

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

Weekly Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 7-11, 2026



UMass Chan
MEDICAL SCHOOL

NEW GRANT



Award Number: 1H79TI088800-01
Awarding Agency: Department of Health and Human Services
Type: New Competing
Title: New England Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Regional Center
Project Period: 9/30/2026 - 9/29/2029
PI: Rosemarie Martin
Total approved for this period: \$650,000

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, September 14, 9:00 - 9:30 AM, Zoom

Live Webinar: OAI CORE Knowledgebase

Presenter: Dr. Shao-Hsien Liu, Associate Professor, PQHS

Title: Causal Inference Using Osteoarthritis Initiative Data: Opportunities, Challenges, and Practical Considerations

Description: This webinar will introduce researchers to opportunities for conducting causal inference studies using the Osteoarthritis Initiative's rich longitudinal clinical, imaging, medication, behavioral, and patient-reported data. The presentation will highlight practical considerations for defining research questions, selecting analytic samples and time-varying measures, addressing confounding and missing data, and choosing appropriate causal inference methods.

Register here

For questions, contact the OAI CORE Team at oaiknowledgebase@umassmed.edu.



Wednesday, September 16, 10:00 – 11:00 AM, Zoom



Research Methods Meeting

Presenter: Shih-Yen Pan, PhD student in Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst
Title: The Impact of IMF Programs on Tuberculosis Outcomes and Government Health Spending: A Cross-National Difference-in-Differences Analysis, 1980–2019

Abstract: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set targets (Target 3.3) for tuberculosis (TB) control, including a 90% reduction in TB deaths and an 80% reduction in incidence by 2030 relative to 2015 levels. Progress has fallen far short of these targets, however, as over 10 million people continue to fall ill and over a million die from the disease every year, making TB among the top 10 causes of death worldwide. The International Monetary Fund (IMF)

has faced sustained criticism for the adverse population health consequences of its lending programs, which often require policy conditionalities prioritizing macroeconomic stability and market liberalization over public provision of social protection. These policies may affect TB outcomes both by constraining government health spending and by exacerbating underlying social determinants such as poverty and malnutrition.

This study employs a local projections difference-in-differences design to estimate the impact of IMF programs on TB outcomes and government health spending using cross-national panel data from 1980 to 2019. Focusing on first-time IMF program participation, the approach enables cleaner comparisons between treated and control countries while accounting for prior program exposures. Outcomes examined include TB mortality, prevalence, and incidence rates, alongside government health spending as a key mediating pathway.

The results indicate that IMF programs, on average, lead to a 7% increase in participant countries' TB mortality rate, a 4.8% increase in TB incidence rate, and a 4.8% reduction in government health spending per capita over six years following program entry. These findings suggest that IMF programs may be undermining TB control by weakening health systems and worsening socioeconomic conditions, with important implications for global health policy.

Bio: Shih-Yen Pan is a PhD student in Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. His research applies causal inference methods to study how political-economic forces shape population health and incarceration in the U.S. and globally. Click [here](#) to join.

Wednesday, September 16, 12:00 - 1:30 PM, Zoom

Synthetic Cannabinoids and Hemp-Derived Intoxicants: A Discussion of Policy & Public Health

This webinar will provide participants with an overview of the federal and state regulatory landscape governing hemp-derived cannabinoids, including emerging efforts to address regulatory loopholes and recent legislative actions. Participants will explore the pharmacology and health effects of synthetic cannabinoids and hemp-derived THC products, review current public health surveillance data and poison center trends, and examine the short- and long-term medical and psychiatric consequences associated with use, including intoxication, overdose, and psychosis.

[Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Please feel free to share this with anyone who may be interested. We hope to see you there!

Tuesday, September 22, 12:30 – 5:30 PM

Health Education Academy for Leadership and Learning (HEALL) Education Day

Location: Paul J. DiMare Center, N1-1200 - N1-1500

Education Day offers an ongoing opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation, connect with like-minded colleagues, plan collaborations, and celebrate our educational activities and scholarship. This annual event serves to highlight the academic scholarly work that happens here, complementing your daily teaching, lab or clinical responsibilities, and curriculum development.

Education Day features plenary speakers who address topics such as the influence of Academies, conducting educational scholarly projects, and innovative trends in Health Sciences education. The event brings together key institutional leaders and educators who shape the future of Health Sciences education at UMass Chan and beyond. It also provides a forum for presenting and discussing novel educational initiatives underway at UMass Chan, enhancing our school's reputation and fostering collaboration within our educational community.

- 12:30-12:45 pm, Welcome Remarks
- 12:45-1:45 pm, Plenary (details coming soon)
- 1:55-4:00 pm Workshops
- 4:10-5:30 pm, Collaborative and Conversations (includes reception)

Click [here](#) to register.

