

# Academic Health Department (AHD) Report

*Fiscal Year July 2020- June 2021*

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DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
AND WELLNESS

# What is an Academic Health Department (AHD)?

Established in January 2011 by the *Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice* (Council on Linkages), the AHD concept of collaborative learning was established to bring together public health practitioners and healthcare professionals to share knowledge and experiences to create resources and tools that support the development, maintenance, and expansion of formal affiliations between health departments and academic institutions. Just as teaching hospitals partner with universities to provide education and training to medical students, academic health departments partner with universities with accredited Schools of Public Health to educate and train future public health professionals. Collaboration with a university ensures that public health students are learning relevant, practical skills.

AHDs support relationships between departments and universities to conduct research, evaluate programs for effectiveness, publish in academic journals, increase collaboration on grants and other funding opportunities, and sharing new research in the field of public health.

## Louisville's AHD

Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW) became an Academic Health Department in September 2018. LMPHW entered into a partnership with the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS). This partnership involves several shared appointments, meaning that some staff are employees of both LMPHW and UofL. We also partner with community organization on priority projects and use scientific methodology and data collection to work towards improving the health of the community. The AHD also develops the lens of the next generation of public health practitioners by bringing in students to work with our LMPHW team.

## How do students engage with us?

As an AHD, LMPHW offers a variety of student experiences for public health students and others interested in public health including the capstone program, internships, practicums, shadowing, clinical rotations, and community medicine rotations.

Our non-clinical student programs act to bridge the gap between academia and public health practice by providing field experience at a public-health related worksite. Students come from many universities locally and nationally though our primary relationship is with the University of Louisville. The capstone program focuses primarily on undergraduates in the university public health degree program, and the practicum experience usually receives applicants in the Master's in public health (MPH) program. Both programs overlap in their requirements for students which include developing a learning agreement in consultation with the practice site mentor and faculty mentor, working on site (or virtually) to address the components of the learning agreement while gaining experience within the organization, and wrapping up with deliverables like written and oral reports describing the program experience.

The capstone program runs for one semester (105 hours) where undergraduates have an opportunity to see public health classwork put into practice. Many come in wanting to work with staff on projects, acting as supplemental help, completing tasks that range from entering data into a platform, creating PowerPoints, updating social media pages, and taking notes for meetings. Other capstone students can even help with research and literature reviews. Overall, the capstone allows students a chance to be involved with various aspects of a project or program without the full commitment that comes with being an MPH student. Masters-level students come in as practicum students/interns to work on a project for 1-3 semesters. Practicum students and interns already have a focus of study like epidemiology, health policy, and health promotion and come to LMPHW for an opportunity to integrate and apply their practical skills and trained learning from coursework in a professional public health work environment. Many of our past practicum students and interns have contributed to projects that result in publications and some have even joined us as staff at LMPHW.

LMPHW also collaborates with UofL's Residency Program: The Department of Family and Geriatric Medicine. Through this community medicine rotation, residents transition among our internal clinics (Syringe

Services Program (SSP), MORE, Tuberculosis (TB), Specialty and external clinics (like Americana) to gain an understanding of medical care in a public health setting. Many nursing students come from across Louisville nursing schools and online programs to also spend time in our internal clinics under the guidance of our nursing staff to complete clinical rotation hours and learn to care for patients visiting public health clinics.

## Student Applications and Project Collection

There's a cycle of when students apply for the student experiences program and when they begin their work at LMPHW. Their university programs expect them to begin at LMPHW in either January, May, or August. Students begin looking for opportunities the semester prior to the one they will begin work with us. Our AHD currently collects projects throughout each academic semester through emails, requesting work that will begin 1-2 months from the request date. These projects are added to a catalog that is distributed a month prior to the student start date after which interviews are set up with project supervisors to determine if the student fits well for the position. The AHD is currently working on an alternative method for both collecting projects and tracking students and progress of projects within programs (see "future -strategic plan" section).

