

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

Weekly Newsletter

MARCH 9-13, 2026



UMass Chan
MEDICAL SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS



Wednesday, March 18, 10:00 – 11:00 AM

Research Methods Meeting

Presenter: Jamie Hartmann-Boyce, MA, DPhil, Assistant Professor of Health Policy and Management, Department of Health Policy and Promotion, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Title: Component network meta-analysis and component network meta-regression: worked examples from smoking cessation trials

Abstract: Component network meta-analysis (CNMA) extends traditional network meta-analysis by decomposing multicomponent interventions into their constituent parts, allowing estimation of the relative contribution of individual components and their interactions. In this talk, I introduce the key methodological principles of CNMA and its extension to component network meta-regression (CNMR), which models how component effects vary by study- or participant-level covariates. Using two large networks of smoking cessation trials as worked examples, I outline the practical workflow: defining and coding components, specifying additive and interaction models, assessing assumptions, and interpreting component-level estimates. The session highlights how CNMA and CNMR can provide more mechanistic and policy-relevant insights for complex interventions.

Bio: Jamie Hartmann-Boyce is an Assistant Professor in Health Policy and Management at University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her work focuses on evidence-based approaches to health behavior change, particularly in tobacco control, diabetes and weight management. Hartmann-Boyce leads and contributes to numerous systematic reviews and meta-analyses, and is a Senior Editor with Cochrane. She is widely recognized for her research on e-cigarettes and smoking cessation, helping shape public health policies and clinical guidelines. In addition to her academic role, she is an advocate for accessible, evidence-informed health information for both policymakers and the public. Click [here](#) to join.

KUDOS



Alan J. Ardelean, MS, is a 2nd-year PhD Student in the Population Health Sciences PhD program. He is mentored by and works with Kate L. Lapane, PhD, MS, focusing his dissertation on the association between psychoactive drug use and risk of suicide-related outcomes among US nursing home residents. Alan was accepted as an **Emerging Scholar** in the Center for Accelerating Practices to End Suicide (CAPES) Year 4 (2026-2027) program, featured [here](#). He will collaborate with CAPES faculty, receive mentorship, and gain access to institutional resources as part of CAPES' mission to foster the next generation of research-driven suicide prevention experts.

On Thursday, February 26, several people gathered to celebrate the **retirement of Bill M. Jesdale, PhD**. He presented “Hallucinating the Future of Epidemiology in the World of AI: The Importance of Asking Good Questions”.

Enjoy Your Retirement



[Jennifer Tjia, MD](#) - Professor, Epidemiology, was part of a 45-minute GeriPal podcast “**Deprescribing at the End of Life**”. Dr. Tjia is currently on a Fulbright Scholarship in the Netherlands. Below are options to listen to the podcast.

Geripal Blog Post URL

<https://bit.ly/GeriPalEp393>

YouTube

https://youtu.be/YuVyP_PcPEw

DEPARTMENT RESOURCE REMINDERS

CONNECT WITH THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Jeroan Allison and Sharina Person invite you to schedule a 30-minute confidential meeting with them. These sessions are an opportunity for you to discuss any topic of your choice in confidence. Whether you have ideas to share, concerns to address, or simply want to connect, this is your chance to speak directly with leadership in a private setting.

If you would like to schedule a meeting with PQHS leadership, please use the scheduling link to reserve your time.

[Sign up here](#) They look forward to connecting with you.

GRANT REVIEW INTERNAL PROCESS (GRIP)

GRIP is a departmental initiative, now in its second year, designed to support and enhance the grant-writing skills of our postdoctoral fellows and faculty (at all levels) as well as improve the overall quality of grant submissions from our department. This program will offer voluntary, constructive reviews to increase the success rates of submitted proposals.

Bi-weekly 30-minute Zoom sessions are held on the first and third Thursdays of each month from 8:30 to 10:00 AM. This year, the program runs from December 4 through May 30. To sign up for a session, [click here](#).

This is a valuable resource, and we encourage you to take full advantage of it to strengthen your proposals. If you have any questions or would like to participate, please feel free to reach out.

Rob Goldberg and Bruce Barton

Co-Committee Chairs

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

QUANTITATIVE METHODS CORE (QMC)

The **Quantitative Methods Core (QMC)**, housed right here in PQHS, has been helping investigators turn great ideas into funded, high-impact studies for over 15 years! Our team brings together expert biostatistical faculty, seasoned analysts, and skilled data management staff to support projects of all sizes and across a wide range of content areas. We offer:

- **Study Design & Analysis** – support for clinical trials, cohort studies, case-control designs, and health services research (including claims and EHR data).
- **Grant Development** – guidance in shaping specific aims, analytic plans, and power/sample size justifications.
- **Data & Project Support** – robust data management systems, project coordination, and project management.

Flexible engagement options: You can involve QMC faculty/staff at the level you need—hourly support or percent effort on grants.

