



Director's Report

67th Meeting of the **National Advisory Council on Minority Health and Health Disparities**

May 5, 2025

Monica Webb Hooper, Ph.D.

**Acting Director
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Minority Health and Health Disparities**

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National Institute
on Minority Health
and Health Disparities

Mission of NIMHD

- **Lead scientific research to improve health and reduce health disparities**
- **Aspiration to assure good health for all populations**
- **Conducts and support multidisciplinary research across integrative biological and behavioral sciences, clinical and health services research, and community health and population science**



Celebrating the NIH and Voices for Our Fathers Legacy Foundation Partnership

- On September 19, 2024, NIH debuted plaque honoring memory of Black American men treated in U.S. Public Health Service Untreated Syphilis Study
- Recognizing 50th anniversary of the National Research Act
- Members of the Voices For Our Fathers Legacy Foundation, descendants of men in study, attended



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NIMHD Updates



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NIMHD Scientific Director of Division of Intramural Research

Kelvin Choi, Ph.D., M.P.H.

- As director, oversees executive direction and scientific leadership for intramural research program
- Served as acting scientific director since March 2023, following retirement of Anna M. Nápoles, Ph.D.
- Joined DIR in 2013 as a Stadtman Tenure-Track Investigator and promoted to senior investigator in 2019
- Accomplished researcher in commercial tobacco use disparities and control



Acting Director Monica Webb Hooper, Ph.D., Honored for Research Contributions

2025 Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research Fellow

- Recognized for outstanding contributions to behavioral medicine research

2025 Pebbles Fagan Award - SRNT

- Honored for outstanding contributions to public health and communities through health disparities research



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Legislative Updates: Congressional Activities

November 19, 2024

- Monica Webb Hooper, Ph.D., met with **Congresswoman Terri Sewell (D-AL)** to discuss updates on health disparities research.

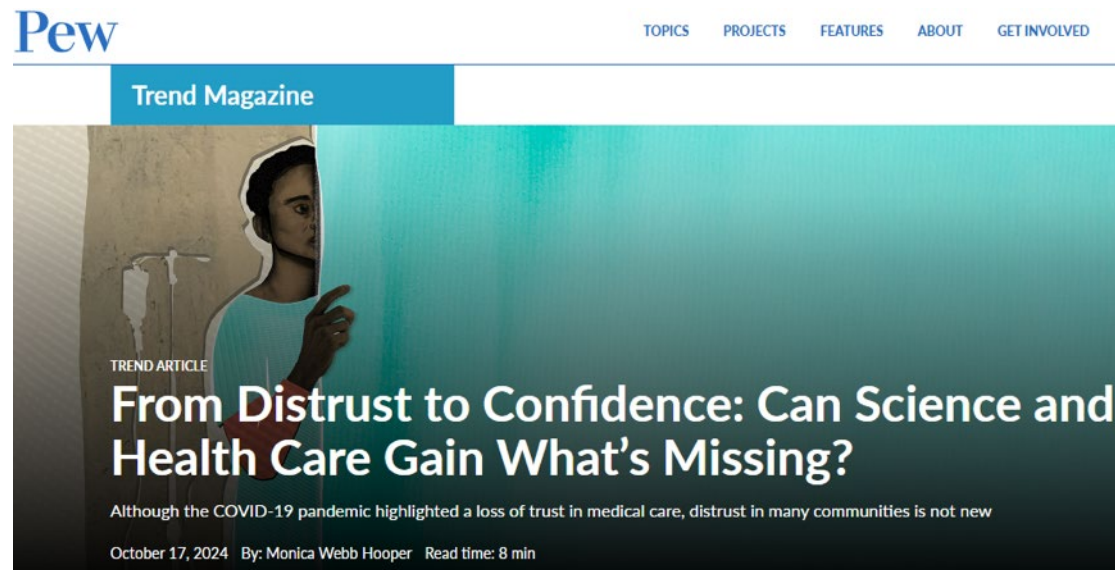
December 6, 2024

- Nathan Stinson Jr., Ph.D., M.D., and representatives from NIGMS and NHLBI participated in NIH Lunch and Learn congressional webinar on rural health.