## July 2020 – June 2021 Student Info and Mentors

**Number of Capstone students:** 13

**Number of Practicums/Internships students:** 31

**Mentors and projects:**

**Alex Amare**, CHE – Tobacco Licensing; Loopholes in Gender Affirming Care

**Terry Chambers**, Health Services – MORE Counseling

**YuTing Chen**, CHE – Examining COVID Disparities: Achieving Health Equity in Louisville; Assessment of Health Status in Jefferson County

**Jane Evans**, Health Services – SSP Wound Care

**Yvette Frank and Mary Jolly**, Health Services – Maternal/Child Health

**Dr. SarahBeth Hartlage**, Health Services – LouVax COVID-19 Vaccination

**Rebecca Hollenbach**, CHE – 2021 Health Equity Report (HER) and the Community Advisory Board

**Dr. Seyed Karimi**, CHE – Covid-19 Assessments and Mask Surveys

**Michelle List**, CHE – Senior Medicare Patrol

**Dr. Linda Omer**, CHE – LGBTQ Gap Analysis; Vaccination Hesitancy

**Haritha Pallam**, CHE – Essential Needs

**Michael Kopp and Aisha Wilson**, Health Services – HIV Prevention

**Sam Rose**, Environmental – Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

**Trey Allen and Angela Graham**, CHE – Ready 4K Alliance: Prenatal Care Research

## Funding for Students

Emory University Rollins School of Public Health program, Rollins Earn and Learn (REAL), collaborated with the CHE to provide partial funding to 3 Emory students who worked with Rebecca Hollenbach on the 2021 HER.

The Region IV Public Health Training Center (R-IV PHTC), housed at the Emory University Rollins School of Public Health, awarded funding 2 UofL students working on the 2021 HER and the tobacco licensing project with Rebecca Hollenbach and Alex Amare, respectively. The Pathways to Practice Scholars Program award is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

CHE provided funding for 5 summer practicum and intern students: 3 are working on the 2021 HER with Rebecca Hollenbach and 2 are working on Loopholes in Gender Affirming Care with Alex Amare.

## IRB Projects In Progress

Community-Based Wound Care Intervention Utilizing Non-Clinical Personnel in the Intravenous Drug Abuse Population: The goal of implementing a quality improvement program for non-clinical staff

at the Syringe Service Program (SSP) is to increase knowledge regarding the evaluation of wounds in the intravenous drug use population they serve, thereby identifying wounds earlier in their development, providing resources for treatment, and preventing long-term sequela.

Acceptability of HIV Self-test kits in People Who Use Drugs (PWUDs): The overarching goal of this study is to assess the acceptability of HIV self-test kits among People Who Inject Drugs (PWIDs) and People Who Use Drugs (PWUDs). Recent studies show that PWID do use health information to take personal precautions, including serosorting for HCV within injecting groups and using fentanyl test strips to test drugs prior to injecting. Consequently, HIV self-testing within PWIDs and PWUDs populations should be evaluated systematically as a potential strategy for reducing the spread of HIV within these subpopulations.



Examining Vaccine Hesitancy Among African Americans: Will it Affect Intent and Willingness to Receive the COVID-19 Vaccine in a Louisville Urban Community: The study will examine understanding of, and intent to take the COVID-19 vaccine and will utilize a pre/post survey and educational program for those hesitant about taking the COVID-19 vaccine. The goal is to address issues that are of most concern to those participating in the study, dispel myths related to the vaccine and improve understanding. The intervention will be an educational voice over PowerPoint presentation that will be used to increase knowledge about the virus and vaccine. The educational program will review important information about the virus and vaccine. Once the educational program is completed, a post survey will be immediately available to measure knowledge gained and if willingness to take the COVID-19 vaccine has either changed, or intent has remained the same.

Ready 4 K Alliance: Prenatal Care Research Project Birthing Experiences: The goal is to understand the use of prenatal care services by birthing parents who are Black, immigrant/refugees, or have experienced substance use disorder. We seek to understand what the barriers were to their use of formal medical care, what their experience with healthcare providers was like (e.g., did they experience any discrimination, bias, or racism) and if they used any “nontraditional” care outside of the medical establishment. Findings will be shared with the Ready 4 K Alliance to allow them to develop policy/practice recommendations for local birthing hospitals to increase access to early prenatal care.

