



EMORY HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



EMORY
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE

Health Services Research Center
Department of Medicine
and Department of Surgery

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MISSION | VISION | GOALS



MISSION

To advance healthcare access, quality, value, and outcomes for all patients and populations through scientific inquiry and innovative solutions.

VISION

Be a national leader in advancing innovative health services research.

GOALS

Strategic Goal 1: Conduct and disseminate innovative and impactful research to improve value and care for all persons.

Strategic Goal 2: Prepare the next generation of health services research leaders.

Strategic Goal 3: Provide resources and infrastructure to drive efficiency and effectiveness of health services research.



MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR



In 2022, our Health Services Research Center community of more than 200 faculty, staff, and trainees continued to lead innovative and impactful research aimed to improve access to healthcare, outcomes of care, and healthcare delivery both at Emory and beyond. In this report, we have selected several examples that highlight important work the multidisciplinary teams of clinicians and researchers are planning or actively engaged in to improve the care of patients and populations. This research could not be done without the time and commitment of so many individuals working on these research teams. Our Health Services Research Center aims to support this research – whether that is through helping them access data, navigating regulatory processes, assisting with study design and analysis, or disseminating research results to our community for highest impact. We look forward to 2023 and helping to advance health for patients and populations.

Rachel Patzer, PhD, MPH
Professor | Director, HSR Center
Department of Medicine, Department of Surgery
Emory University School of Medicine



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**INCREASING
RESEARCH
CAPACITY &
COLLABORATIONS**

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH INCREASING RESEARCH CAPACITY & COLLABORATIONS

Health services research is a highly collaborative field and much of success and preeminence depends on having a broad network of collaborations and administrative support. Large program or center grants can provide the necessary critical infrastructure for investigators to participate in national projects. In 2022, the Health Services Research Center focused efforts on building operations, research infrastructure, and collaborations to support School of Medicine researchers, and worked diligently towards our mission of building partnerships within and outside Emory University which could be leveraged for high impact research.



HIGHLIGHTED COLLABORATIONS



National Patient-Centered Outcomes Research (PCOR) Network OneFlorida+

The HSR Center (site Principal Investigators: Rachel Patzer and Department of Biomedical Informatics Professor Gari Clifford) leads Emory's participation in the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) OneFlorida+ Clinical Research Consortium, PCORnet, an integrated partnership of clinical research networks and research ecosystem to offer real-world data to conduct health services research. This new Network participation has offered research investigators across Emory opportunities to partner with OneFlorida+ on pragmatic research trials and/or to conduct research with the large network of electronic health record data. In 2022, three new OneFlorida+ collaborative projects were funded with Emory collaborators, including OneFlorida's RECOVER electronic medical records studies (PI: Dr. Rishikesan Kamaleswaran, Biomedical Informatics), diabetes risk among racial and ethnic minorities after COVID-19 (PI: Dr. Rosette Chakkalake, Family & Preventive Medicine), and the PREVENTABLE trial which aims to prevent dementia in older adults (PI: Dr. Ambar Kulshreshtha, Family & Preventive Medicine).

NIH Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery (RECOVER)

Dr. Igho Ofotokun (Infectious Disease), Dr. Priscilla Pemu (Morehouse School of Medicine) and Dr. Rachel Patzer (Surgery) co-lead the metro-Atlanta effort to study long COVID with partners in the Division in Infectious Disease, patient partners, and multiple health system partners including Kaiser Permanente of GA, Morehouse School of Medicine, Grady Hospital, and the Atlanta VA. The HSR Center leads the data management for this national study. The RECOVER meta-cohort will enroll nearly 20,000 individuals across the country to study Post-Acute COVID-19 Sequelae (PASC), or long COVID, including nearly 1000 patients in the metro-Atlanta area. This research is bringing over \$18M to Emory University. In 2022, the RECOVER team collaborated with Emory Healthcare and Vital Software to use innovative methods to recruit Emory participants via a text messaging platform and save research coordinator time with recruitment, and HSR Center staff have managed the process and data. In 2022, more than 700 participants were recruited from the 5 clinical sites. The metro-Atlanta RECOVER team comprises 85 individuals of varying backgrounds, including 17 co-investigators representing multiple diverse backgrounds. In addition, patient partner and co-investigator, Marjorie Roberts, DBA, COVID Survivor and Long Hauler, received congressional recognition for her efforts.



vital



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HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH INCREASING RESEARCH CAPACITY & COLLABORATIONS



HIGHLIGHTED COLLABORATIONS



Georgia State University Partnership: Developing an Informatics Workforce

In 2022, the Health Services Research Center led the development of a partnership between Georgia State University and School of Medicine to create a unique opportunity for graduate students in the Georgia State University Master of Science in Health Informatics program to intern with School-level departments and gain hands on experience in applied data management within a large health system. While this program is still in a pilot phase, its success has paved the way for an expansion throughout the university. Ultimately, this collaboration has potential to create a pipeline of well-trained and diverse applicants to fill future roles as informaticians throughout Emory community, an area of critical need in preparing for expanding research capacity.

Emory – Kaiser Permanente of Georgia Collaborations

Kaiser Permanente Georgia and Emory have continued and/or expanded several collaborations in 2022. A new Data Use Agreement was approved to analyze Kaiser and Emory patient electronic health data. In 2022, research teams collaborated across the institutions to identify and quantify the relative contributions of several clinical, geographic, and social determinants of health risk factors contributing to the racial disparity in COVID-19 infections and related complications, with a goal of informing multi-level interventions to reduce COVID-19 risk among Black Americans disproportionately affected by COVID-19. In addition, Emory and Kaiser Permanente of GA also launched a joint pilot grants program as a way to jumpstart more health services research across the institutions.



Department of Justice, DeKalb County, Georgia State, and Grady Hospital

Dr. Randi Smith (Surgery) was recently awarded funding from the Department of Justice to collaborate with DeKalb County, Grady Hospital, and Georgia State University to implement a Community Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative in DeKalb County. The focus of this project is to develop DeKalb County's Violence Intervention Plan working with external and internal organizations to conduct research, develop an implementation model, and ultimately employ programs and services that reduce violent crime and improve communities that have high violent crime. The unique aspect of this project is the working group. This working group is a collaboration of universities, school districts, nonprofits, court systems, public safety, and human services to find a solution, together, that saves lives.



