ grant HS18102; project period July 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010. This research project will explore the role of advertising as a potential force to mitigate or enhance report card value. The goal is to provide a basis for further research to explore the implications of advertising in many

State Variations in Linguistic Competency Policies and the Effects on Immigrant Access to Health Services. Dennis Kao, doctoral candidate in Social Work, University of Southern California. AHRQ grant HS18082; project period July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010. This project will examine the effects of State language policies on access to health services among immigrants.

Teaching Evidence Assimilation for Collaborative Health Care (TEACH). Renae Smith-Ray, doctoral candidate in Public Health, University of Illinois at Chicago. AHRQ grant HS18295; project period September 30, 2009 – January 31, 2009. This study will test the impact of cognitive training in order to improve balance and gait and thereby reduce the incidence of falls and fall-related injuries in older adults.

Web-Based Intervention for Alcohol Use in Women of Childbearing Potential. Katia Delrahim-Howlett, doctoral candidate in Public Health with a concentration in Health Behavior, the Joint Doctoral Program at San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego. AHRQ grant HS18071; project period June 1, 2009 - May 30, 2010. This study will involve a small scale randomized trial to test an adapted version of a Web-based intervention to reduce alcohol

consumption in a subset of non-pregnant women of childbearing age who currently drink at risky levels.

More Information

For more information about the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, please visit the AHRQ Web site at www.ahrq.gov. For more specific information on funding for dissertation grants and other training programs, including answers to commonly asked questions, please visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/fund/training/trainix.htm>.

For specific programmatic questions, please contact:

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