## Collaborations

### Marketing for Outreach

Late last year, we connected with Dr. J’Aime Jennings from UofL’s SPHIS Health Management and Systems Sciences to provide projects for a Healthcare Marketing course. Her students worked on a marketing campaign for our Syringe Service Program (SSP) with Ben Goldman. Using some of the marketing team’s work, Ben and team managed to justify SSP’s request for expanded community outreach funding for Kentucky Harm Reduction Coalition to canvas West Louisville. They received that funding and outreach has been ongoing for about six months.

### BRFSS

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is the nation’s premier system of health-related telephone surveys that collect state data about U.S. residents regarding their health-related risk behaviors, chronic health conditions, and use of preventive services. By collecting behavioral health risk data at the state and local level, BRFSS has become a powerful tool for targeting and building health promotion activities. As a result, BRFSS users have increasingly demanded more data and asked for more questions on the survey (*CDC*). In October 2020, the Center for Health Equity’s Angela Graham applied, requesting the 2021 BRFSS questionnaire include two questions on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). She presented to the committee that adding the SOGI battery to the 2021 BRFSS supports existing research and work being developed by the CHE. The core questions around health care access, health status, and health-related behaviors could help us examine the links between the individual choice and systems of power that create risks and health outcomes. Questions on sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex at birth could provide a start to examining all these connections. In January, we received a notification that the SOGI module would be added to the questionnaire. The data collected will help us monitor health issues and behaviors that tend to disproportionately affect the LGBTQ+ population (and demographic subgroups of the LGBTQ population), including tobacco use, HIV status and testing, depression and poor mental health, and other chronic illnesses, especially among the younger population. Understanding the prevalence of these behaviors and conditions in our LGBTQ population will allow us to better target our interventions and improve our community engagement with the LGBTQ+ community in Louisville. Results will be disseminated through future releases and updates to the Health Equity Report and the LGBTQ+ Community Needs Assessment. Data will be released through published reports, online platforms such as ArcGIS online or PowerBI/Tableau web applications, live webcasts, etc. Results will also be used for program planning to target our service delivery and policy advocacy towards the most critical needs of the LGBTQ community.

## New LMPHW Tools/Resources

### Public Health digital library (PHDL)

A subscription to the PHDL has been active as of May 1, 2021. The PHDL is funded by the National Library of Medicine and overseen by the National Public Health Coordination Office. The *goals* of the PHDL are to: 1) Expand access to information resources through the PHDL offered to public health departments throughout the country, 2) Offer access to shareable resources available through partnering libraries, and 3) To continually refine a sustainable and cost efficient model of information access to a workforce that falls outside the areas where information support is often readily available. The PHDL provides state and city public health departments access to library resources including over 340 journals (articles), 75 e-books, and 150 databases in support of evidence-based practice and research. This will allow LMPHW staff to find timely evidence-based research in support of public health practice and learn how to create Policy Maps. Policy maps use data and mapping to analyze large amounts of data and display the information through maps, tables, charts, and reports. Through these maps, access to criteria of data related to demographics, health, housing, and much more is visualized and provides clear narratives about past and current status of our communities

We are arranging training sessions to go over details of access and to build capacity for finding evidence-based information resources from the PHDL and even other sources. [Here's a link](#) to survey to determine the best dates for orientation in September and the type of training you'd like to go over including general beginner to more intermediate and advanced.

## Future - Strategic Plan

LMPHW's 2019-2021 strategic plan had a goal to "formalize LMPHW's participation in public health research by 2020." LMPHW staff have worked with the AHD over the last 3 years that has led to an increase in research at LMPHW and the need to expand the AHD. Linda Omer, Rebecca Hollenbach, and Austin Chitwood have been working together with LMPHW staff to create an AHD strategic plan to spread awareness of the AHD program and build more support into the AHD. Over the span of June and July, our teams have met weekly and are closer to the implementation of action items to reach goals related to the themes within the AHD strategic plan. Below you can find more information on the strategic plan. More updates will be shared in the fall/winter wrap up newsletter on the AHD.

**Vision:** Public health practitioners are equipped with health equity knowledge and expertise to ensure every community thrives.