National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases P30

A center level grant for the Georgia Center for Diabetes Translational Research (GCDTR) led by PI Venkat Narayan, Professor & Chair, Global Health; Medicine. The mission of the GCDTR center is to "...leverage multidisciplinary expertise and experience by bringing together collaborations among researchers from several institutions to close the gaps in equitable and sustainable translation for prevention and care of diabetes." The Design and Evaluation for Equity Core is led by Dr. Mo Ali (Family & Preventive Medicine) and Dr. Rachel Patzer HSR Center Director, collaborating with Dr. Jessica Harding (Surgery, Medicine). This program grant brings resources for investigators interested in diabetes research, such as pilot grants, data, internships, and mentorship.



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH INCREASING RESEARCH CAPACITY



HIGHLIGHTED COLLABORATIONS



VALOR

"Veteran Access and Limitations to Organ Recovery (VALOR)," is a new National Institutes of Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) R01 grant funded in 2022.

This investigation, led by Raymond Lynch, MD, transplant surgeon and faculty in the Health Services Research Center (HSRC) at Emory, is designed to determine which patients receive high quality medical care for organ donation. Other HSR Center Coinvestigators include Dr. Katie Ross-Driscoll. "We are proud to work with more than 17 OPO partners nationally as well as the VA, to describe opportunities to improve organ donation care and quality of care as provided by OPO clinical staff to veteran patients. The team will utilize community-based research principles, complex analysis of health records, and a multidisciplinary team-based approach to improve care for veteran patients.



Healthcare
Innovation Program

HIP Seed Grants

The HSR Center, as part of the Emory-Georgia Tech Healthcare Innovation Program (HIP), in partnership with the Emory Synergy Award Program and the Georgia Clinical & Translational Science Alliance (Georgia CTSA), helped to fund pilot project Grants in Healthcare Innovation. Grants fund multi-disciplinary teams proposing innovative research and education projects that address issues of healthcare quality, costs, and/or access that are consistent with the goals of HIP.



Better Center

The Behavioral Economics to Transform Trial Enrollment Representativeness (BETTER) Center is part of the American Heart Association's Strategically-Focused Research Network to advance the science of diversity in cardiovascular clinical trials. Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania (Penn), Emory University, Grady Health System, and MedStar Washington Hospital Center are collaborating to use behavioral health science to improve clinical trial participation among diverse groups. BETTER brings together experts in behavioral economics, health services research, research ethics, health equity and clinical trials to identify methods that make trial enrollment and retention easier for everyone. The overall PI is Scott Halpern, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.E. at the Perelman School of Medicine at Penn. Emory faculty Neal Dickert, M.D., Ph.D., Alanna Morris, M.D., MSCR, and Modele Ogunniyi, M.D., M.P.H. all serve as project PIs.



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HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER DATABASES

The Health Services Research Center maintains or has access to **more than 55** existing local, regional, and national databases through HSRC faculty. The HSRC keeps a record of the data available, how to access it, and if there is a cost or contract necessary for access.

EMORY HEALTHCARE

USRDS

Grady

MARKET SCAN

ACS NSQIP

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

SRTR SCIENTIFIC REGISTRY OF TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS

Epic

KAISER PERMANENTE

UNOS **DONATE LIFE**

American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline[®] Stroke

OneFlorida⁺ Clinical Research Network

QOD

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY

Atlanta VA Medical Center Patient Centered Care...Second to None...One Veteran at a Time

BRFSS Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

pcornet The National Patient-Centered Clinical Research Network

HRS

American Hospital Association Advancing Health in America

CDC WONDER

Data.CMS.gov

Cerner

Commission on Cancer

NACOR Anesthesia Quality Institute[®]

H-CUP HEALTHCARE COST AND UTILIZATION PROJECT

CARES Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival

MOREHOUSE HEALTHCARE

GHA Georgia Hospital Association

NBER NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

CDC

vital

nhanes The Nation's Mobile Health Survey

SVS | VQI VASCULAR QUALITY INITIATIVE

MBSAQIP METABOLIC AND BARIATRIC SURGERY ACCREDITATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

ACR AMERICAN COLLEGE OF RADIOLOGY

National Health Interview Survey Since 1957

VON Vermont Oxford NETWORK

AJRR American Joint Replacement Registry Improving Orthopaedic Care Through Data

STSNational Database Trusted. Transformed. Real-Time.

EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE Health Services Research Center Department of Medicine and Department of Surgery



HSR CENTER SPONSORED RESEARCH

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER

PILOT GRANTS FUNDED IN 2022

Through 2021-2022, our **Health Services Research Center** supported a pilot grants program to assist early-stage Core faculty investigators in the HSR Center. These pilot grants are intended to help faculty gather preliminary data to support applications for larger external funding. This program is continuing to grow and lead to new opportunities and larger extramurally funded projects. The Center also supports two faculty by subsidizing a Rollins School of Public Health intern for the year.

2022 HSR Pilot Grant Awardee Dr. Jessica Harding

Dr. Jessica Harding is an Assistant Professor and early-stage investigator in the Department of Surgery and the Department of Medicine. Her pilot research grant proposal will focus on identifying factors associated with gender disparities in access to transplantation among patients with end-stage kidney disease. Dr. Harding is an epidemiologist with expertise in conducting chronic disease research at population and system levels in both academic and government settings. She received her PhD in medical research (epidemiology) from Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, Melbourne, Australia, in 2016, and was a research fellow at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from 2017-2019. In her current role, Dr. Harding is working to improve data collection and quality of care to improve access and gender equity in transplantation. "These results will be used to help us identify when (i.e., which transplant step), where (i.e., which health center), and among whom (i.e., patient subgroups such as older women) gender disparities in transplant access are occurring. Our long-term goal is to use these data to inform the development of large-scale interventions to ensure that women have the same access to this life-saving resource as men," Dr. Harding says.



Jessica Harding, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Surgery &
Department of Medicine



2022 FAME Grant and HSRC Intern Program: Dr. Gabriela Cohen

Dr. Gabriela Cohen was co-awarded the Department of Medicine FAME grant (sponsored by the Department of Medicine and the HSR Center) for her proposed research entitled “What matters most for patients with dementia and their caregivers: An analysis of Dementia Care in an Outpatient Geriatrics Clinic.”

