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Center for HOPES |  
2020 Annual Report |

*A year of **growth,**  
connecting **Communities,**  
**Policies, and Practice***



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

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CENTER FOR HEALTH OUTCOMES AND  
POLICY EVALUATION STUDIES



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## **The Center for HOPES**

*Leveraging research for health and equity*

### **Mission**

Our mission is to support health equity and social justice through rigorous and innovative policy research and evaluation.



## 2020 | Annual Report

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## Letter from the Director

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Supporters,

The Center for HOPES has had a busy and *impactful* year, serving as a resource for policy makers and researchers seeking to understand how to improve health care and population health. The COVID-19 pandemic, along with the existing opioid epidemic and the health implications of racism, were critical challenges in Ohio and across the nation. The Center for HOPES was uniquely positioned to add to the conversations and the solutions being tested in 2020.

The Center takes an interdisciplinary approach to health and health care systems. Our team brings evaluation, economic, and policy expertise to complex issues facing our communities. In addition, we provide a platform for scholars from The Ohio State University's wide array of colleges and schools to take advantage of our expertise, as well as to learn from one another.

The Center's current projects include serving on the State of Ohio's COVID Recovery data team, conducting research on addressing Ohio's opioid epidemic, analyzing access to reproductive health services, and investigating health care payor strategies for addressing social determinants of health. We believe a deep and wide understanding of the issues facing health care systems and our communities can provide the most actionable information to decision makers.

Our goal is to help governments, communities, and organizations better understand the impact of programs and policies. Please feel free to [reach out](#) with any questions, or if you are interested in partnering with the Center for HOPES.

Sincerely yours,  
Eric Seiber



Director, Center for HOPES  
Professor, Health Services Management and Policy  
The Ohio State University College of Public Health



## Report Summary and Year-in-Review

The Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Evaluation Studies (HOPES) experienced unprecedented growth in terms of both staff and projects during 2020. Despite the many uncertainties related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we:

- Hired *three* new team members,
- Co-authored *seven* publications,
- Submitted *twenty* proposals for funding,
- Were awarded *ten* new grants and/or contracts for service, and
- Hosted *three* graduate students during Spring and Summer terms.

As we continued work in the areas of substance use and the opioid epidemic, global health, and reproductive health, we established new partnerships and initiatives to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and address racism as a public health crisis. To enhance our visibility and reputation as The Ohio State University's home for health policy and evaluation research, we focused on engagement and communications. To strengthen our role in public health professional education, we began development of an Evaluation Certificate Course (non-degree) set to be deployed in Summer 2021.

As we look forward to another productive and fruitful year, we will be completing our strategic plan, reestablishing an oversight committee, recruiting more faculty affiliates, and applying for larger awards.

### Center for HOPES's Core Activities





# Center History and Personnel

## *History*

The Center for HOPES, located within The Ohio State University's College of Public Health, was established in 1994 to respond to the needs of health policy decision makers at local, state, and national levels. Center researchers conduct applied health services research studies to help public and private organizations evaluate clinical effectiveness, quality of care, costs of medical services, process flow in health care institutions, and other investigations in the areas of health outcomes, policy, and evaluation. Our programs have a direct and strong impact on health care in both the private and public sectors.

## *Budget Summary*

The Center for HOPES receives \$165,000 per year in core funding from the Board of Trustees. Due to Center growth, payroll expenditures increased by approximately one third, from \$350,000 in 2019 to \$450,000 in 2020. Even with this growth in payroll expenses, we were able to increase reserves by approximately \$89,000. In 2021, the Center for HOPES plans to build a new reserve account/bridge fund of approximately 6 months of personnel costs to cover potential funding shortfalls.

## *Staff*

### Director | **Eric Seiber, PhD**

Dr. Seiber is an expert in the areas of health economics and policy and is a professor in the Division of Health Services Management and Policy. He specializes in health care financing, especially for vulnerable populations; public and private insurance markets; and cost-effectiveness analysis. In the fall of 2020, Dr. Seiber accepted Governor DeWine's invitation to serve as a member of the Ohio Economic Roundtable focusing on State revenue forecasting models specific to pandemic effects.