**Mission:** To develop relationships and create infrastructure for students and public health professionals to learn, understand their communities, implement innovative practices, and contribute to the expansion of the field of health equity

### **Theme 1: Building institutional relationships**

*Goal 1.1: Develop a process for creating a research agenda*

*Goal 1.2: Increasing publication of data to open data portal*

### **Theme 2: Preparation and development of public health workforce to have an equity lens**

*Goal 2.1: Have high quality engagement between staff and students*

*Goal 2.2: Improve the public health and health equity competencies of students and staff*

*Goal 2.3: Increasing academic and demographic backgrounds of students who participate in AHD*

### **Theme 3: Sustainable funding**

*Goal 3.1: Create a formal, sustainable income stream specifically for the AHD to support student payments and research projects*

*Goal 3.2: Have a clear competency-based professional development plan for all staff so funding can be proactively identified and equitably distributed*

### **Theme 4: Increasing capacity of the AHD**

*Goal 4.1: Defining processes and roles/responsibilities for AHD activities*

*Goal 4.2: Developing an internal and external communications plan for AHD*

*Goal 4.3: Creating a system to understand the impact of the AHD*

### Awards:

**Coffey, K.** [Health Equity During a Pandemic](#). NACCHO 2021 Innovative Practice Bronze Award.

### Op Eds/Newsletters:

**Hartlage, SB.** [“Canada’s experience is a Thanksgiving Day Warning for us.”](#) courier journal, November 17, 2020.

Gousee T, Rodgers K, **Allen T, Graham A,** Chambers S, Baker T. [“The Community Resilience Framework: A Novel Approach for Confronting Health Inequity and Building Community Resilience.”](#) NACCHO Exchange: Winter 2021 (Health Equity), pp. 9-13. 2021.

### Technical Reports:

1. **Karimi SM,** Zarei H, DuPre NC, **Chen YT,** Patel N, Mitra R, McKinney WP, Little BB, Ul Hassan R, **Moyer S.** [“Projecting COVID-19 Deaths and Hospitalizations for Jefferson County, KY from July 16 to September 15, 2020.”](#) Technical Report for the Center for Health Equity, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW), pp. 25. July 31, 2020.
2. **Karimi SM,** Zarei H, DuPre NC, Salunkhe SS, Patel N, Mitra R, McKinney WP, Little BB, **Moyer S.** [“Projecting COVID-19 Deaths and Hospitalizations for Region 4 of the Kentucky Regional Hospital Preparedness Program \(HPP\) Coalition from August 18 to October 17, 2020.”](#) Technical Report for the Office of Health Data and Analytics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), pp. 26. September 2, 2020.
3. **Karimi SM,** Zarei H, LaZur R, DuPre NC, McKinney WP, Patel N, Little BB, Mitra R, **Moyer S,** Schutze MH. [“Projecting COVID-19 Hospitalizations and Deaths for Region 3 of the Kentucky Regional Hospital Preparedness Program \(HPP\) Coalition \(Jefferson County and 14 Surrounding Counties\) during the Implementation of the State’s ‘Targeted Measures’.”](#) Technical Report for the Office of Health Data and Analytics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), and for Center for Health Equity, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW), pp. 22. November 20, 2020.
4. **Karimi SM,** Zarei H, LaZur R, DuPre NC, McKinney WP, Patel N, Little BB, Mitra R, **Moyer S,** Schutze MH. [“Projecting COVID-19 Hospitalizations for Regions 2, 3, and 4 of the Kentucky Regional Hospital Preparedness Program \(HPP\) Coalition during the Implementation of the State’s ‘Targeted Measures’.”](#) Technical Report for the Office of Health Data and Analytics, Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), pp. 23. November 30, 2020.
5. **Allen T.** [“2014-108 Birth and Death Trends, Jefferson County, KY.”](#) Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness. January 5, 2021.
6. **Payne D, French L, Bowman-Rogers A, Amare A, Johnson S.** [“Health Impact Assessment of Kentucky’s Child Care Assistance Program.”](#) Technical Report for the Center for Health Equity, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW). January 22, 2021.
7. **Karimi SM,** Zarei H, **Chen YT,** LaZur R, McKinney WP, Little BB, DuPre NC, Mitra R, Patel N, **Hollenbach R, Moyer S,** Schutze MH. [“Projecting COVID-19 Hospitalizations and Deaths under Scenarios of Vaccination in Jefferson County, Kentucky.”](#) Technical Report for Center for Health Equity, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness (LMPHW), pp. 30. March 6, 2021.

