

## Weekly Newsletter January 16-19, 2024

### PQHS NEWS

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Wednesday, January 17 – 10:00 – 11:00 AM**

**Research Meeting –**

**Presenters:** Arlene Ash (Division Chief for Biostatistics and Health Services Research) and Jeroan Alison (Chair), in the Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences, UMass Chan

**Title:** Using Synthetic Control Method (SCM) to strengthen causal inference with observational data.

**Brief Description:** The goal is to estimate the effect of “treatment” on a population with an ill-defined, non-random mechanism of treatment assignment, by comparing an outcome Y for treated (T) vs. non-treated (NT) cases. The classical method of handling such data is to build a model on variables that predict the outcome and identify the difference in actual outcomes for the Ts (as compared to the NTs). This works well when all important predictors are included in a correctly-specified model, regardless of whether the predictors are similarly distributed in the T and NT populations. Propensity score methods (PSM) were popularized by Rubin and Rosenbaum in the 1980’s to address the fact that, when the populations are highly dissimilar, a mis-specified predictive model can produce radically wrong findings. Synthetic control methods (SCM), introduced by economists for policy studies early in this century, have since been adapted for use in clinical-trial-like settings, and have been recently been [used to support FDA](#) decision-making. Both PSM and SCM can be implemented using all T and NT cases, with weights to enforce balance (on average) on all important variables. We explore differences in these methods and why one might be better for strengthening causal inference with observational data.

Click [here](#) to join or call 646 876 9923 Meeting ID: 937 1668 5400 password: 492717

#### PQHS HEADSHOTS FOR WEBSITE



PQHS would like to encourage all staff and faculty to get their headshots taken in their best outfit during this season as this will be used to update our website. Photos are taken every other Wednesday from 9 AM to 3 PM on the fifth floor of the Sherman Center by the elevators. Each session caps at 50 people. Anyone at UMass Chan can sign up using this document found on the SharePoint site. **See updated link for new options:** [Photo Sign-Ups \(office365.com\)](#)

#### PQHS HAPPENINGS



**Sign up to have lunch with the Chair & Vice Chair!** There are still slots available to pick from. Lunch with the Chair and Vice Chair sign ups are first come first serve for 3 Faculty Members and 3 Staff Members each month to have to have a nice catered meal and to talk about anything, but NO WORK TALK. Please review the available slots below and click on the button to sign up for the date that works for you. Thank you!  
Click [here](#) to sign up!

#### PQHS SHOUT OUT



Donghee (Nicole) Lee has received a NIH K99/R00 grant under the primary mentorship of Drs. Elise Stevens and Rajani Sadasivam. The goal of the project is to investigate how e-cigarette education message sources and presentation strategies impact young adults’ e-cigarettes use. The study employs psychophysiological methods and a texting intervention.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



Wednesday, January 17, 2024, 3:30PM-4:30PM

### ***"Housing, Homelessness and Health: What Do We Know Housing And Health And What Is Being Done?"***

Presented by: Tom Byrne, MSW, PhD; Jeneczka Roman, MPH & Elizabeth Gonzalez Suarez, MA

Click [here](#) to Register.



Thursday, March 25, 2024, 12:00-1:00PM

### ***Department of Medicine Grand Rounds: "Food Insecurity and Food is Medicine"***

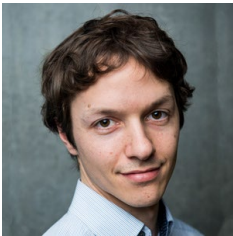
Presented by: Kurt Hager, PhD, MS, UMass Chan and Elizabeth Eagleson, MD, Baystate Health PQHS faculty member, Kurt Hager, will present at the quarterly Grand Rounds next week. The course objectives are to learn how food insecurity impacts clinical care, how emerging partnerships in Massachusetts are connecting patients to free, healthy foods, how these programs impact health outcomes, and what resources are available to physicians. Click [here](#) to Register.

Monday, January 29, 2024, 2:00-4:00PM

### ***"Striving for Impact: Designing the Community – Academic Research Dissemination Process to Foster Equity"***

Presented by: Kathleen Szegda, PhD, MPH, MS, Director of Community Research and Evaluation at the Public Health Institute of Western MA (PHIWM) & Sarah Goff MD, PhD, Associate Professor and Program Head of Health Policy and Management at UMass Amherst

Click [here](#) to Register.



Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 12:00-1:00PM

### ***"Making Reproducibility Research More Systematic"***

Presented by: Abel Brodeur, PhD, Assistant Professor at University of Ottawa & Institute for Replication

Click [here](#) to join. Password: 602937

## UMASS CHAN REMINDER



**Holiday season public health reminders:** With the holiday season upon us, many will be traveling and gathering with family, friends and colleagues, which, while festive, may increase the possibility of contracting COVID-19, the flu, RSV and other viruses or infectious diseases. Consider masking while on public transportation and in crowded areas. Please be reminded to follow good public health practices, including receiving annual vaccinations against influenza, COVID-19 and, if in a risk group, RSV ([How to Get Your Flu, COVID-19, and RSV Vaccines This Year | CDC](#)) and practicing good hygiene, including frequent hand washing. If you are experiencing symptoms of any illness, contact your health care providers, avoid coming to work or school, and contact Employee or Student Health for return-to-work guidance.

[Click here for instructions on what to do if you are experiencing symptoms or are exposed to COVID-19.](#) We continue to require that individuals who test positive for COVID-19 report the test result to Employee or Student Health so that we can prevent outbreaks.

Free, at-home COVID-19 tests are available to order at <https://www.covid.gov/tests>. To locate COVID-19 vaccines in your area, visit <https://www.vaccines.gov/>.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for helping to keep our campus community safe and healthy.

**Holiday season is upon us.** Here is the [link](#) to the Holiday Calendars for UMass Chan Medical School.

**Following Holiday Schedule for 2024:**

- Presidents Day – Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup>
- Patriots' Day – Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>
- Memorial Day – Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup>
- Juneteenth National Independence Day – Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup>
- Independence Day – Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Labor Day – Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Indigenous Peoples' Day – Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup>
- Veterans Day – Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup>
- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup>
- Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 29<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Eve – Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

*PQHS Weekly will be sent to all members of PQHS on Monday mornings. The intent is to provide a snapshot of what is going on that week in PQHS and to share our faculty and staff activities with the department. We depend on you to provide the items we need to share. Please send suggestions of events, faculty invited seminars & talks, honors, student thesis presentations, and news – new babies born! – to Kellie ([kellie.armstrong@umassmed.edu](mailto:kellie.armstrong@umassmed.edu)) & Sarah ([sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu](mailto:sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu)) by Friday each week.*