### Research Specialist | **Kristin J. Harlow, PhD, JD, MSW**

Dr. Harlow brings expertise in public policy and management, data analytics, and applied policy research. She previously worked as a research associate at the Center for Human Resource Research at Ohio State (focusing on workforce research) and as a health care attorney in private practice. Beginning in 2021, Dr. Harlow will serve as Ohio's Project Director for the National Institutes of Health's HEALing (Helping to End Addiction Long-term) Communities Study.

### Research Specialist | **Lisa A. Frazier, PhD, MPH**

Dr. Frazier joined the Center in 2020 and adds expertise in public administration, applied policy research and communication, computational social science, and public health to the team. She previously worked as a professor of political science at Miami University and as a research and policy analyst at the Health Policy Institute of Ohio. Dr. Frazier provides analytical support on several of the Center's projects and manages the Center's communications and dissemination needs.

### Research Evaluator | **Saira Nawaz, PhD, MPH**

Dr. Nawaz's expertise lies in health services research, health insurance claims data, and program evaluation. She provides methodological support in claims research, evaluation, and cost analysis. Dr. Nawaz previously worked as a biostatistician at Nationwide Children's Hospital and as an evaluation specialist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### Research Evaluator | **Lauren Phelps, MPA**

Ms. Phelps has over twenty years of experience developing, implementing, or evaluating health care programs in the public, private, and academic sectors. In the middle of 2020, Ms. Phelps transitioned full-time to the Center for the Advancement of Team Science, Analytics, and Systems Thinking (CATALYST) within The Ohio State University College of Medicine.

### Senior Consulting Statistician | **Wilson Figueroa, PhD, MS**

Dr. Figueroa brings expertise in health psychology, social science research design, and data analytics. He previously worked as a research associate at the School of Health



and Rehabilitation Science in the College of Medicine and Department of Extension in the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences at Ohio State.

### **Evaluator & Community Engagement Specialist | Anne Trinh, MPH**

Ms. Trinh joined the Center for HOPES in 2020 and brings expertise in public health, epidemiology, evaluation, and collective impact. She previously worked as a maternal and child health epidemiologist at Columbus Public Health and as a chronic disease epidemiologist at the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Epidemiology Center, serving Tribes and American Indian populations in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. She serves as a board member for Harm Reduction Ohio and as the Chair for Data and Research for the Franklin County Suicide Prevention Coalition.

### **Research Associate | Francis Anagbonu, MS**

Mr. Anagbonu is also a new hire for the Center. He brings expertise in health care, applied policy research, and data analytics. He previously worked as a health care specialist for the United States Army, providing limited primary and emergency care for the COVID-19 response team, and as a venture analyst at Ohio University.

### **Program Coordinator | Barbara Wohlever**

Ms. Wohlever brings expertise in business management. She assists with project coordination, budgets, contracts, events, communications, and other administrative functions. She previously worked as the Business Manager for the Statistical Consulting Service in the department of Statistics. Prior to joining Ohio State, Ms. Wohlever taught accounting courses and worked as an administrative manager in local accounting firms.

### **Graduate Students | Evan Goldstein, Selasi Attipoe, Brian O'rourke**

The Center hosted three graduate students during Spring and Summer terms: two doctoral candidates and one doctoral student. Additionally, Dr. Nawaz and Ms. Trinh had the opportunity to work with a student intern. The students bring new ideas and perspectives and we greatly value their contributions to the Center. Conversely, our research and evaluation activities offer a rich environment for students to apply their skills and knowledge, as well as complement their fields of study and interests. We hope these experiences and connections with partners allow students to transition into successful careers.



## New Project Highlights

In 2020, the Center for HOPES expanded our areas of work into two new primary topics: the COVID-19 pandemic and racism as a public health crisis. We have also begun development of an online certificate program to contribute to public health professional development.

### *COVID-19 Pandemic*

#### *State of Ohio's Response & Recovery*

The Center for HOPES is proud to serve the state of Ohio as part of a coalition whose aims are to monitor the effects of the pandemic and to identify data-informed strategies for response and recovery. Together with the Department of Health, Development Services Agency, Department of Medicaid, Office of Budget and Management, Department of Administrative Services, and Department of Job and Family Services, we work to leverage a wide range of data sources to provide real-time analyses of Ohio's economy and households. This includes analyzing unemployment insurance claims, health insurance coverage, and consumer confidence regarding public health and financial security. The state's executive leadership is drawing on these insights to inform its decisions for supporting health, safety, equity, and economic recovery.



