Public University Partnership Program (PUPP)

SFY23 Q4 Report

Louisiana Public University Partnership Program (PUPP)

Bureau of Health Services Financing

August 2023

LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Contents

Executive Summary

Louisiana Medicaid's Public University Partnership Program (PUPP) joins 25 other states that partner with public colleges and universities in similar funding arrangements. PUPP provides cost-sharing agreements with the Universities wherein PUPP uses federal match (50%) under 42 CFR 433.15(7) and the University portion serves as Certified Public Expenditures to provide for the proper and efficient administration of the State Plan.

Successful proposals promote the delivery of evidence-based, high-quality, cost-effective, and accessible care to Louisiana Medicaid members. Research projects also have the potential to guide policymaking, promote innovation, and advance new approaches. Proposals also align with the Medicaid priorities, which include : improving maternal and neonatal outcomes, improving early childhood health and development, reducing premature death and illness with a focus on preventive care, improving mental health and substance use disorder outcomes, and improving health equity while decreasing health disparity.

Additionally, this program is cost-effective in three ways: 1) the research identifies opportunities to inform on policy and program evaluation that shows cost-effective use of resources; 2) the value of the research provided is greater than the university reimbursement and 3) as a cost-match program with Federal Financial Participation, there are no state funds expended.

Program Overview

The Public University Partnership Program has awarded over $1.75 million to ten faculty researchers at five universities, including Louisiana State University A&M, Louisiana Status University Health Sciences Center, Louisiana Technical University, McNeese State University, and Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

As part of the 2021 and 2022 State Business Plan, PUPP was tasked to develop strategic partnerships with Louisiana's public universities and colleges as they serve as a laboratory for innovative solutions to inform on policy and program operations. Goals identified in the Business Plan included expanding the outreach and awareness of this program to ensure a broad and inclusive reach throughout Louisiana. Prior to the research application deadline, PUPP staff provided informational sessions to university grants offices and interested researchers and met with the university chancellors, deans, and presidents. Ultimately, these efforts will encourage participation from all Louisiana public universities and colleges to increase the number and diversity of participating researchers and universities.

As part of the award obligations, researchers present the status of their project at an annual PUPP Collaborative Research Day. This provides an opportunity for the university researchers to present and obtain feedback from the other researchers as well as LDH, public health, community stakeholders, and legislative participants. The first session is planned for August 2023.

The third cycle of the PUPP Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released in April with a start date of January 1, 2024. Six researchers submitted proposals for consideration, with two universities submitting for the first time. These two new universities were University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Southeastern Louisiana University. Awardees will be notified in August.

Program Status

YEAR 1 UNIVERSITY AWARDEES

Louisiana State University, Health Sciences Center – New Orleans, "Health Policy Honors Program Contributions to Promoting Evidence-Based Care to Louisiana Medicaid members" – Peggy Honore, DHA, Principal Investigator
Effective Date: March 1, 2022 – February 29, 2024 | Award: $110,796 | Payments invoiced: $61,105

Dr. Peggy Honore's project is a meta-analysis of three policies to determine potential return on investment (ROI) for Medicaid applicability. This project provides an opportunity for state medical students to increase health policy proficiency within their existing medical school curriculum.

Considered to have a direct benefit to Medicaid priorities, the three policies and will provide economic insight to guide program development. These are:

1. **Economic impact and health outcomes associated with an expansion of Medicaid post-partum coverage** [Note: This research was proposed in August 2021 before Louisiana adopted post-partum expansion].
2. **Analysis of Medicaid policies to address disparities around medically tailored meals for individuals with complex chronic conditions**.
3. **Economic evaluation of policies to reduce maternal mortality.**

Honore's research offers an opportunity for state medical students to understand the economics of health policy by researching and providing economic impact to health issues that affect Louisiana Medicaid costs, value, quality, equity, and patient outcomes. This is an important skill development for new healthcare professionals entering a complex healthcare and coverage system.

During this quarter, Honore's research team continued development of the web-based interactive models of costs and benefits for Medically Tailored Meals, Maternal Mortality and Postpartum Coverage. These models now estimate community-level program impacts showing the before and after estimates of health programs' interventions, along with identifying the impact of community health behavioral norms. For example, one significant finding is the identification of untreated maternal mental health conditions as a primary driver of adverse pregnancy outcomes. The ability to quantify the economic impact of interventions has the potential to incentivize communities as costs can be associated with the causal relationship.

The web-based models reference against national statistics, but are customizable to our individual Louisiana parishes. Dr. Honore has been able to demonstrate the model with related community and professional group and collect information which will allow adjustments to provide more specificity to the local study models.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: Stakeholder assessment of the models continue as this will assist with identifying modifications to the models to make it more comparable with Louisiana markets.