Each year, one of the FAME grants is supported by the Health Services Research Center and provided an HSR Center intern to assist with the research. Dr. Cohen, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Internal Medicine, will be interviewing geriatric patients with dementia at the Grady Hospital Geriatrics Clinic with a goal of identifying what health outcomes matter most to this patient population. Many of these complex patients have fragmented care with multiple physicians and numerous medications, and also face substantial social risk factors due to the impact of social determinants of health that affect the quality of life for these patients and their caregivers. “These results will be used to help our health systems better understand how to best help patients and connect resources to ensure patients’ health goals are met,” said Dr. Cohen.



Gabriela Cohen, MD
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine

2022 HSRC Intern Program: Dr. Virginia Shaffer

Dr. Virginia Shaffer's proposal "Exploring the Relationship Between Depression, Anxiety, Pain Catastrophizing and Resilience on Surgical Outcomes: A Mixed Method Study," was selected by the HSRC to fund a Rollins School of Public Health master's student to intern with her on this project.

Dr. Shaffer is collaborating with Dr. Theresa Gillespie and Dr. Srinivas Emani to study the relationship between clinical preoperative psychologic/psychometric characteristics and surgical outcomes among surgery patients. A better understanding of this can lead to meaningful preoperative interventions to improve patients' experience and outcomes.



Virginia O. Shaffer, MD
Professor
Department of Surgery



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH HEALTH CARE INNOVATION PROGRAM

Joint Pilot Grant Funding with the Emory-Georgia Tech Healthcare Innovation Program

The Emory-Georgia Tech Healthcare Innovation Program (HIP), in partnership with the HSR Center, offers seed grant opportunities for students and faculty. Projects funded are multidisciplinary and involve innovative research and education to address issues of healthcare quality, costs, and/or access. This program allows for the support of preliminary data for cutting edge research on topics such as racism in healthcare and the impact of social determinants of health within a clinical setting. Below are highlighted examples of funded research over the last year which involve HSR Center faculty:

Decision Aid for Reducing COVID-19 Hesitancy

- Dr. Ambar Kulshreshtha (Department of Family & Preventative Medicine) was a recipient of a 2022 HIP seed grant for his proposal "A Novel Web-based Decision Aid Tool for Reducing COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy." Despite the extensive availability of effective COVID-19 vaccines, vaccination and booster hesitancy has been a dilemma in the U.S., and Georgia has one of the lowest full COVID vaccination rates (57%) in the country. This research seeks to use a decision aid-based non-directive educational approach to help individuals reach a decision around the COVID-19 vaccine and boosters. This work will be conducted in partnership with Dr. Emily Wall, Department of Computer Science. The decision aid is simple, personalized, data-driven, visual decision aid for tailored health communication that will be tested in a randomized controlled trial. See <https://covid19.emory.edu/decision-aid/about>.



Ambar Kulshreshtha, MD, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Family and
Preventive Medicine

Machine Learning for Diabetes in COVID-19

- Dr. Dong Li's proposal "[Machine Learning-Based Spatial And Temporal Dynamics Network Analysis for Diabetic Kidney Disease in COVID-19 Survivors](#)," was selected for funding by the Healthcare Innovation Program. COVID-19 survivors are at high risk of diabetes. However, the long-term effects of COVID-19 on diabetic kidney disease (DKD), one of the most common complications of diabetes and the leading cause of end-stage renal disease, are unknown. Early DKD symptoms are frequently absent. We used temporal and spatial dimensions, machine learning algorithms, and AWS cloud computing to analyze the long-term effects of COVID-19 on DKD based on over 1.3 million patients' data from VA Renal Information System (VA-REINS).



Dong Li, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine



A close-up photograph of a healthcare professional and a patient. The healthcare professional, on the right, is wearing light blue scrubs and has a stethoscope around her neck. She is smiling warmly at the patient. The patient, on the left, is wearing a grey headscarf and a patterned top. She is also smiling and looking down at something in her hands. The background is softly blurred, suggesting a clinical setting. The overall mood is positive and collaborative.

**CONDUCTING
IMPACTFUL
HEALTH SERVICES
RESEARCH**

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

NEWLY FUNDED RESEARCH



Megan Urbanski, PhD, MSW
Assistant Professor
Department of Surgery

Megan Urbanski, PhD, MSW, Assistant Professor, received an F32 grant for her project titled "Establishing Foundations to Develop a Treatment Decision Aid for Patients Hospitalized with Unexpected End-Stage Kidney Disease: A Community Engaged Approach". This research will conduct the initial steps necessary to develop a hospital-based kidney replacement therapy decision aid targeted to patients with unexpected organ failure during their kidney replacement therapy initiation hospitalization, with a long-term goal of increasing uptake of preferred treatment, such as home dialysis and kidney transplant.



Jessica Harding, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Surgery
Department of Medicine

Jessica Harding, PhD, Assistant Professor, received a P30 Supplement grant. This P30 is a center-level grant for the Georgia Center for Diabetes Translational Research. The supplement will examine diabetes incidence in individuals with vs. without COVID-19 in a multi-ethnic cohort across three Kaiser-Permanente study sites (Georgia, Hawaii, Northwest). The proposed study will generate much needed information to guide disease screening priorities among individuals in the post-acute stage of COVID-19 and inform potential prevention and management strategies.



Nader Massarweh, MD, MPH
Associate Professor
Department of Surgery

Nader Massarweh, MD, MPH, Associate Professor, Department of Surgery, Division of Surgical Oncology, and Chief of Surgery at the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Healthcare System, recently received an R01 grant titled "Using Modern Data Science Methods and Advanced Analytics to Improve the Efficiency, Reliability, and Timeliness of Cardiac Surgical Quality Data." This mixed-methods proposal will involve observational studies using VASQIP and VA Corporate Data Warehouse data for patients who underwent cardiac surgery at a VA hospital between 2016 and 2020 as well as qualitative interviews with stakeholders who can help to inform future changes that can improve the data available within VASQIP.

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

NEWLY FUNDED RESEARCH



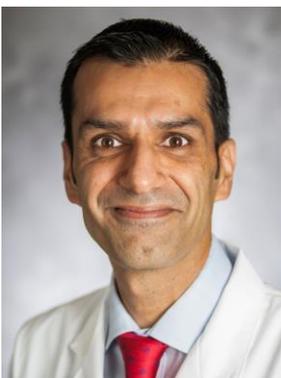
Amit Shah, MD, MSCR
Assistant Professor
Department of Medicine

Amit Shah, MD, Assistant Professor, in collaboration with Viola Vaccarino, MD, PhD, received R01 funding from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for their project titled "Investigation of Sex and Gender Differences in Cardiovascular Risk in Rural Communities." This project examines non-traditional psychosocial, behavioral, immune, endocrine, and physiological mechanisms that have not been comprehensively examined before, in a cohort of 4,600 rural Americans in the Appalachia and Mississippi Delta region. This research will be critical in our understanding of heart disease pathogenesis not just in rural women, but all women, as well as men, and will shed light on potential public health and clinical interventions that may improve outcomes.



