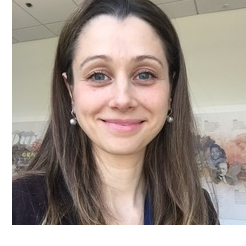


POLICY-DIRECTED RESEARCH TO IMPROVE CARE FOR PERSONS WITH COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS

Fall 2019

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

This quarter, we spotlight faculty member **Mariana P. Socal, MD, MS, MPP, PhD**, Assistant Scientist in the Department of Health Policy and Management. Dr. Socal is a medical doctor who holds a Master's of Public Policy from Princeton University and a PhD in Health Systems from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Dr. Socal joined the JHSPH faculty in 2017 as part of the Johns Hopkins Drug Access and Affordability Initiative led by Prof. Gerard Anderson. Dr. Socal's research focuses on improving prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries and for individuals with employer-sponsored health insurance, an issue on which she recently testified in Congress. A summary of Dr. Socal's research can be found [here](#).



RESEARCH FINDINGS

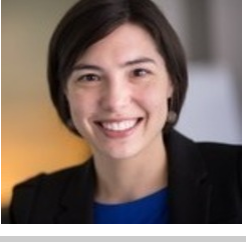
Trends in Dementia Diagnosis and Use of Specialty Care

Study by **Emmanuel Drabo**, **Douglas Barthold**, **Geoffrey Joyce**, **Patricia Ferido**, **Helena Chang Chui** and **Julie Zissimopoulos** in *Alzheimer's & Dementia* analyzes trends in dementia diagnosis & subsequent use of specialty care up to 5 years post-diagnosis. The study finds 85% of persons diagnosed with dementia are diagnosed by a non-specialist and the likelihood of seeing a specialist within 1 year (22%) & 5 years (36%) is low. The article discusses clinical and policy implications. [Read More](#).



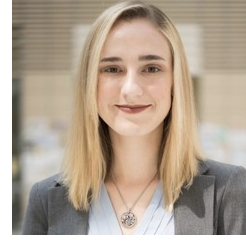
Why State Medicaid Programs Should Cover Hearing Aids for Adults

Hearing loss affects an estimated two thirds of Americans aged 70 years and older, but Medicare currently excludes hearing aids and related services from coverage and many state Medicaid programs do not yet provide coverage of hearing aids for adults. A *JAMA Otolaryngology - Head & Neck Surgery* viewpoint by **Amber Willink**, **Mary Ann Hernando** and **Sarah Steege** discusses why hearing aids and related services should be covered for all Medicaid enrollees when medically necessary, regardless of age. [Read More](#).



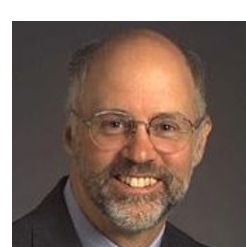
Discussion of Memory During Primary Care Visits of Older Adults with Cognitive Impairment and Accompanying Family

Study by **Jennifer Aull**, **Halima Amjad**, **Debra Roter**, and **Jennifer Wolff** in *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry* examines factors associated with memory-related discussion during routine primary care visits of older adults. The study finds discussion of memory appears largely driven by the clinician's, but not the family's, ratings of patient cognition and presence of an established diagnosis, suggesting potential benefit of engaging family to improve cognitive impairment detection and management in primary care. [Read More](#).



Financial Eligibility Criteria and Medication Coverage for Independent Charity Patient Assistance Programs

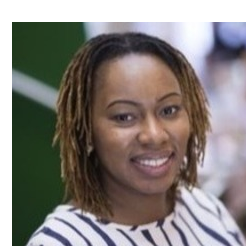
Independent charity patient assistance programs may improve access to costly prescription drugs, but recent federal investigations have raised questions about their potential to increase pharmaceutical spending. A study by **So-Yeon Kang**, **Aditi Sen**, **Ge Bai** and **Gerard Anderson** published in *JAMA* examines the eligibility criteria of the programs and the drugs covered by them. The study finds that among the 274 patient assistance programs operated by the 6 independent charity foundations, the majority did not provide coverage for uninsured patients. Medications that were covered by the patient assistance programs were generally more expensive than those that were not covered. [Read More](#).



This research was highlighted by [Reuters](#) and [STAT News](#).

Racial Disparities in Medicaid Home and Community-Based Service Utilization: Implications of State Policy

Study in the *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities* by **Chaneë Fabius**, **Jessica Ogarek** and **Theresa Shireman** describes racial differences in home and community-based service utilization among people with Multiple Sclerosis. Authors find blacks and Hispanics receiving home and community based services more often do so in states that are less rebalanced toward community settings compared with whites. Findings suggest a need for focusing on health equity and more widespread policies. [Read More](#).



NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL HEALTH AND AGING TRENDS STUDY

Eight rounds of NHATS have been released, affording annual data from 2011-2018, with three waves of the National Study of Caregivers: 2011, 2015, and 2017. Details are available at www.nhats.org. Nearly 3,000 users have registered to access NHATS data, from which 200+ peer-reviewed articles have been published.



Learn About NHATS at the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Annual Meeting

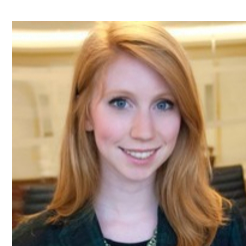
The National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS) will host a pre-conference workshop at the 2019 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) in Austin, Texas. The workshop, "Using the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS) in Analyses of Disability and Aging," will provide an overview of the study design and content of NHATS and the National Study of Caregiving (NSOC) and will cover topics including disability and caregiving, as well as opportunities for data linkages. For registration and more information, please visit the [GSA website](#).