#### *Surveillance for Ohio's Schools*

In July 2020, the Center for HOPES started working with Dr. Ayaz Hyder, Assistant Professor and Faculty Affiliate, to provide project management and community engagement support for the COVID-19 Analytics and Targeted Surveillance System for Schools (CATS) project. CATS is a syndromic surveillance system that helps schools and public health authorities work together to make data-informed decisions about learning modality (virtual, in-person, or hybrid) to prevent and control the spread of disease. Through the monitoring and epidemiological review of various school-based indicators, in addition to county-level and school district attendance area-level data for COVID-19 case rates, our syndromic surveillance system allows for real-time analyses of factors that can predict localized outbreaks. Nineteen Central Ohio school districts have access to CATS and we are working to expand services to other areas in the



state. Independent of the pandemic, we hope our partnerships with school districts and local public health can grow into work focusing on other aspects of student health and well-being. This work has been funded by the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio with allocations disbursed via the Ohio Department of Education from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief funds.

## *Racism as a Public Health Crisis*

### **Measuring Racism**

As the nation grappled with issues related to race and racial justice, the Center for HOPES, like many other academic and public service organizations, took the opportunity to more directly and purposefully be a part of the national dialogue. We published a commentary entitled, "Racism Measurement Framework: A Tool for Public Health Action and Accountability," in the *Ohio Journal of Public Health*. Information in the article can be used to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of anti-racist efforts implemented across the state. The framework provides not only a call for action against racism in Ohio, but an opportunity for organizations to measure the extent to which efforts have intervened on entrenched pathways to health inequities and disparities caused by racism.

### **Racial Justice Seed Grant Proposals**

Following the commentary, we also submitted three proposals for funding from Ohio State's Racial Justice Seed Grant. Our first proposal was with Safe Point, Franklin County's syringe services program, and focused on providing harm reduction supplies for crack/cocaine use for people of color who use drugs. Our second proposal was with Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services, a non-profit that supports immigrants and refugees, and focused on evaluation of an initiative designed to build job skills. Our third proposal was with the City of Columbus, Center for Public Health Innovation. We sought to use our racism measurement framework to evaluate the city's work to address racism as a public health crisis. Though we did not receive any awards, we developed new partnerships that we hope to continue to nurture.



## City of Columbus, Center for Public Health Innovation

Our work on the Racial Justice Seed Grant proposal with the Center for Public Health Innovation grew into a small contract to provide support for strategic planning and evaluation of community partnerships in service of enhancing the city's response to racism as a public health crisis. We will be working directly with the Executive Officer, who provides recommendations to the Mayor of Columbus.

## *Evaluation Certificate*

The Center for HOPES is excited to announce that we will be launching a course to earn a non-credit Certificate in Evaluation in May 2021. Our target audience is public health and social services students, practitioners, and researchers in Ohio and across the country who want to augment their knowledge of evaluation concepts and be more prepared to conduct evaluation in different settings to address population health concerns. Our goal is to disseminate best practices for evaluation and prepare the workforce to more critically apply evaluative thinking. We will offer three types of certificates for three levels of proficiency: beginner, intermediate, and expert.

Certificates will range from \$200-400 each. All courses will be virtual, self-paced, and offered in a cohort fashion to allow students with the same level of knowledge to interact with each other. We will have live virtual orientation events and virtual "office hours" for students who seek more engagement.