NIMHD Acting Director Monica Webb Hooper, Ph.D., Article on The Road Toward Trust

- Article published on October 17, 2024, in The Pew Charitable Trusts *Trend Magazine*
- Discusses how trust in many national institutions is at historic low
- Explores the roots of distrust in science and healthcare
- Offers possibilities for how leaders can help restore trust



[Read article](#)



American Public Health Association Conference, October 2024

- **9 PIs and fellows** from 5 different DIR labs presented.
- Allana T. Forde, Ph.D., M.P.H., presented on **"Critical Issues in Public Health"** panel.
- NIMHD hosted exhibit booth with funding opportunities, resources to support research.



“Oral Health for Some Is Not Enough: Life Course Approach to Oral Health” Workshop

During NIH Research festival, NIH Health Disparities Interest Group hosted hybrid workshop on factors that influence oral health disparities and efforts to address these disparities.

- Featured speakers included:
 - Gina Thornton-Evans, D.D.S., M.P.H., Director, Division of Oral Health, CDC
 - Lisa Simon, M.D., D.M.D, Instructor, Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School
 - Brenda Heaton, Ph.D., M.P.A, Associate Dean for Research, School of Dentistry, University of Utah
 - Dushanka V. Kleinman, D.D.S., Professor, University of Maryland



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NIMHD Science Advances



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Religious Participation and Dementia Diagnosis Among Black People

- Highest prevalence of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD)
- Report higher levels of religiosity or spirituality than other racial and/or ethnic minority groups
- Health and Retirement Study found that religiosity or spirituality related to lower odds of ADRD. **Black adults who never attended religious services had 2.37 higher odds of being diagnosed with ADRD than those who attended at least weekly**
- Attending religious services, but not frequency of prayer nor religious salience, was associated with reduced risk of ADRD for Black people.

Grant No. R01MD011606

Griffith, E. E., et al., [Amer J Human Biology](#). 2024.



Quit Attempts Among Rural Daily Smokers

- Data from 1,610 rural adult daily smokers in the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health study were analyzed to assess prevalence and factors of quit attempts in past year.
- 1 in 4 rural adult daily smokers made a quit attempt.
- Greater odds of quit attempts linked to higher educational attainment and poor/fair self-reported physical health.
- **Being aware of smoking's social harm and disapproval of smoking by friends and family were each related to improving odds by 46%.**
- **Being advised by a clinician to quit smoking increased attempt odds by 63%; <50% of participants had been advised by a doctor to quit smoking.**



In-Person Versus Virtual Smoking Cessation Interventions

- To compare the effectiveness of smoking cessation interventions, low-income adults in Baltimore were randomized into 3 intervention groups: (1) self-help, (2) in-person, and (3) virtual/hybrid groups.
- In-person group showed higher rate of successfully quitting smoking compared to self-help group; virtual/hybrid group was not associated with significantly higher quit rate compared to self-help group.

Although virtual intervention could expand access to smoking cessation support, limitations in low-income populations must be addressed.



Blood Pressure Prescriptions After Stroke

- Control of blood pressure is crucial for primary and secondary stroke prevention.
- Assessed trends in post-stroke blood pressure medication prescriptions and adherence to clinical practice guidelines in 265,409 stroke cases recorded in the Florida Stroke Registry (Jan. 2010 – March 2020).
- Adherence to guidelines was 48% to 74%.
- Guideline adherence was lower for Black patients, 50% of whom did not receive first-line medication options.

Lower guideline adherence among Black patients is related to prescribers' post-stroke blood pressure medication choice.