Ram Jagannathan, PhD
Assistant Professor
Division of Hospital Medicine

Ram Jagannathan, PhD, received three-year funding from the National Institute on Minority Health Disparities with NIMHD collaborators to apply novel causal inferential techniques to elucidate how specific adverse neighborhood social environments influence CVD risk factors and outcomes and will leverage various national databases. This research will be critical in understanding the impact of neighborhood measures on cardiovascular disease risk and cardiovascular-related outcomes and the mediating biological pathways as this topic is understudied in the United States.



Mohammed Ali, MD, MSc, MBA
Professor
Department of Family &
Preventive Medicine

Mohammed Ali, MD, Professor, received an R01 for his proposed research "Can Medicaid Managed Care mitigate race/ethnic health disparities in diabetes?" This study represents a timely investigation that addresses race/ethnic disparities in type 2 diabetes (T2DM) care over a period that included a major pandemic shock. This proposal was submitted in partnership with Dr. Maria Alva, DPhil, MPhil from Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy.



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

NEWLY FUNDED RESEARCH



Deanna Kaplan, PhD, MA
Assistant Professor
Department of Family and
Preventive Medicine

Deanna Kaplan, PhD, MA, Assistant Professor, Department of Family and Preventive Medicine received funding from Georgia CTSA's PASC (Long COVID) Pilot grant program. Her research titled “What to wear: Investigating the clinical validity and implementation determinants of consumer health wearables for self-monitoring cardiovascular symptoms of Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 (PASC)” focused on optimizing consumer health wearable technologies for self-monitoring and management of cardiovascular symptoms of PASC (long-COVID).



Laura Plantinga, PhD, ScM
Associate Professor
Department of Medicine

Laura Plantinga, PhD, ScM, received R03 grant funding from AHRQ for her project titled "The Role of the Patient Care Technician in Dialysis." The aims of this formative study are to use national administrative data to increase our understanding of U.S. dialysis patient care technician staffing patterns and conduct focus groups of dialysis providers and patients to further understand the amount of care—beyond the technical management of hemodialysis—that is being, or could be, provided by dialysis patient care technicians.



Adam Wilk, PhD
Assistant Professor
Rollins School of Public Health

Adam Wilk, PhD, in collaboration with Courtney Yarbrough, PhD and Raymond Lynch, MD, received data from the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients to examine the relationships between the opioid epidemic and both organ supply and receipt. They are interested in how changes in opioid mortality over time affect the supply of deceased organ donations overall, the supply of deceased organ donations which are used in transplantation, and the receipt of deceased donor organs. They are also interested in what area-level characteristics, hospital characteristics, and individual characteristics are associated with the likelihood of an opioid-related death resulting in a successful organ donation.



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

NEWLY FUNDED RESEARCH



Scott Fridkin, MD
Professor
Department of Medicine

Scott Fridkin, MD, received a Division of Infectious Diseases J. C. Kennedy Foundation Award for his proposal "Linking EIP HAIC Surveillance Data and CMS Data to Study Opportunities to Prevent Antibiotic Resistant Healthcare Associated Infections, with a Focus on Antecedent SARS-CoV-2 Infections."



Jessica Sales, PhD, MA
Associate Professor
Behavioral Sciences and
Health Education

Jessica Sales, PhD, MA, in collaboration with Ameeta Kalokhe, MD, received R34 funding from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities for their project titled "Trauma Informed Care." The results of this study will inform a future Hybrid Type 2 effectiveness-implementation trial examining the impact of centralized delivery of trauma-informed care (TIC) training and facilitation on TIC implementation and patient HIV effectiveness outcomes and enable an evidence-driven response to the high-level calls for integration of TIC into HIV primary care services.



Birju Rao, MD, MSCR
Medical Resident
Department of Medicine

Birju Rao, MD, MSCR (Cardiology fellow) received an AHRQ F32 award for his project "Understanding Patients' Decisions About Generator Exchanges for Implantable Defibrillators." Dr. Rao's primary mentors are Neal Dickert, MD, PhD and Faisal Merchant, MD. Implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) generator exchanges are often performed as the default without consideration of risks, benefits, and most importantly patients' preferences. This project is an exploration of patients' approach to ICD generator exchanges decisions, which is needed to understand how to best support patients with their decision regarding ICD generator exchanges.



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

NEWLY FUNDED RESEARCH



Annette Esper, MD, MSC
Professor
Department of Medicine

Annette Esper, MD, MSC and **Rishikesan Kamaleswaran, PhD**, co-PIs, in collaboration with **Drs. Neal Dickert, Andre Holder, Alex Hall,** and **Rafick Sekaly**, received R21/R33 funding for their project titled "Scalable and Interoperable framework for a clinically diverse and generalizable sepsis Biorepository using Electronic alerts for Recruitment driven by Artificial Intelligence (SIBER-AI)." This project will develop a screening algorithm and recruitment process to enhance diversity in a sepsis biorepository. Health services research methods will be utilized specifically to develop, implement, and evaluate approaches to consent that enhance trust and engagement and are sensitive to the clinical context in which these interactions occur.



Rishikesan Kamaleswaran, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Biomedical
Informatics



Colleen S. Kraft, MD
Professor
Department of Pathology and
Laboratory Medicine

Colleen Kraft, MD, Professor in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine contracted with CDC in collaboration with **Morehouse School of Medicine** and the **American Nurses Association**. The project is titled: Strengthening Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control and Improving Patient Safety in the United States. The goal of this collaboration is to implement accumulated research into practice as it relates to hospital infection prevention.