QMC Skillsets Available Through the Talent Share Marketplace

- Power/sample size calculations
- Advanced statistical modeling (longitudinal, survival, hierarchical, SEM, etc.)
- Data cleaning, wrangling, and harmonization
- Creation of study databases and REDCap builds
- Statistical programming (SAS, R, Stata, SQL)
- Data visualization and reporting
- Manuscript tables/figures and publication support
- Project and study coordination

Let's connect!

The QMC Directors, Bruce Barton and Sharina Person, are happy to talk with you about your project needs and how they can partner with you.

RESEARCH METHODS MEETINGS

The goal is to share innovative research methods, explore current challenges like reducing inequities, highlight method-focused publications, seek feedback on research problems for grants, and identify collaborators for new or ongoing projects.

Meetings are scheduled on the first and third Wednesdays of each month through the end of June. Always advertised in this newsletter, but if you would like to receive a calendar invite and reminders before each seminar, please email judi.saber@umassmed.edu to be added to the distribution list.

DIVERSITY

National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, led by the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), is celebrated throughout March 2026 (March 1–31), focusing on inclusion, advocacy, and celebrating the contributions of people with developmental disabilities.

Key Aspects of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month:

- **Goals:** The campaign aims to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all aspects of community life, including education, employment, and social activities.
- **Theme:** The 2026 campaign emphasizes creating accessible, supportive communities year-round, with specific initiatives like "The Power of Support" theme focusing on sharing stories of support.
- **History:** Proclaimed by President Reagan in 1987 to increase awareness and support people with disabilities in leading productive, full lives.
- **Scope:** Developmental disabilities include conditions such as autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and intellectual disabilities.
- **Significance:** Approximately one in six children in the U.S. has a developmental disability, emphasizing the need for awareness and accessibility.



St. Patrick's Day (March 17) commemorates Ireland's patron saint and has evolved into a global celebration of Irish culture. Beyond parades and traditional symbols, the day invites reflection on themes of migration, resilience, cultural pride, and the importance of fostering inclusive communities that honor diverse cultural identities.

<p>2026 MARCH</p> <p>Monthly observances: *National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month *National Irish American Heritage Month *Women's History Month</p>	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	International Women's Day	Commonwealth Day					
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	International Day to Combat Islamophobia	*Laylat al-Qadr *Benito Juárez Day	St. Patrick's Day		*St. Joseph's Day *Chaitra Navaratri (3/19-27) *Eid al-Fitr (3/19-20)	*Ostara *Vernal Equinox Day *Naw-Rúz (3/20-21)	*Nowruz *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
			*Annunciation of the Virgin Mary *Intl Day of Remembrance of Victims of Slavery and Slave Trade	Khordad Sal	Ram Navami		
29	30	31	1	2	3	4	
Palm Sunday		*Mahavira Jayanti *International Transgender Day of Visibility					

UMASS REMINDER

Use Your Excess Vacation Leave by June 27, 2026

As we get closer to fiscal year end, we want to remind you of the maximum accruals outlined in the [UMass Chan Holiday, and Personal and Vacation Time Policy](#) so you can plan accordingly.

As of the last full pay period of the fiscal year, the maximum number of vacation hours employees may carry over into the next fiscal year is 240. During the fiscal year, employees are allowed to accrue hours over 240. Hours over this accrual limit are automatically re-set in the payroll system to the accrual maximum. This year, **the relevant pay period ends Saturday, June 27, 2026**. You are encouraged to use any vacation balances that exceed the 240-hour maximum before that date. To avoid the loss of accrued vacation hours, review the following recommendations:

- Take all vacation over 240 hours before Saturday, June 27, 2026. Keep in mind that the vacation accrual for the pay period ending on that date that will not appear on your paycheck.
- Any hours over the cap will automatically be reset to 240 and will appear on your paycheck **on Friday, July 3, 2026**.
- If you are approaching 240 hours of accrued vacation time, talk with your manager about planning time off before June 27 and make sure it is approved by them.
- Ensure your vacation time has been entered into the Time Reporting system **by June 27, 2026**.



HOLIDAY — SCHEDULE —

- 🚩 Patriots' Day – Monday, April 20th
- 🚩 Memorial Day – Monday, May 25th
- 🚩 Juneteenth National Independence Day – Friday, June 19th
- 🚩 Independence Day – Friday, July 3rd (observed)
- 🚩 Labor Day – Monday, September 7th
- 🚩 Indigenous Peoples' Day – Monday, October 12th
- 🚩 Veterans Day – Wednesday, November 11th
- 🚩 Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 26th
- 🚩 Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 27th
- 🚩 Christmas Eve – Thursday, December 24th
- 🚩 Christmas Day – Friday, December 25th

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 Judi (judi.saber@umassmed.edu) & Sarah (sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu) by Friday each week.