Friday, September 25, 12:30 – 5:30 PM, Zoom

Qualitative Research Interest Group Webinar

Presenter: Katie Sveinson, PhD, Associate Professor, Associate Department Chair Charles J. Dockendorff Endowed Faculty Fellow, Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst



Title: Introduction to Discourse Analysis as Theory and Methodology

Abstract: Communication in our multimodal world goes beyond spoken words and written text. Images, videos, symbols, icons, body language, sound, music, body language, and physical arrangements make unique contributions to effective messaging. Discourse analysis allows for the study of these elements of communication in social processes. With a focus on meaning-making, discourse analysis highlights how the relationship between language and what language represents is far from straightforward (Gee, 2011; Sveinson, 2026). This approach offers opportunities to investigate and to be conscious of artifacts that may communicate (un)intended and implicit messaging that may reveal hidden assumptions and power structures encoded in

common documents. It goes past literal words to show how other aspects of messaging content may shape beliefs and behaviors. In this talk, Dr. Sveinson will discuss the inextricably linked theory, methodology, methods, and analysis of discourse analysis, with a focus on the uniqueness of this approach compared to other qualitative methodologies. Emphasis will be placed on how this work links micro-level language use to macro-level structures. Examples of her work will be provided as well as suggested areas of interest to utilize this approach.

Bio: Dr. Sveinson has published 13 articles utilizing (critical) discourse analysis, including empirical pieces, methodological perspectives, and scoping reviews and has received the Isenberg School of Management Outstanding Research Award. She serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Sport Management, Sport Management Review, and Sociology of Sport Journal and is a NASSM Research Fellow.

Click [here](#) to register.

Sunday, September 27, 12:00-1:00 PM

2026 UMass Cancer Walk

Polar Park, 100 Madison Street, Worcester

Join Us for the Cancer Walk!

We're putting together a team for this year's cancer walk, and everyone is welcome to join! It's a great opportunity to support cancer research, honor those affected by cancer, and connect with colleagues outside of work. If you're interested in participating, please use the team invitation link below. We'd love to have you with us!

To register, click [here](#).



2024 PQHS Team

[Watch Chancellor McManus's video message](#) to learn about how you can help.

Friday, October 9, 12:00-1:00 PM

Qualitative Research Office Hours

This is an open online meeting for all interested in qualitative research methods, where participants may choose to present to other qualitative researchers their research project, proposal, manuscript, or idea for discussion and feedback. A short basic methods presentation will also be planned, such as using conceptual models, immersion/crystallization, or developing a coding structure. Click [here](#) to join.

Gerontology Speaker Series

University of Massachusetts Boston
Department of Gerontology and Gerontology Institute,
Donna M. and Robert J. Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences
&
University of Massachusetts Medical School
Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences
For more information contact Whitney Mills: whitney.mills@umb.edu

Monday, September 14, 1:00-2:15 PM

via Zoom: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/94175483404>, Password: Boston

Title: Patient Priorities Care

Speaker: Aanand D. Naik, MD, Professor and Chair, Management, Policy and Community Health, Associate Dean for Learning and Health Systems, Director, Institute on Aging, Nancy P. and Vincent F. Guinee, MD Distinguished Chair, and Uzi and Micki Halevey and Carmel Dyer, MD Interprofessional Research Fellowship, School of Public Health, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, TX



Monday, September 21, 1:00-2:15 PM

via Zoom: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/94175483404>, Password: Boston

Title: Age-Friendly Ecosystem

Speaker: Karon Phillips, PhD, MPH, MS, CHES, CAPS, FGSA, Policy Development Manager, Trust for America's Health, Washington, D.C.



Monday, October 5, 1:00-2:15 PM

via Zoom: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/94175483404>, Password: Boston

Title: Implementation Science and Rehabilitation Research

Presenter: Lisa Juckett, PhD, OTR/L, CHT, Associate Professor, Division of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, The Ohio State University



Monday, November 9, 1:00-2:15 PM

In-person: Gerontology Classroom, Wheatley Peters Hall, 3rd floor, Room 125

And via Zoom: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/94175483404>, Password: Boston

Title: Narrative Gerontology: Theory, Research, and Practice

Presenter: Gabriela Spector-Mersel, PhD, MSW, Associate Professor and Director,, Sadot Institute for the Study of Shared Trauma and Growth, Sapir Academic College

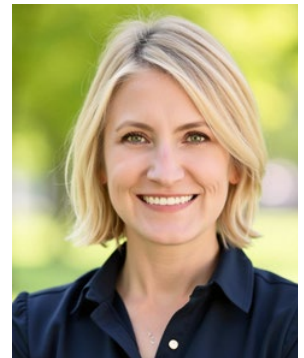


Monday, December 7, 1:00-2:15 PM

via Zoom: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/94175483404>, Password: Boston

Title: Montessori In Nursing Homes

Presenter: Michelle Hilgeman, PhD, Associate Chief of Staff for Research, Tuscaloosa Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Associate Adjunct Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Alabama