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

NEWLY FUNDED RESEARCH



Lisa M. Flowers, MD, MPH, FACOG
Professor
Department of Gynecology &
Obstetrics
Department of Medicine

Lisa Flowers, MD, MPH, FACOG, Professor in the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics, and Department of Medicine received U01 funding from the CDC research titled "The CHES (Community, Home-based Education, Screening Services) Strategy to increase cervical cancer control access for HIV positive women in Nigeria." A primary goal of the project is to increase access to cervical cancer screenings among Nigerian women, ultimately reducing cervical cancer risks for women living with HIV. Dr. Flowers and Co-I's will leverage existing HIV treatment infrastructure in Nigeria to integrate cervical cancer control activities into the successful MoMent (MOther MENTor) peer-based HIV support program.

"Using implementation science frameworks, we will implement and evaluate the sustainability of the adapted MoMent HIV + Homebased Cervical Cancer program to advance cervical cancer control in Nigerian women living with HIV."



Theresa Gillespie, PhD, MA, BSN
Professor
Department of Surgery

Theresa Gillespie, PhD, MA, BSN, Associate Director of Community Outreach and Engagement for Winship Cancer Institute, received a 2022 SOM I3 (Imagine, Innovate, and Impact) Wow! Research award. She will collaborate with Randi Smith, MD, MPH, Joseph Lipscomb, PhD, and Jessica Wells, PhD, RN on the project, entitled "Building an Emory Initiative for Health Equity Research to Reduce Health Disparities in Georgia, or TURNING (HealTh EqUity Research INitiative IN Georgia)." In response to the significant health disparities experienced by various populations in Georgia, Dr. Gillespie and her team's TURNING initiative will strive to build a comprehensive, multidisciplinary partnership, creating a new organizational structure that will facilitate novel collaborations between departments and schools and a common approach to training a new generation of disparities researchers.

"The resulting group would harness all Emory-propelled health disparities projects involving both urban and rural underserved settings in Georgia and maximize the philosophical and practical goals they share to exponentially improve the health status of our state populations," says Dr. Gillespie.



Rachel Patzer, PhD, MPH
Professor
HSR Center Director

Rachel Patzer, PhD, MPH, Director of the Health Services Research Center, received a pilot grant from the Georgia CTSA. Her project, entitled "Improving Equity in Access to Kidney Transplantation through a Web-based Transplant Referral EXchange (TREX) Platform" collaborating with Assistant Professor Megan Urbanski, PhD, MSW, the Southeastern Kidney Transplant Coalition, and developers at Apex Health Innovations, creates an application designed to close the communication gap between dialysis and transplant centers in the Southeastern U.S. (GA, NC, SC), where kidney transplant rates are lowest in the nation.

"We are securely capturing patient data regarding referral and evaluation for kidney transplantation and assessing the rates of transplant referral, evaluation start, and referral closure as well as patient and transplant center characteristics associated with each of these steps in the transplant process." -Dr. Urbanski





ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

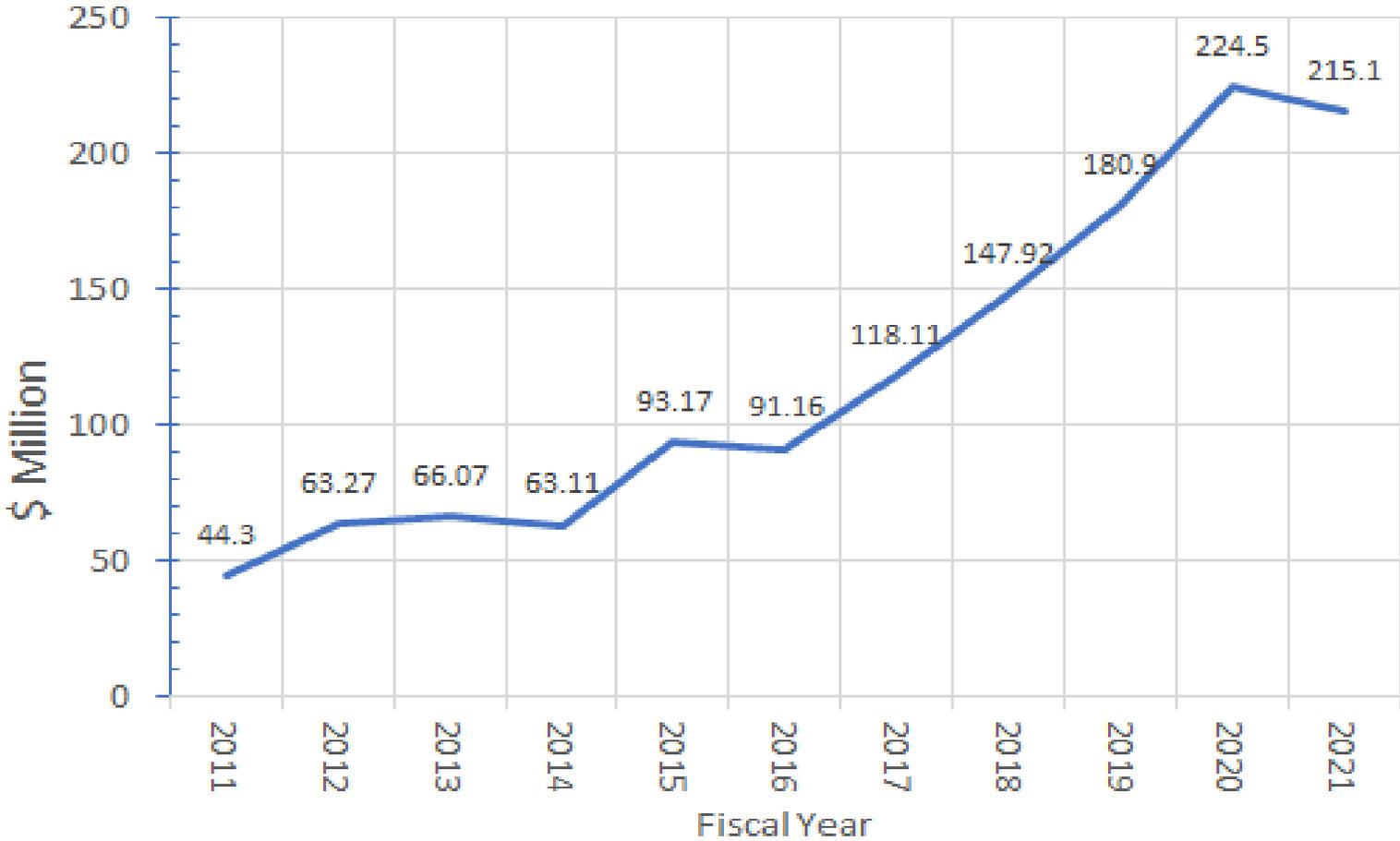
HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH FUNDING

The Health Services Research Center aims to help improve patient-centered outcomes through the promotion of health services research and optimal clinical care delivery. To do this, our HSR Center looks to identify a range of funding opportunities that fit within the large span of health services research topics that our over 200 faculty and trainees are engaged in within Emory and our surrounding communities.