Demand for Mental Health Services after Maui Wildfire

- August 2023 Maui wildfire in Hawai'i created a mental health crisis.
- Analyzed calls to the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline from July 2022 to August 2024.
- Monthly calls increased from 97.5 to 137.4 per 100,000 residents post wildfire. In-state call answer rates for Hawai'i decreased from 90.3% to 77.2%, indicating insufficient capacity to meet demand.



***Need for increased mental health
care capacity after disasters***

Grant No. R61MD019939

Rivera-González, A., et al., [JAMA Netw Open](#). 2024.



Physical Activity Among Breast Cancer Survivors

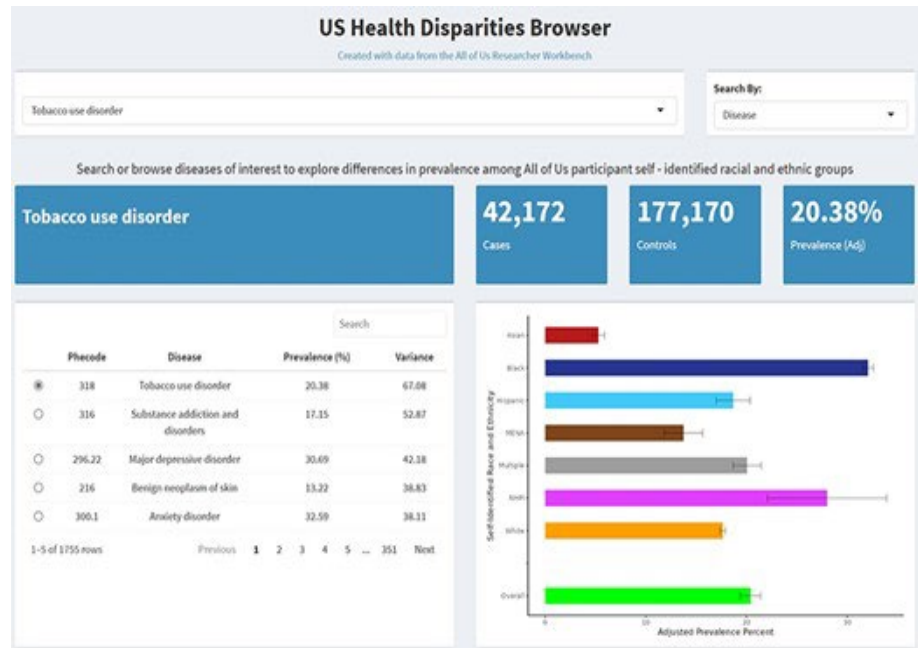
- Physical activity is an important aspect of care.
- Study used National Health Interview Survey (2004-2018) physical activity data from breast cancer survivors and women without breast cancer.
- 37.7% breast cancer survivors vs. 40.9% without cancer met aerobic exercise guidelines
- Rates for meeting physical activity guidelines were lower among Black, Latina, and low-income breast cancer survivors.

Targeted interventions may improve physical activity rates among underrepresented and underserved breast cancer survivors.



Landscape of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities in the *All of Us* Research Program

- NIH's *All of Us* Research Program collects genetic, environmental, demographic, and health data from volunteer participants.
- All of Us* participant electronic health record data was used to develop the US Health Disparities Browser, an interactive web application that shows differences in racial- and/or ethnic-specific prevalence estimates for 1,755 different diseases.



Browser serves a resource to explore racial and ethnic health disparities in the All of Us cohort.

Grant No. ZIA MD000018 Lam, V., Sharma, S., Spouge, J. L., Jordan, I. K., Mariño-Ramírez, L., [Database](#). 2024.



NIMHD William G. Coleman Jr., Ph.D., Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Innovation Award



Dr. David Adzrago



Dr. Jason Ashe



Dr. Marlena Fisher



Dr. Bethany Ogbenna



Dr. Marcus Andrews



Dr. Juliana Camargo



Dr. Amir Lueth

Each awardee receives \$15,000 to conduct the proposed research.



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Discussion



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