## Publications/Abstracts & Conferences:

### **Surveys (of Mask Use):**

1. **Karimi SM**, Salunkhe SS, White K, Alzahrani SA, **Chen YT**, McKinney WP, Little BB, DuPre NC, Mitra R, Adkins ER, Barclay JA, Ezekekwa E, He CX, Hurst DM, Kothagadi AR, Popescu MM, Shakib SH, Swinney DN, Johnson DA, **Hollenbach R**, **Moyer S**. "[Results of the First Observational Surveys of Mask Use in Indoor Public Areas in Jefferson County, KY during November 5–11, 2020.](#)" November 17, 2020.
2. **Karimi SM**, Salunkhe SS, White K, **Chen YT**, McKinney WP, Little BB, DuPre NC, Mitra R, Adkins ER, Barclay JA, Ezekekwa E, Hurst DM, Popescu MM, Swinney DN, Johnson DA, **Hollenbach R**, **Moyer S**. "[Results of the Second Observational Surveys of Mask Use in Indoor Public Areas in Jefferson County, KY: December 14–20, 2020.](#)" December 22, 2020.
3. **Karimi SM**, Salunkhe SS, White K, Shakib SH, **Chen YT**, McKinney WP, Little BB, DuPre NC, Mitra R, Adkins ER, Barclay JA, Ezekekwa E, Hurst DM, Kothagadi AR, Popescu MM, Swinney DN, Johnson DA, **Hollenbach R**, **Moyer S**. "[Results of the Third Observational Surveys of Mask Use in Indoor Public Areas in Jefferson County, KY, January 25–31, 2021.](#)" February 8, 2021.

### **Peer-Reviewed:**

1. **Karimi SM**, DuPre NC, McKinney WP, Little B, Patel N, **Moyer S**. "[Projecting the Covid-19 Weekly Deaths and Hospitalizations for Jefferson County, Kentucky.](#)" UL Journal of Respiratory Infections. 2020;4(1): 139053. DOI: 10.18297/jri/vol4/iss1/44. July 8, 2020.
2. **Karimi SM**, Salunkhe SS, White K, Alzahrani SA, Little BB, **Chen YT**, McKinney WP, DuPre NC, Mitra R, Popescu MM, Adkins ER, Barclay JA, Ezekekwa E, He CX, Hurst DM, Kothagadi AR, Shakib SH, Swinney DN, Johnson DA, **Hollenbach R**, **Moyer S**. "[Facial Mask Use and COVID-19 Protection Measures in Jefferson County, Kentucky: Results from an Observational Survey, November 5–11, 2020.](#)" UL Journal of Respiratory Infections. DOI: 10.18297/jri/vol5/iss1/7. March 25, 2021.
3. DuPre NC, **Karimi SM**, Zhang HZ, Blair L, Gupta A, **Alharbi LMA**, **Alluhibi M**, Mitra R, McKinney WP, Little BB. "[County-Level Demographic, Socioeconomic, School Enrollment and Lifestyle Correlates of COVID-19 Infection and Death Trajectories during the First Wave of the Pandemic in United States Counties.](#)" Science of the Total Environment. DOI: 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.147495. May 3, 2021.
4. **Karimi SM**, Majbouri M, DuPre NC, White K, Little BB, McKinney WP. "[Weather and COVID-19 Deaths during the Stay-at-Home Order in the US](#)" Journal of Environmental and Occupational Medicine. Available online from 3 February 2021. DOI: 10.1097/JOM.0000000000002160. June 1, 2021.

### **Abstract/Conference Presentations:**

2021 ASPPH

"Maximizing your relationship with the local health department" - Tammi Thomas, **linda omer**, and **Leslie Wolf**

2021 KPHA

"Latinx mothers' experiences giving birth during the COVID-19 pandemic" - Dr. J. Richerson, **Trey Allen**, **Angela Graham**, **Leslie French**, **Monica Leslie**, and **Jan Rogers**