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH FUNDING LANDSCAPE AT EMORY

In the last decade, Emory University has increased institutional investments, infrastructure, and resources to advance the science of healthcare access, outcomes, and delivery. Extramural funding for health services research has increased from \$44.3 million in 2011 to \$215 million in 2021. These overall trends in health services research represents an extraordinary opportunity for the Emory School of Medicine to continue to support a robust community of faculty, trainees, and students to address the needs of the health systems and the community. The increase in funding, combined with a changing healthcare landscape, presents new opportunities for growth and expansion in health services research and an ideal environment to foster training of the next generation of health services research leaders.

Emory Health Services Research Funding Trends
From FY21 Emory Healthcare Innovation Program (HIP) Report



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER

MEMBERSHIP MODEL & RESPONSIBILITIES

Throughout 2022, the HSR Center has focused on redesigning our model for membership. Initial investments in the HSR Center had focused membership within the School of Medicine and the Department of Medicine and Department of Surgery at Emory University; however, HSR expertise and cultivated research skill sets has led to increased demand for participation in the HSR Center throughout the Emory community. To create an inclusive model, we expanded membership opportunities for faculty, staff and trainees to join at various levels. Membership in the HSR Center is currently free and provides numerous benefits.

Membership Model & Responsibilities

- Our new membership model consists of Core members and Affiliate members. By joining the Emory Health Services Research Center, you gain access to a wide network of stakeholders who are interested in health services research, including research that focuses on access to care, outcomes of care, processes and structures of care, and quality of healthcare delivery.
- It is with the help of our affiliates that we are able to conduct rigorous research to impact health and disseminate innovative and transformative research findings to the communities we serve.
- Currently our center has **29 core** members and **64 affiliate members**. As a member, you are able to access our exclusive resources, services, and support provided by our HSR Center.

Health Services Research Center Membership Benefits and Responsibilities

	Core	Affiliate
Responsibilities		
Meet with Prospective Faculty	X	
Speak in an HSR Seminar once every 5 years	X	X
Moderate one HSRC seminar or Trainee Research in Progress meeting once every 2 years	X	
Mentor one HSRC intern every 5 years	X	
Serve as a peer reviewer for Center-Pilot grants	X	
Acknowledge HSRC as support for appropriate manuscripts	X	X
Benefits		
Opportunity to collaborate with other members	X	X
Letter of support for grants	X	X
Letter of support for promotion package	X	X
Participate in annual HSR Day	X	X
Mailing lists for events, newsletters, seminars, and faculty development activities	X	X
Listing on the HSRC website members list	X	X
Inclusion in the HSRC annual report as a member	X	X
Help with recruiting post-docs/ student outreach	X	
Eligible to apply for HSRC pilot funding	X	
Access to catalog of IRB protocols	X	X
Access to list of HSRC databases across Emory	X	X
NIH-style mock study sections practice	X	
Invitations to networking events - local/national	X	X

If you are interested in becoming a member, please visit our website to apply for membership or email HSRC@emory.edu for more info.

[Apply here](#)

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER LEADERSHIP AND PROGRAM SUPPORT



Rachel Patzer, PhD, MPH

Director, Health
Services Research
Center



Neal Dickert, MD, PhD

Associate Director,
Health Services
Research Center



Larissa Teunis, MPA

Director of Projects
& Research



Tracy Obertone, PhD

Associate Director
of Programs



Melisa Meza

Senior Program
Coordinator



Mengyu Di, MSPH

Senior
Biostatistician

An empty lecture hall with rows of black chairs and a large arched window on the left. The ceiling has recessed lighting and a ceiling fan. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**TRAINING THE NEXT
GENERATION OF
HEALTH SERVICES
RESEARCHERS**

NETWORK FOR EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCES AT EMORY

The Health Services Research Center is committed to training the next generation of researchers that bring forth new perspectives, creativity and ambition to solving the most important clinical research questions. This commitment is demonstrated through sincere and intentional efforts to diversify the field in terms of trainees and faculty in leadership roles. It is also illustrated in the way the HSR Center offers educational courses, seminars, and hands-on research experiences for students to enhance the robustness of their research. Ultimately, this underlies an unwavering commitment to creating a new class of academic health services researchers.

Networking and Training with the Network for Evaluation & Implementation Sciences at Emory



The Network for Evaluation and Implementation Sciences at Emory (NEISE) is a network that encourages interdisciplinary research opportunities to harness the intellectual resources of Emory University and Greater Atlanta to create solutions for sustainable and resilient communities, while enriching the faculty and student experience. NEISE offers a collaborative learning environment for evaluation and implementation science research through seminar series as well as training opportunities. To date, NEISE has sponsored 12 large scale grant submissions, of which 5 have been funded. NEISE also provides interdisciplinary networking opportunities for faculty, staff, and students across campus, bringing together researchers and practitioners with interest in improving population health by conducting rigorous, evidence-based, and actionable research on implementing programs and informing policies in the US and abroad.

"The Network for Evaluation and Implementation Sciences at Emory is at the forefront of innovation within academia. It is where research meets practical application in public health and medicine. The trainings and networking events offer opportunities for students, trainees and faculty alike to collaborate on some of the most challenging health problems of our times and drive the translation of research into meaningful change."