Louisiana State University, Health Sciences Center, New Orleans "Promoting Resilience among Medicaid Members with Opioid Use Disorder (PROUD)." Benjamin Springgate, MD, Principal Investigator

Effective Date: March 1, 2022 – December 31, 2024[1] | Award: $180,841 | Payments invoiced: $127,217

The relevance of this study lies in the struggle to contain the opioid epidemic which has roots in prescribed pain medicine. Dr. Benjamin Springgate's research aims to show how environmental stressors such as hurricanes or the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted clinical services delivery for opioid use disorder (OUD) and contributed to an increased drug overdose mortality rate. The ultimate aim of PROUD is to propose policy innovations for Louisiana Medicaid to facilitate more efficient entry of Medicaid members with OUD into evidence-based care with medication-assisted treatment (MAT), bolster continuity of care, and ensure availability of necessary supports to health and well-being for these members during times of State emergencies.

The PROUD study team continued to expand and build on existing recruitment plans with an emphasis on diversification of participants to obtain a wide range of perspectives. The study team further continued to conduct interviews; transcribe interviews; de-identify interview transcripts; clean interview transcripts; summarize interview transcripts into 2-page templates; and review associated data.

The PROUD Leadership Council has met to review data and provide feedback on perspectives shared in the data. Leaders represented in this community-partnered research leadership council includes those with backgrounds from organizations that advocate for the homeless, religious-based services, community resiliency and restoration, incarceration advocates, community outreach and support, youth programs and substance use treatment programs. These groups represent those with the biggest impact for resource distribution during times of emergencies.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: The Leadership Council feedback on preliminary themes and quotes identified across the interviews will be summarized to draft abstracts, reports, and products for dissemination, in collaboration with community and academic partners.

Significant accomplishments: Dr. Springgate's team will present the PROUD study at the November 2023 American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center, "Evaluating the Effects of Continuous Glucose Monitoring Device Use on Intermediate Clinical Outcomes in the Louisiana Medicaid Diabetes Population," Ronald Horswell, Ph.D., Principal Investigator

Effective Date: March 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024 (ext.)[1]| Award: $171,126 | Payments invoiced: $42,059

Dr. Ronald Horswell's research is a three-phase project to identify approaches to appropriately increase the use of continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) devices among Louisiana Medicaid enrollees with type 1
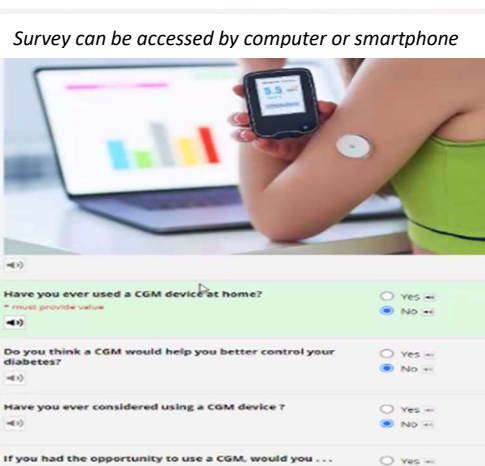
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[1] These projects requested an extension to the original project timeframe due to the delayed implementation.

diabetes. The initial phase provides background on the effectiveness of continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) device use on diabetes-related health outcomes, the second phase will investigate the obstacles among patients and providers for initiating and sustaining the device use and the third phase will pilot approaches to increase CGM use.

This research project is coordinating between several large health systems, including LSU Health Care Services Division, Tulane Medical Center and Ochsner Health System. This coordination has caused some delays due to institutional reviews to ensure patient privacy and data compliance, however, some initial data is available and Horswell has begun analysis.

Proceeding into the next phase, Horswell's team will collect information from CGM-device users to obtain a better understanding of use trends. Louisiana Healthcare Connections (LHCC) stepped in as a partner to send the surveys by email to their Medicaid enrollees.   This partnership constitutes a significant accomplishment to outreach into this population, it does mean that the intent of the research will need to be re-viewed by the review boards of each participating institution, as well as coordinating with LDH for member communication. This review will occur while other parts of the research project, that are not subject to re-review, are underway.

Survey can be accessed by computer or smartphone

This proposal is reaching the end of its original proposal timeframe, however, with implementation delays, a contract extension has been initiated.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: Horswell plans to finalize the Phase 1 analysis while submitting the revised IRB application.   Following that approval, focus will be to implement the Medicaid enrollee surveys through LHCC.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center, "Trends in the incidence of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) and hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (HDP) and their associations with adverse pregnancy outcomes among the Louisiana Medicaid population." Gang Hu, MD, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Effective Date: March 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024 | Award: $210,448 | Payments invoiced: $44,496

Dr. Gang Hu's research will assess the trends in the annual incidence of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) and hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (HDP) among Medicaid pregnant women to examine whether maternal GDM or HDP is associated with increased risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes, e.g., low birth weight, preterm birth, cesarean section, infant death.