## Continuing Efforts

### *HEALing Communities Study (HCS)*

The National Institutes of Health funded a four-state research study, including Ohio, to test the impact of an integrated set of evidence-based interventions across health care, behavioral health, justice, and other community-based settings on addiction. The goal of the study is to treat opioid use disorder within highly affected communities and reduce opioid related deaths by 40 percent over three years. The Center for HOPES provides support for project direction and management and serves as the Ohio lead for the study's Policy Tracking activities and Health Economics core, for which we coordinate a cost-effectiveness analysis for Ohio's different strategies. We work closely with the University's Center for Clinical and Translational Science (where the primary investigator is), OSUWMC, other universities, Research Triangle Institute, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

### *Ohio Policy Evaluation Network (OPEN)*

OPEN conducts rigorous and forward-thinking social-science research on the reproductive health of Ohioans with the goal of evaluating the reproductive health care landscape in the state in the context of federal and state laws, regulations, and policies. In doing so, OPEN aims to support more equitable access to quality reproductive health care. For this partnership, the Center for HOPES leads the development of a state profile of contraceptive access to provide a deeper understanding of contraceptive use patterns, gaps in coverage, and these trends over time. We work with other network members which includes the University of Cincinnati, CareSource, the Center for Community Solutions, and the LARC Access Group.

### *Global One Health Initiative (GOHi)*

The University's Global One Health Initiative works to build capacity in areas of global health, focusing on topics such as zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, maternal and child health, and food safety. The Center for HOPES provides monitoring and evaluation technical assistance and services for GOHi in Ohio and internationally. In 2020, GOHi's reach expanded with two additional grants.



## *Overdose Data to Action (OD2A)*

The Overdose Data to Action grant was awarded to Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) via the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It is a multi-year competitive award aimed at increasing comprehensiveness and timeliness of surveillance data related to the unintentional drug overdose epidemic. The Center for HOPES is supporting FCPH by 1) facilitating data conversations across Ohio State and Central Ohio, 2) developing “use-cases” for geospatial data visualizations and analyses, and 3) integrating information across organizations into a unified tool.

## *Generation Rx*

The Generation Rx program educates people of all ages about safe prescription medication use. In our second year of partnership, we continue to assist the team with developing evaluation tools and protocols and building an evidence base for program outcomes.

## *Ohio Youth Resilience Collaborative (OYRC)*

The Center for HOPES serves as the lead evaluator for the Ohio Youth Resilience Collaborative (OYRC) (formerly Ohio PROSPER), a coalition of Extension Educators and researchers from OSU and Central State University, school districts across Ohio, and community stakeholders working to support youth and family mental health and well-being. OYRC currently has initiatives in eight rural and one urban county and has received additional funding to expand.



# Engagement and Dissemination

## *New Partnerships*

### Ohio State Wexner Medical Center

Dr. Nawaz has been a part of the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center (OSUWMC) Social Determinants of Health Work Group since fall 2020. As a member, she supports the group in establishing monitoring and evaluation measures to track their progress with addressing upstream indicators of health and disease. Currently, the Center for HOPES is negotiating a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with OSUWMC to support a co-creation process for community-based solutions and an evaluation of a referral process for addressing non-medical services for patients. We plan to begin this work in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2021 and look forward to working more closely with OSUWMC colleagues.

### Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus

The Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus (HCGC) is a “not-for-profit organization committed to transforming the quality, delivery, and value of healthcare to ensure all people in the Columbus region have the best healthcare experience possible.” They manage the Central Ohio Pathways Hub, connecting patients and providers for better health outcomes. The Center for HOPES is set to begin work with HCGC for evaluating two client pathways: one for a diversion project for people who are justice-involved and the other for COVID-19 case investigations. This new partnership will help us develop more experience with policy development and evaluation for addressing individual-level clinical outcomes.

### Franklin County Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Board

In June 2020, we submitted a proposal to conduct a community health needs assessment for the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County FC ADAMH). While the proposal was not funded and the award went to a partner the board has worked with before, we had a great introductory meeting with FC ADAMH leadership that included their new Chief Executive Officer. We are pleased to have developed this connection and look forward to other opportunities for collaboration.



### Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs

The Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs (OJPP) is directed by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners. It supports policy development and services for people who are justice-involved. The Center for HOPES met with the former director a few times during June and July of 2020 and established an agreement for a pilot project for data integration to build a predictive model for unintentional drug overdose deaths in Franklin County. Though our proposal was approved, a transition in leadership prevented our contract from being executed. We plan to continue engaging OJPP after a new director is named.

### National Science Foundation Convergence Accelerator

The Center for HOPES was invited to coordinate community engagement activities for a multi-college application for funding via the National Science Foundation. The project goal was to deploy a translational model commons to support post-pandemic response and recovery for “smart” foodsheds. We appreciated this opportunity to meet and work with colleagues in Computer Science, the Translational Data Analytics Institute, the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, the Fisher College of Business, and others.