- Larissa Teunis, MPA (Georgia State DrPH Student and Director of Projects, HSR Center)



<https://emoryimplementationscience.org>



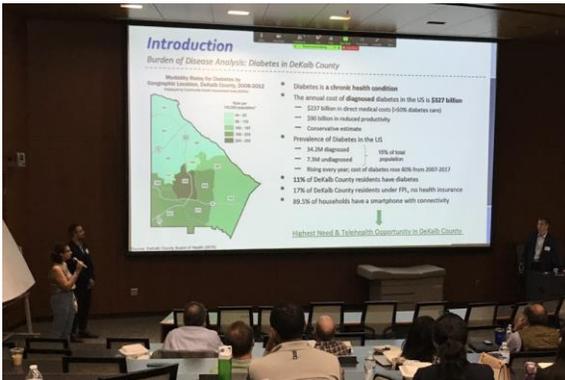
EMORY
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF
MEDICINE

Health Services Research Center
Department of Medicine
and Department of Surgery

TRAINING WITH INNOVATION

HEALTHCARE INNOVATION PROGRAM

The HSR Center is committed to training the next generation of researchers by providing resources to support education inside and outside of the classroom. The Emory-Georgia Tech Healthcare Innovation Program and the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance are key partners in this arena, supporting new and upcoming investigator with access to study design and analytical support, didactic training and seed funding to pilot new and innovative research. Below are some highlighted activities from these partnerships:



The Emory and Georgia Tech Case Competition is an event for Emory and Georgia Tech undergraduate and graduate students who think like innovators to put what they have learned into practice with a real-life, real-time healthcare problem. This case competition will promote the development of interprofessional relationships amongst graduate students through experiential learning opportunities, inspiring long-term chronic care management for diabetic patients in the Georgia Population.

“A fabulous expose of students from Emory and Georgia Tech using their respective expertise to tackle real world problems related to diabetes care. All group proposals were impressive, and judging them was a pleasure”

– HSR Faculty Judge,
Dr. Jessica Harding

A graphic featuring two spotlights at the top corners, casting beams of light onto a three-tiered white pedestal in the center. The text '2022 INTERN SPOTLIGHT' is written in bold, dark blue letters across the top of the pedestal.

2022 INTERN SPOTLIGHT

The Health Services Research Center welcomed 12 interns in 2022. The intern program supports health services research investigators by facilitating access to graduate student interns from the Rollins School of Public Health through the Rollins Earn and Learn program, creating a mutually beneficial relationship for practical research opportunities for students to participate in real world, practical health services research while providing support for faculty from a leading public health school. Trainees rotating through the program go on to doctoral programs, medical school, or other influential positions throughout medicine and public health.

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER

INTERN SPOTLIGHT



Franchesca Amor Aguilar, or as many people may know her as Fran, was born and raised in Honolulu, HI, and attended Gettysburg College for her Bachelor of Science in Biology with a minor in East Asian Studies - Chinese Track. In undergrad, she worked in a research lab that focused on dipeptidases in *Drosophila melanogaster* (fruit flies). She created a micro endpoint assay for dipeptidase A activity. Franchesca is currently pursuing her Master of Public Health in Epidemiology with a certificate in Infectious Disease Epidemiology. At the HSR Center, she works on the RECOVER study team, an NIH-funded observational study aiming to understand long COVID. She is interested in infectious diseases and outbreak response and aspires to work as an infectious disease epidemiologist at a local or state health department.

Franchesca Amor Aguilar (Fran)



Arrey-Takor Ayuk-Arrey is an MPH Epidemiology candidate at the Rollins School of Public Health. Prior to attending Emory, he obtained a Bachelor of Science from the University of Maryland, College Park and briefly worked as a Research Assistant at The MayaTech Corporation. Arrey currently works with Dr. Katie Ross-Driscoll (Department of Surgery) on a research study focused on identifying the factors that influence liver transplant referral, evaluation, and waitlisting among hepatocellular carcinoma patients with end-stage liver disease in Georgia. As someone who has previously undergone a transplant, he is very passionate about his work with Dr. Ross-Driscoll. Arrey plans to pursue a career in medicine after completing his MPH degree.

Arrey-Takor Ayuk-Arrey



Emily Blythe is an MPH Epidemiology candidate from Cherokee, NC. Ms. Blythe research interests include health equity and social epidemiology, and is currently pursuing the Social Determinants of Health Certificate with her MPH degree. Currently, she is working on a study exploring COVID-19 vaccine perspectives among patients with end stage kidney disease, with RaDIANT dialysis staff surveys regarding barriers to kidney transplant, and on a study to understand T-REX utilization among dialysis and transplant centers. Emily's future career aspirations include working as an epidemiologist to further understand the social determinants of health and mitigate their impact on health disparities among minority populations.

Emma Blythe



Margo Bowers is a first-year MPH candidate in Epidemiology at the Rollins School of Public Health and recently joined the HSR Center team as an intern working on the RaDIANT study. From Ohio State, Margo found her passion for chronic disease epidemiology through taking coursework in cancer and cardiovascular epidemiology and from her previous experiences working as a Regulatory Research Intern. After graduating in 2024, Margo hopes to have a career in the clinical research field where she can apply her knowledge to impact and educate others on diverse risk factors that could have influenced their chronic disease diagnosis.

Margo Bowers

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH INTERN SPOTLIGHT



Nicole Doucet is a second year Epidemiology Master of Public Health student and pursuing a certificate in Social Determinants of Health. Her research interests include health disparities, particularly racial and gender disparities, and infectious disease. Nicole is currently working on two projects. One project is on gender disparities in kidney transplantation, and the other is on racial disparities in COVID-19.

Nicole Doucet



Fanta Drame is a second-year MPH candidate in the Global Health Department. She is focused on the sexual and reproductive health track and completing the Maternal and Child Health Certificate Program. Currently, Ms. Drame is a public health advisor in the Division of STD Prevention at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). She is also passionate about data visualization, transformation, and communication. Fanta currently supports communication projects within the HSR Center, and as she completes her degree and training, she aspires to continue tackling the under-five mortality rate and obstetric violence globally.

Fanta Drame



Olivia Free is a first-year MPH candidate in the Behavioral, Social, Health Education Sciences department. She currently supports Dr. Gabriela Cohen as her Graduate Research Assistant. Olivia specifically helps support Dr. Cohen's project at Grady Hospital titled, "What matters most for patients with dementia and their caregivers: An analysis of dementia care in an outpatient geriatrics clinic."

Olivia Free



Alexandra Kauffman is a first-year epidemiology student at the Rollins School of Public Health. As an HSR Center intern, she has assisted with several NIH grant applications, and has learned a lot about the grant process. Alexandra's research interests are centered around social determinants of health (SDOH) and social epidemiology. Over her career, her goal is to work at various levels, spending time in both data analysis and, more directly, community engagement settings.

