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UF Health Jacksonville, like all healthcare institutions, is adjusting to rapidly changing dynamics, notably of healthcare accountability, performance-based reimbursement, electronic information, and disparities in population health.

The Center for Health Equity & Quality Research (CHEQR) provides an organizational structure that strategically utilizes and synthesizes the broad range of individual and clinical capacities to embrace the mission, vision, and values of UF Health. CHEQR made substantial contributions to the UF Health Academic Health Center missions in Jacksonville during the 2016-17 academic year.

Apart from building foundations for faculty to grow external funding and scholarship, CHEQR staff have acquired external funding for population health and health equity research. However, CHEQR’s major role and return on investment is its support of UF Health’s missions in education and research. CHEQR also provides extensive support for the academic health center service mission through data analysis supporting quality improvement and performance measurement as well as evaluation of implementation and dissemination of evidence-based medicine and healthcare.

Support for Education Mission

CHEQR’s primary accomplishment is its service as a campus wide research support center. For example, ACGME RRC requirements for graduate medical education residencies require resident engagement in research. The support CHEQR provides resident and fellow research helps offset heavy clinical demands on faculty. Thus, CHEQR also helps many faculty with significant clinical effort overcome the major challenges to engage in their own research as well as mentor research of residents and fellows. Scholarship reported in the Campus Research Support Center illustrates this critical role in support of the education mission of the UF Health Jacksonville.
Support for Research Mission
CHEQR provides extensive support for the research mission overall and with particular emphasis in community engagement in research. Community engagement through participatory research and empowerment evaluation studies complements the UF Health’s commitment to our community. However, these research efforts in engagement and participatory studies also support and complement broader UF Health efforts to obtain external funding for research through mechanisms such as the CTSI and PCORI. These accomplishments are illustrated in the Campus Research Support Center and Community Engagement section of this Report.

Funding for Sponsored Programs
CHEQR has been successful in supporting research grant proposals for faculty from a broad range of clinical departments. These efforts include assisting in: background research, program and research plan development, data analysis plans, evaluation plans where appropriate, and completion and submission of requisite forms. CHEQR faculty and staff have also been successful in acquiring grants and contracts for education, research in public health systems and community based participatory research.

Faculty Scholarship to Build Research Portfolio
External funding for a wide range of research opportunities that typify academic health centers require demonstrated expertise reflected in scholarship for the areas for which external funding is requested. Suitable faculty scholarship that befits the role of a principal investigator is a prerequisite for successful grant requests. Thus CHEQR works with faculty to bolster individual and institutional portfolios needed to win more external funding in an era when such funding is increasingly competitive.

This Annual Report is intended to summarize accomplishments of CHEQR in the past year as well as to describe its ongoing role in further developing capacity of UF Health Jacksonville to undertake research, clinical analytics, and community engagement.

The Report is organized by major types of services that CHEQR provides as these align with the Mission, Vision and Values of UF Health:

- Campus Research Support Center
- Research Education
- Community Engagement
- Statewide Initiatives
The UF Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is a multi-campus resource offering research support services, research initiatives, mentoring and community engagement. Within UF Health Jacksonville, CHEQR aims to mirror and expand at the local level resources and services similar to and increasingly aligned with the CTSI.

CHEQR focuses on education, research, grant development and scholarship to support faculty, residents and fellows in the College of Medicine, College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing, and UF Health.

**Research**

CHEQR provides research design and analysis consultation services including IRB preparation, protocol development, data collection, statistical analysis, and assistance with manuscripts and grants. Consultations include navigation towards an end result of either scholarship or grant submission.

Requests for services are triaged through a Consultation Request Form on the CHEQR website (using a REDCap form - consulting and research services form) at [http://hscj.ufl.edu/cheqr/BiostatisticalServices.aspx](http://hscj.ufl.edu/cheqr/BiostatisticalServices.aspx).

In 2016-2017, of the approximately 114 consultations, 20% needed assistance with their IRB application (30% were already IRB approved), 37% needed assistance with their study design and 82% needed statistical analysis. Just over half of the consultations needed advice on data collection strategies, data processing and cleaning, and/or exploratory data analysis. Approximately 10% of these projects included support in the development of grant proposals for federal and local grant opportunities.
Grants

CHEQR assists with grant submissions across the campus. Mentoring new investigators is a top priority. A publication and research track record is needed to achieve extramural funding in today’s research climate. Often, funding begins small through foundations or internal funding sources but this is an important early step by which research experience and a portfolio is eventually built. Over time, some preliminary studies lead to more federal grants such as NIH R01 or K-awards.