PHS STUDENTS VISIT TO MILAN, ITALY

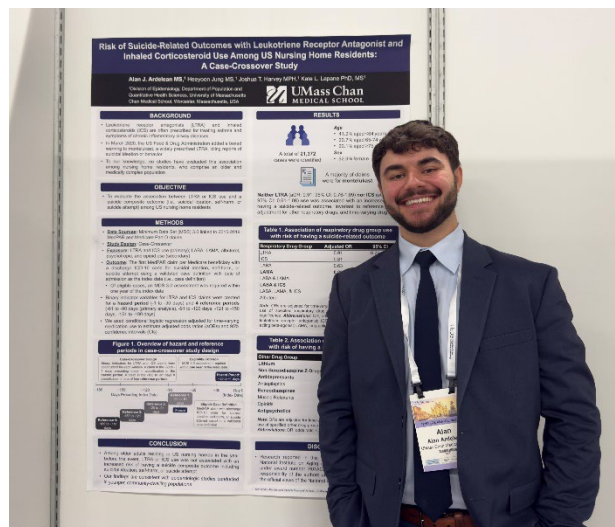
PHS Students at 42nd Annual International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) Conference

Alan J. Ardelean, MS, Heeyoon (Melissa) Jung, MS, and Joshua T. (JT) Harvey, MPH -- PhD students in the Population Health Sciences program -- attended the 42nd Annual International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) conference in Milan, Italy (August 29-September 2).

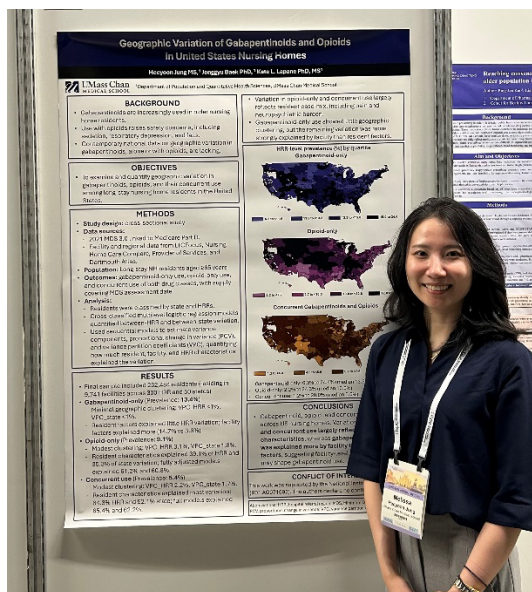
As [Kate Lapane](#)'s mentees, the students presented their respective abstracts as posters featured among several research showcases, including Geriatric Pharmacoepidemiology, Methods in Pharmacoepidemiology/Study Design, and Drug Utilization/Health Services Research/Trends and Comparisons. They networked with new and familiar colleagues in pharmacoepidemiology, engaged in didactic and hands-on conference courses, and return to UMass Chan eager to continue their studies.



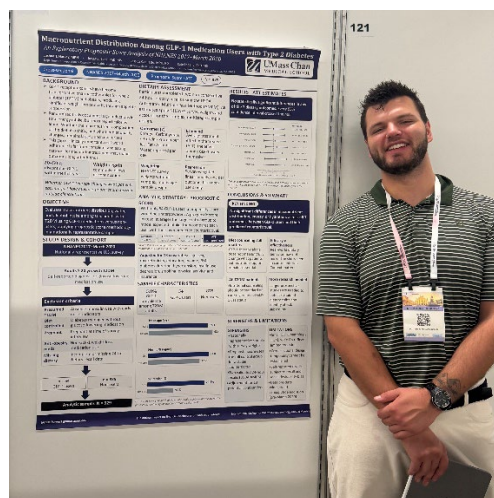
Alan, Heeyoon (Melissa), and JT at the 42nd Annual ISPE in Milan, Italy



Alan J. Ardelean, MS
Abstract: "Risk of Suicide-Related Outcomes with Leukotriene Receptor Antagonist and Inhaled Corticosteroid Use Among US Nursing Home Residents: A Case-Crossover Study"



Heeyoon (Melissa) Jung, MS
Abstract (1 of 2): "Geographic Variation of Gabapentinoids and Opioids in United States Nursing Homes"



Joshua T. (JT) Harvey, MPH
Abstract: "Macronutrient Distribution Among GLP-1 Medication Users with Type 2 Diabetes"

UMASS REMINDERS

UMass Chan Farmers' Market



**Every Tuesday through October 27
(No market on Sept.15)
10 AM - 1 PM**

Two Locations:

- Market Vendors will be set up in the Albert Sherman Center, MPR - East, First Floor.
- Food Trucks and Food Vendors will set up outside on the Medical School Building Terrace.

[Click here](#) for more details and to view the list of attending food trucks and vendors



🚩 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.