Alexandra Kauffman

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH INTERN SPOTLIGHT



Sofia Oviedo is a second-year MPH Epidemiology candidate who graduated from Texas A&M University in 2021 with a BS in Public Health. Her research interests include health services research, social epidemiology, and cardiometabolic diseases. Ms. Oviedo is currently involved with the quantitative aim of a Georgia CTSA pilot grant looking to evaluate the effectiveness of an electronic kidney transplant referral system. She is also completing her thesis with Dr. Jessica Harding, which will examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on access to telehealth and completion of diabetes routine care guidelines among those with diabetes in an integrated healthcare system. After completion of my MPH, Sofia hopes to continue doing research in health services and outcomes and eventually obtain a PhD.

Sofia Oviedo



Charlie Wood is a first-year MSPH candidate in Health Services Research. He has a background in mental health advocacy and is currently working with Dr. Virginia Shaffer (Department of Surgery) to study the impact of depression and anxiety on surgical outcomes for colorectal surgery patients. After graduation, Charlie hopes to expand access to healthcare by researching health insurance policies, especially for behavioral health.

Charlie Wood



Yanan Wang is from the Biostatistics department in the Rollins School of Public Health. As a biostatistician intern in HSR, I really enjoyed working and being part of it here. I have done racial disparities in COVID-19 projects so far and I currently focus on diabetes care processes during COVID-19 projects, which paves the way for me to be a professional biostatistician in the future.

Yanan Wang



Ziwei Zhang is a second-year MSPH Biostatistics candidate. Ziwei joined the HSRC in 2022 as a student intern. Her background is in International Economics she earned her degree from China Pharmaceutical University. Currently Ziwei is working on several research projects with the HSR Center staff to advance her training in health services research methods.

Ziwei Zhang

A 3D rendered scene featuring a sphere resting on a rectangular block. Below the block are a cylinder and a cone. The text 'HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CORE PROGRAMS' is overlaid in yellow on the rectangular block.

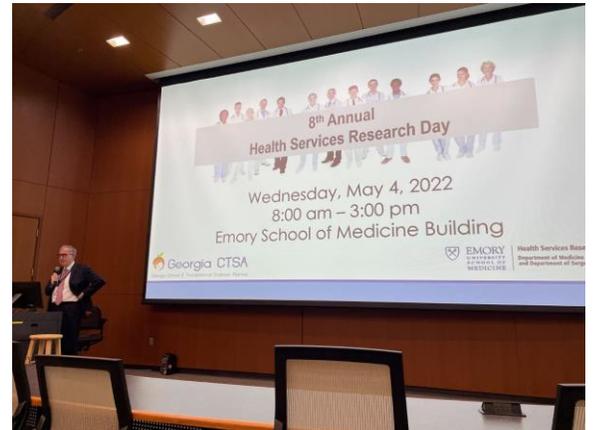
**HEALTH SERVICES
RESEARCH
CORE PROGRAMS**

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CORE PROGRAMS

To meet our strategic goals, the HSR Center supports several activities to help faculty, trainees, and students in health services research to conduct and disseminate impactful research, prepare the next generation of health services researchers through training and education, and to provide the resources and infrastructure critical to drive HSR. These include but are not limited to research seminars, networking events, mock study sections, and training opportunities to support the next generation of health services researchers.

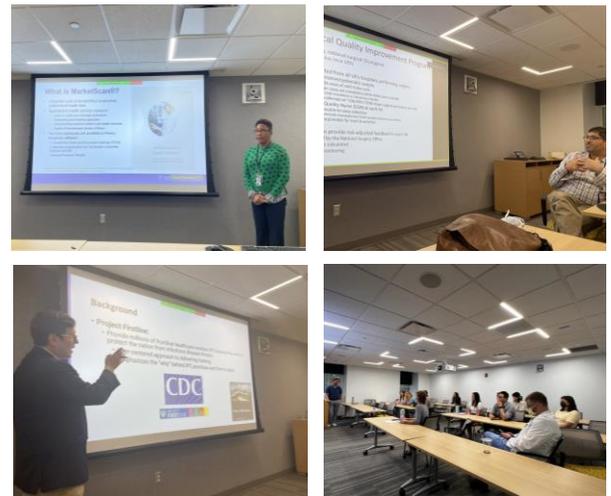
HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH DAY

The Emory Health Services Research Center and Georgia CTSA were excited to host over 150 researchers back in person for the 8th Annual Health Services Research Day at Emory School of Medicine in May 2022. During this symposium and networking opportunity, researchers across Georgia learned about ongoing quality, effectiveness, and value-based research activities. The event showcased the latest research during featured talks, oral abstracts, and poster sessions. Thank you to our planning committee, keynote speaker, featured speakers, staff volunteers, abstract reviewers, and poster judges who helped make this event possible.



HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH SEMINARS

The HSR Center hosts monthly health services research seminars, hosting both internal and external researchers. The seminars are opportunities for faculty, trainees and staff to learn about new and emerging topics in the field and offer a valuable forum for introducing potential collaborators or expanding professional networks throughout the Emory community. These meetings occur in a hybrid format and are open to Core and Affiliate HSR Center members and their trainees.



TRAINEE RESEARCH IN PROGRESS MEETINGS

Trainee Research in Progress (TRiP) meetings offer an environment for students or faculty to present research in progress to obtain feedback from the HSR Center team and faculty advisors. This enhances the robustness of the research and ensures trainees are prepared for the peer review process, oral presentation, grant applications, or thesis defenses.





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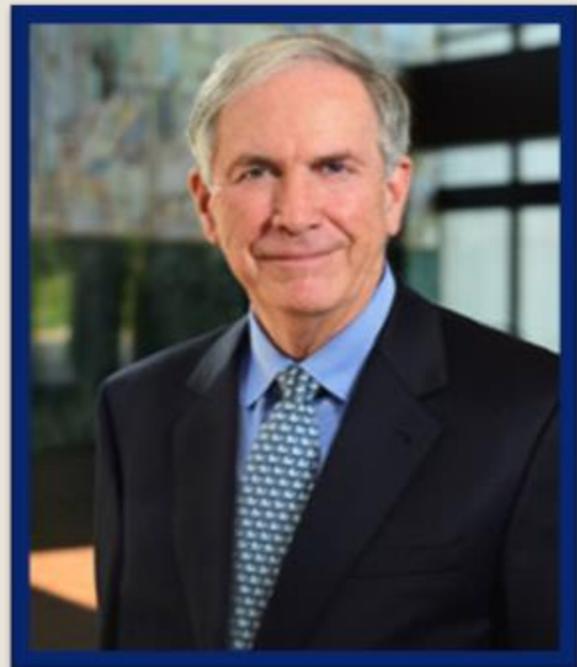


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