During this quarter, the main objectives were data preparation and database development; data analysis ; and draft manuscript preparation using the available Medicaid data. These were all completed with the draft version of the manuscript prepared and sent to all co-authors for comments.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: A manuscript will be submitted to scientific journals for consideration while efforts continue on secondary analyses.

Significant Accomplishments: The initial manuscript from this project was accepted for publication in March 2023.   Hu G, Ding J., Ryan D. Trends in obesity prevalence and cardiometabolic risk factor control in U.S. adults with diabetes, 1999-2010. Obesity 2023 March; 31; 841-851.

YEAR 2 UNIVERSITY AWARDEES

All Year 2 University Awardees had a delayed implementation date due to the extended contracting process.

Louisiana State University A&M – Baton Rouge, "The Impact of Motivation-Based Interventions for Substance Misuse for Medicaid Recipients in Inpatient Hospital Units" – Julia Buckner, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Effective Date: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024 | Award: $204,799 | Payments invoiced: $0[2]

Dr. Julia Buckner's research will assess brief motivation-based interventions for substance misuse during inpatient hospitalizations to ascertain whether interventions are associated with better health-related outcomes and to identify barriers to post-discharge treatment for substance misuse. This project is being conducted with patients who are Medicaid recipients at Our Lady of the Lake Regional (OLOL) Medical Center, the area's largest provider of Medicaid care.

Buckner's research also crosses multiple entities which required coordinating research study approval that is more complex, but yields stronger research depth. During this quarter, IRB approvals were received from Louisiana State University A&M, Our Lady of the Lake (LSUHSC/OLOL) and LDH. While this approval was in process, Dr. Buckner's research team prepared for the research data by developing the database to begin data collection for the initial part of the project.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: The project will perform pilot testing of Part 2 data collection methods and begin data collection and while continuing data entry for Part 1.

Louisiana State University A&M – Baton Rouge, "Mapping Behavioral and Social Determinants of Health to Inform Louisiana Medicaid Delivery." Senlin Chen, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Effective Date: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024 | Award: $335,000 | Payments invoiced: $0

MAP LA is a quick visual to explain the project's mission.

Dr. Senlin Chen's interdisciplinary collaborative research project aims to assess and map out the disparities of key behavioral and social determinants of health among Louisiana children. The project also involves multiple entities with participation from LSU A&M, Pennington Biomedical Research Center with the Medicaid Managed Care Organization, Louisiana Healthcare Connections (LHCC), to identify health disparities in Louisiana. The findings will bear significant implications for policy and practice related to

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[2] Louisiana State University A&M opted for a longer invoicing time frame with payments calculated on an annual basis.

resource allocation and identification of high-risk populations and areas that would most benefit from prevention and treatment services.

Chen's project has a layer of complexity to coordinate between two universities, LHCC, and Medicaid to obtain necessary research approvals (IRB) and data sharing agreements. While the approvals were being obtained, Chen's team was able to work on survey development. The surveys will be used to collect information relating to social determinants of heath (SDOH) in the Greater Baton Rouge area from three main groups: 1) parents/parent proxies of children, ages 5 – 11 years old, 2) administrators and teachers from 18 area schools and 3) community level resources focusing on parks and recreation services.

Recruitment and survey administration will begin once approvals from all entities are obtained. The research team has begun analyzing the SDOH dataset. Dr. Chen has also had the opportunity to meet with the School Superintendents to introduce the project and create awareness.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: The three REDCap surveys will be fine-tuned for distribution readiness. Participant recruitment will begin.

Louisiana State University A&M – Baton Rouge, "Assessing Alternative Payment Models for Medicaid Health Providers."   Austin Matthews, LCSW, Principal Investigator
Effective Date: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024 | Award: $251,436 | Payments invoiced: $0[2]

This project will test measurement-based care (MBC) in a pay-for-performance model, by evaluating cost-effective methods of improving systems of care and increasing provider reimbursement. Two hundred providers in clinical practice will be recruited to train and implement MBC. This implementation pilot will inform the development of an implementation toolkit, simulate the potential financial costs and client benefits of pay-for-performance, and explore provider willingness to engage in MBC and pay-for-performance models.

