Inside this Issue

1 Highlights
2 Resources Research Evaluation
3 The Results Are In! Team Member Spotlight A Word from the Vice Chair of Research
4 How Can We Assist You

Mission
To improve population health by contributing to informed health workforce policy through data management, community engagement, and original research.

Vision
To be an internationally recognized Health Workforce Center engaged in policy, research, and advocacy leading global health system transformation through community collaborations.

Values
Community, Excellence, Integrity, Collaboration & Equity

• Highlights

The health workforce acts as a keystone to support the entire health system, and therefore efforts to enhance the health workforce are critical to achieving national goals of improving care quality and controlling health care spending. Delivery system reforms cannot succeed without attention to the workforce that will carry these out on the ground. Health workforce planning serves many purposes, and as such, many different public and private entities carry out related functions within their own silos. Many states have been working diligently to centralize these functions and break down these silos, but without much success.

On June 29, the Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research & Policy (Bowen Center) convened the inaugural Indiana Health Workforce Summit, which served as a platform for important health workforce policy discussions while focusing on current research and best practices for obtaining an accessible, well-trained, and flexible health workforce. Indiana’s Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development, Steven Braun, was the first speaker of the day and delivered a level setting presentation. His remarks laid the foundation by providing an overview of workforce development in Indiana. The Bowen Center was also fortunate to have as keynote speaker Dr. George Zangaro, Director of the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis at Health Resources and Services Administration (pictured above). A data visualization presentation detailing the efforts within the state of Indiana allowed stakeholders the opportunity to engage interactively with the presentation and to provide valuable feedback. There were also several opportunities afforded to the participants in which they were able to interact and network with one another. Indiana AHEC, through their generosity and graciousness, sponsored the luncheon.

In addition, the summit hosted two power packed breakout sessions in which participants were able to delve deeper into specific and engaging topics related to mental and behavioral health, as well as education, pipeline, and training. The event concluded with a panel of distinguished speakers who facilitated outstanding and informative discussions on strategies for integrating new and innovative health workforce models into our evolving health system.

The inaugural 2016 Indiana Health Workforce Summit was a huge success. The summit provided a multi-disciplinary platform which brought together multiple sectors within the health system and engaged participants in relevant and timely health workforce policy discussions. By bringing a diverse group of stakeholders together, the state of Indiana can align health priorities and health policy initiatives. We hope to make this an annual event which would strive to continue these important discussions and advance health workforce priorities for the State of Indiana.
The Bowen Center is engaged in research that serves to inform health policy, improve health care delivery, and promote population health. A large portion of our current research focuses on understanding how the health care workforce and various health care delivery models influence access to not only primary care, but also for oral and mental health care. Understanding the distribution and characteristics of the mental health workforce is a critical first step in addressing public health concerns as they relate to mental illness. Effective program intervention management must take into account the specific services provided as they relate to the population served. Indicators of public mental health such as the incidence of suicide and emergency room utilization for mental health crises are also important tools for estimating regional needs, as well as intervention effectiveness.

The Bowen Center is currently collaborating with the Department of Psychiatry on research that aims to quantify the array of services provided by psychiatrists throughout the state, and match this data with population characteristics. These data will serve as a guide to maximize the effectiveness of strategic public mental health interventions. Such interventions may include implementing models of collaborative care, modifying physician training, and targeted recruitment of mental health professionals.

The Bowen Center is pleased to announce the collaboration with the Department of Biostatistics at the Indiana University Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health and The Polis Center at IUPUI on enhancing the health workforce data management and visualization efforts. “Because access to data is critical for effective evidence-based decision making, it is our top priority to develop a data strategy that will enhance our capacity to visualize and analyze data from a variety of disparate sources - all toward improving access to health care in Indiana,” said Connor Norwood, Assistant Director, Bowen Center. “Biostats is building a centralized data repository and associated data management solution, while The Polis Center is currently facilitating geospatial data visualization and analysis. This includes the development of a new process for ArcGIS map creation to streamline map production to produce consistent, professional quality health workforce maps.”

The Polis Center, as part of the 2016 Indiana Health Workforce Summit, presented initial work and illustrated available options, advantages, and limitations to various data visualization platforms which helped to elicit feedback and associated requirements from its stakeholders. Over the next year, the Bowen Center will continue to integrate stakeholder feedback and build an online dashboard that will promote easy access to health workforce data for the state of Indiana. Stay tuned for future updates!