GSA 2019 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING
Strength in Age: Harnessing the Power of Networks

Family Caregiver Involvement During Older Adults' Home Health Care

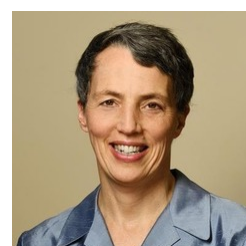
A study led by doctoral student **Julia Burgdorf** with **Alicia Arbaje** and **Jennifer Wolff** in *Home Health Care Management & Practice* analyzes the role of family caregivers during Medicare home health visits. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently enacted a policy that requires home health providers to assess family caregivers' abilities and offer training and education. The study finds nearly 9 in 10 Medicare beneficiaries receiving home health care require family caregiver assistance in addition to care from home health care: the majority require assistance with 5 or more health care activities. Study findings support calls to develop training interventions and strengthen the partnership between home health providers and family caregivers. [Read More](#).



NEWS & UPDATES

Sarah Szanton Receives Prestigious Heinz Award

Nurse researcher **Sarah Szanton** received the Heinz Award for Human Condition for the co-development of Community Aging in Place Advancing Better Living for Elders (CAPABLE). CAPABLE is a progressive program helping low-income older adults live independently with home repair services, in-home nursing and occupational therapy to help them age independently and decrease healthcare costs. Congratulations to Sarah on this achievement! [Read More](#).



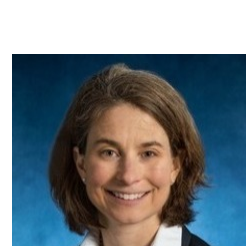
Cynthia Boyd and Michael Steinman To Lead New National Effort to Improve Prescribing Among Older Adults

Congratulations to **Cynthia Boyd** and **Michael Steinman** of UCSF on a new award by the National Institute on Aging to establish a U.S. Deprescribing Research Network to improve the quality of pharmaceutical care and health outcomes for older adults. Older adults often use unnecessary and potentially inappropriate medications that are inconsistent with their goals of care. This new award will support efforts to reduce use of inappropriate medications and improve the quality of pharmaceutical care and health outcomes for older adults.



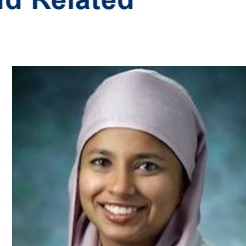
Jennifer Wolff Awarded New R01 by National Institute on Aging

Jennifer Wolff has been awarded a new R01 by the National Institute on Aging, "Involving Family to Improve Advance Care Planning for Primary Care Patients with AD/DR." Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (AD/DR) are among the most profoundly disabling and costly conditions, but little attention has been directed at interventions to improve advance care planning in primary care. This new award will allow refinement and testing of the efficacy of a multicomponent advance care intervention to meet the needs of older persons with AD/DR and their family caregivers in primary care.



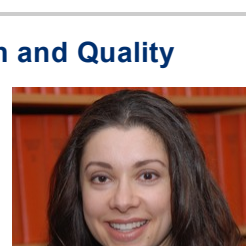
Halima Amjad Appointed by Governor to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council

Halima Amjad has been appointed by the Maryland governor to the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council. The Council's charge includes improving and enhancing quality of life and support services, both in the home and community, for individuals and their families living with dementia. This work is accomplished by reviewing State statutes, policies and programs; monitoring the 2012 Maryland State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias; and convening workgroups as needed.



Alicia Arbaje Awarded R01 from Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Alicia Arbaje has been awarded a new R01, "Making Health Care Safer for Older Adults Receiving Skilled Home Health Care Services After Hospital Discharge." Care delivery is increasingly moving to home and community-based settings. However, older adults who require home health services after hospital discharge are at high risk of returning to the hospital. The goal of this new study is to see how to identify and reduce potential safety risks in home health care by understanding and acting upon older adult, caregiver, and home health provider feedback at the point of care.



New Health Policy Podcast, Tradeoffs, Launches

Tradeoffs is a new health policy podcast focused on exploring challenges within the U.S. health care system. The podcast brings together an interdisciplinary team of researchers and journalists with expertise in policy and economics to discuss the current health policy landscape. The first episode airs on October 16th, and will analyze proposed Democratic health reform plans. Faculty **Daniel Polsky** is on the advisory board for the podcast. To tune in or learn more, visit tradeoffs.org.

SELECT RECENT PUBLICATIONS

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Bai G, Chanmugam A, Suslow VY, Anderson GF. [Air Ambulances With Sky-High Charges](#). *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 2019 Jul;38(7):1195-1200.

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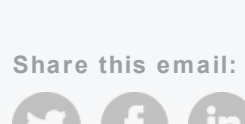
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Spillman BC, Freedman VA, Kasper JD, Wolff JL. [Change Over Time in Caregiving Networks for Older Adults With and Without Dementia](#). *J Gerontol B Psychol Sci Soc Sci*. 2019 Sep 16.

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Weich WP, Sen AP, Bindman AB. [Concentration of Physician Services Across Insurers and Effects on Quality: Early Evidence From Medicare Advantage](#). *Med Care*. 2019 Oct;57(10):795-800.

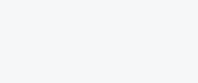
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