During this quarter, Matthews developed a testing version of the MBC training with pre- and post-testing protocols. After receiving feedback from these test participants, the training will be revised to increase learning engagement and immediate retention. The research team also developed a participant management system to track enrollment, participation in elective activities, incentive distribution, and data reporting. This tool will collect both dynamic and static reporting fields and make this data reportable to the participating provider. Additionally, it will provide ongoing information to the team for participant management and data analysis. Items for recruitment, including a recruiting landing page and a few flyers/fact sheets have been prepared in anticipation of the IRB approvals. This will be included in a manual that is already in progress as the project plan document. As training tools, clinical assessments, fidelity monitoring tools, suggested performance measures, and other program tools are developed, these are added to our project plan document.

The research project received IRB approval from LSU and is pending review with LDH.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: Once LDH IRB approval has been made, Matthews' team will formally request permission to outreach to OBH for assistance recruiting within their provider networks.

Louisiana State University A&M – Baton Rouge, "Testing the Efficiency and Predictive Value of an Alternative Screener for Head Start Medicaid Recipients" – Janna Oetting, PhD
Effective Date: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024 | Award: $52,536| Payments invoiced: $0[2]

The purpose of Dr. Janna Oetting's research is to scale up and rigorously test the alternative screening approach when administered to Central Baton Rouge/East Baton Rouge Head Start Medicaid recipients. The anticipated outcome is to reduce delays to services for minoritized Medicaid recipients with communication disorders. This project will evaluate the alternative screening approach as compared to the practice-as-usual approach to assess for the failure rate, screening time expended, and the number of children unable to be tested. The screening tools considers dialects and other language factors to determine which children aren't keeping pace with their peers for Head Start enrollment.

Dr. Oetting's project expands on the existing university-community screening program. This project coincides with the academic year whereas screening activity occurs only when school is in session. The project aggressively screened 150 of the anticipated 225 total to compensate for having only 2 of the 3 screeners available. The third tool will be available when the school resumes in August. Currently, the Research team has begun analysis of the results of the Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy (TROLL) survey. This tool examines consistency of the screeners to the teachers' ratings of the children.

One unintended benefit of the additional program funding was that the research team has more hands-on contact with the children, parents and parent-proxies. This has allowed for more trust development with the Head Start staff and the families they serve.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: Screenings resume with all three tools in August when the Head Start programs begin their school year.

Louisiana Technical University "A Predictive Mining Approach to Analyze the Impact of COVID-19 on Smoking." – Prerna Dua, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Effective Date: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023 | Award: $55,611 | Payments invoiced: $21,100

Dr. Prerna Dua's study proposes the development of a predictive model for analyzing the incidence of tobacco use based on patterns of associated factors, such as disparities in population, tobacco characteristics, and the impact on COVID-19 outcomes. Results generated from the study propose to close the loop between established factors of Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), tobacco use, and COVID-19.

During this quarter Dua obtained data from the National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS) and performed feature engineering and extracted the relevant features for the study. The NCHS report was not complete for the COVID-19 data. After receiving research approvals from La Tech and LDH's IRB, a data sharing agreement was finalized. Dua worked with LDH's Business Analytics for her data requirements for analysis. Simultaneously, her research team is performing a systematic literature review on the impact of tobacco on COVID.

Significant Accomplishments: Dua submitted an abstract to the Texas Health Informatics Alliance 2023 conference for consideration.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: Work will continue on the literature review to examine the health outcomes of the various tobacco products on COVID-19 along with finalizing the analysis on the LDH dataset.

McNeese State University "Meeting Technology Needs to Improve Access to High-Value Behavioral Healthcare."—Joanna Thompson, Ph.D., Principal Investigator.
Effective Date: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024 | Award: $88,807 | Payments invoiced: $2,531

Dr. Joanna Thompson's research study will provide staff curricula and training on new technology for behavioral healthcare services, incorporate virtual reality simulation, and provide parent/caregiver training in the community. This project will also conduct a cohort study of billing codes within Louisiana Medicaid to identify the value-level (high-low) of care for Autism Spectrum Disorder and other relevant diagnostic codes.

During this quarter, the first round of essential for living (EFL) live training to develop staff competency in applied behavioral analysis (ABA) technical skills. The PI also attended the Floreo VR training, which uses virtual reality (VR) as a method to teach social and communication skills to individuals, primarily youth, on the autism spectrum. These activities were performed in anticipation of completing research review board approval. Thompson received McNeese HSIRB approval in May. LDH IRB approval is pending. Additionally, Data Use Agreements are also receiving review. Upon these items finalizing, other aspects of the research project can commence.

Projected Activities for Next Quarter: Once the Data Use Agreement and LDH-IRB applications are completed, the retrospective cohort study can begin .

For more information on PUPP:
https://ldh.la.gov/page/4617