### Latino Health Access

In July 2020, the Center for HOPES began working with Latino Health Access (LHA), a non-profit organization founded in 1993 in Santa Ana, California to combat public health problems plaguing a community of underinsured and under-served families. LHA clients are primarily Latinx individuals residing in eight zip codes considered “high-risk” for chronic diseases in Orange County. Through a robust Community Health Worker model, promotoros educate their own neighbors about different health topics, including diabetes, breast cancer, obesity, domestic violence, parenting and more. We have partnered with LHA on publications on COVID-19 response and relief, as well as evaluation of different LHA initiatives.

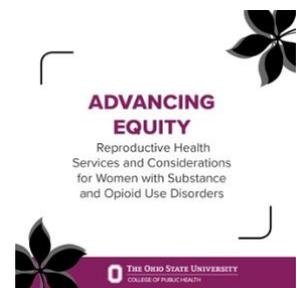
## *Educational Events*

### **Social Determinants of Health Speaker Series**

Early in 2020, the Center for HOPES completed two of a four-part planned speakers series designed to convene faculty and research staff across campus focusing on the social determinants/indicators of health. We had a total of nearly 100 attendees and may continue the series in-person in 2021.

### **Substance Use Disorder / Reproductive Health Learning Series**

From July through December, in collaboration with the Center for Public Health Practice, we hosted a six-part virtual learning series focusing on the intersection of addiction and reproductive health. We documented nearly 700 unique event registrants and had the support of over 30 distinct organizations that either assisted with planning and/or presentations. We hope to activate some of these connections to facilitate a more standardized and evidence-based approach for providing care and support for women with addiction.



## *Digital Presence*

[Our YouTube](#) channel has become an important way to share new Center for HOPES educational content. We have also expanded and made improvements to [our website's](#) design and content. We provide new content weekly so we can continue to expand our reach. From December 2019 to December 2020, our user base increased by 325% and our page views increased by 3,200%.



The Center for HOPES launched its [Twitter](#) account recently, in January 2021. We make daily posts and are using the platform to be more engaged in conversations about health policy.



## Publications

Center for HOPES researchers co-authored seven [publications](#) in 2020 on a wide range of public health issues.

Racism Measurement Framework: A tool for public health action and accountability	<i>Ohio Journal of Public Health</i>
Health Economic Design for Cost, Cost-effectiveness and Simulation Analyses in the HEALing Communities Study	<i>Drug and Alcohol Dependence</i>
The HEALing Communities Study: Protocol for a cluster randomized trial at the community level to reduce opioid overdose deaths through implementation of an integrated set of evidence-based practices	<i>Drug and Alcohol Dependence</i>
Medicaid Access During Economic Distress: Lessons learned from the Great Recession	<i>Medical Care Research and Review</i>
Ohio's COVID-19 Populations Needs Assessment	College of Public Health Report
The Dual Burden of Unmet Reproductive Health Care Needs Among Women with Substance Use Disorder	Center for HOPES Issue Overview
Linoleic Acid-Rich Oil Supplementation Increases Total and High-Molecular-Weight Adiponectin and Alters Plasma Oxylipins in Postmenopausal Women with Metabolic Syndrome	<i>Current Developments in Nutrition</i>

# Areas of Opportunity and 2021 Forecast

## *Supporting Our Work*

As we work to complete our strategic plan, one primary area of focus for development will be obtaining targeted funding for research. Our team is at a critical capacity level where we are all working on funded projects, unable to devote effort to Center driven initiatives. In 2021, we will direct more resources to turning our partnerships into a long-term research project, either with state, federal, or foundation funding. We will also continue to take on work in service of public health to build trust within different communities.

## *Expanding Our Reach*

In 2021, the Center for HOPES will launch three new efforts designed to expand our reach in Ohio and around the country: a quarterly electronic newsletter, a health policy blog, and a podcast interview series. The newsletter will allow us to share successes with our collaborators and keep stakeholders informed, while the blog and podcast series will allow us to communicate more deeply with students, professionals, and community members.

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