The Bowen Center recognizes the importance of the evaluation of policies, programs and initiatives in order to measure impact and implement continual process improvement. The Bowen Center partners with various agencies to provide quality and timely evaluation of ongoing health workforce projects. One of Bowen Center’s ongoing evaluation projects, the Clinical Health Coach Evaluation, examines the impact of the clinical health coach workforce on health outcomes.

**Clinical Health Coach Evaluation:**
The Bowen Center is working with the Indiana Rural Health Association and the Indiana Statewide Rural Health Network to evaluate a health coach-facilitated chronic disease management intervention. Three chronic health issues were identified as diseases of interest in this project: diabetes, congestive heart failure, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. In year two of this three-year evaluation, strategies for outcome evaluation were developed. Key findings in year two demonstrate **patient compliance with prescribed medications is a predictor for change of glucose** in diabetic patients. More research will be conducted to study outcomes associated with the remaining two chronic disease groups. Stay tuned in the next newsletter to hear perspectives on the intervention from hospital administrators and the health coaches who provide direct care to chronic disease patients.
**The Results Are In!**

Hannah Maxey, PhD, Director, Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research & Policy and Assistant Professor of Family Medicine, recently published an original research article in the Journal of Public Health Dentistry (JPHD) entitled, “State policy environment and the dental safety net: A case study of professional practice environments’ effect on dental service availability in Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC).” This article found that FQHCs with favorable levels of state policies for dental hygiene professional practice had the highest proportion of FQHCs that directly delivered dental services. The article has been highly discussed in the research community making it the #1 output of similar age from the Journal of Public Health Dentistry, according to Altmetric.

Dr. Maxey concluded that the state policy environment for the dental hygiene workforce is likely associated with the availability of dental services at FQHCs. The greatest proportion of FQHCs delivering dental services was found in states with policy provisions supporting professional independence in public health settings. Nevertheless, additional research is needed to understand the specific mechanism by which these policies affect FQHCs.


**A Word From the Vice Chair of Research**

Family physicians make up 1,718 of the roughly 10,000 actively practicing physicians in Indiana. With each family physician caring for an average of 2,300 people, more than 3.9 million Indiana residents are currently cared for by a family doctor. Yet, with the aging physician population, growth in the number of patients with chronic health conditions, and other important changes in the physician workforce and population of Indiana, Hoosier families are quickly approaching a precipice.

By 2020, Indiana is expected to have 2,000 fewer primary care physicians than we need. That means that we will all have a harder time getting in to see our personal doctor, face longer waits for an appointment, and more often see providers who are not familiar with our beliefs, values, and health history. The reasons for this growing shortage of primary care physicians are many. The complexity of these issues are enormous and even more difficult to resolve. Understanding these workforce changes, the factors effecting them, and evaluating the impact of programs and policies on these trends are essential to the people of Indiana.

The Indiana University Department of Family Medicine has a long history of both educating future family physicians and researching the impact of and factors related to the family physician workforce. The Bowen Center has built upon this strong foundation and launched it into a new era—an era which aligns stakeholders invested in improving the health of Indiana residents in important and new ways.

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**Team Member Spotlight**

Sierra Vaughn joined the Bowen Center team in December 2015 as the Health Services Research Analyst leading the health professional data collection and verification operations. Sierra holds a Master’s of Public Health in Epidemiology from Boston University. She comes with five years of experience in survey data collection and data management. Sierra is very proud of the team with which she works and looks forward to the great work planned for the remainder of the year.

A native of Indianapolis, Sierra enjoys watching movies and listening to music in her spare time.

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Transformation Officer, IU Health Physicians

“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.” — Lao Tzu
Philanthropic support helps to advance research in the Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy and the Department of Family Medicine that will benefit Hoosiers throughout Indiana. Your gift also supports the training of the next generation of physicians who benefit from the expertise of our dedicated faculty.

For additional information about the various ways to give, please contact Joshua Lee at 317.278.2124.

Gifts to the Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy and the Department of Family Medicine can be made online by clicking the “Gift Giving” tab on the top of the page at family.medicine.iu.edu/hws/

Thank you for making a difference!

How Can We Assist You?

Looking for data or technical assistance? The Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy provides stakeholders with critical information on Indiana’s health workforce that can be used for evaluation, original research, and reporting. Contact us today to discuss how we may assist you!

Contact Us

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