Grant preparation also includes developing relationships between researchers, various experts, and the community. CHEQR has a successful track record of linking researchers; between campuses, between universities, and with the community. Below are recent grants CHEQR provided support for; some with preparing the application, others with implementation of multi-site projects. Grants are broken down by active/continuing, newly funded, pending, and non-funded.

Active/Continuing Grants

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) Evaluation of the Fostering Systems of Care Initiative (SOCl) Program. Sub-Award SAMHSA. $1,200,000 (CHEQR: $110,040).

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) Evaluation of the Systems of Care Initiative (SOCl) Expansion Program. Sub-Award SAMHSA. $600,000 (CHEQR: $66,658).

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) Partnerships to Improve Community Health. Sub-award CDC/Broward Regional Health Planning Council. $94,971.

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) Measuring integration between health care and public health to improve HIV early detection and control. RWJF Sub-award/RTI. $25,133.

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) ENRGISE- ENabling Reduction of low-Grade Inflammation in Seniors Pilot Study. Sub-award NIH Dr. Pahor, Institute for Aging, UF Gainesville. (CHEQR $4,500/randomized participant).

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative. Florida Department of Health. (CHEQR $10,000).

William Livingood, PhD. (CHEQR) Study of local agency QI interventions to improve cost effectiveness of delivering STI services. RWJF. $277,642.

New—Funded Grants

Lori Bilello, PhD (CHEQR) OneFlorida Cancer Control Network. Subaward Florida Department of Health James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program, Dr. Elizabeth Shenkman, UF Gainesville. (CHEQR $2,530).

CHEQR Supported applications—Pending Grants

Carolyn Tucker, PhD. Culturally Sensitive, Primary Care Clinic-Based Interventions by Community Health Workers and Trained Physicians to Promote and Sustain Weight Loss among Obese Black Women Patients. *Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute.*


Carolyn Tucker, PhD. Health-Smart: A Church-Based Empowerment Model for Long-Term Weight Reduction in Black Communities. National Institute of Health.


**Non-Funded Grant Submissions**


Brian Celso, PhD. “Communication and Numeracy” (UF CAN) for Breast Cancer. Florida Department of Health- Bankhead Coley.


Lori Bilello, PhD (Jacksonville University) A Statewide Innovation to Promote Solutions in the Health System to Address the Needs of Transitional Youth with ADHD to Improve Health Outcomes. Blue Foundation.

**Scholarship**

CHEQR is committed to supporting scholarship including peer reviewed publications, white papers, abstracts, reports, presentations and posters. CHEQR strives to support faculty, residents and fellows to publish in high-impact, peer reviewed journals. Such publications disseminate important research being conducted on the campus and increase the likelihood of external funding. Highlighted scholarship through the support of CHEQR Faculty and staff are listed below:

**Publications & Scholarship**


Abstracts & Presentations

Porterfield, D, Husick, C, Bevc C, Bilello, L, Wilson MM. Improving systems of care for early detection, linkage, and continuous care for persons with HIV/AIDS. Poster presentation at the NACCHO Annual Meeting, July 2016, Phoenix AZ.


RESEARCH EDUCATION

As part of the core mission, CHEQR provides research education lectures and programs tailored to specific needs that increase research skills and capacities of faculty and trainees at UF Health Jacksonville.

We provide the following lecture series in an online platform that is available to students, residents and faculty on campus:

- Research Design Course
- Introductory Biostatistics Course
- SPSS course
- Grant Writing Seminar Series

These courses and seminars are available on the UFHealth Jacksonville Intranet at [http://1b-esx-infonet.umc.ufl.edu/cheqr/Pages/default.aspx](http://1b-esx-infonet.umc.ufl.edu/cheqr/Pages/default.aspx).

CHEQR faculty provides one-on-one training to all second year Department of Medicine residents in research methods for quality improvement (QI) as part of their QI rotation schedule. In addition, our chief biostatistician, Dr. Shiva Gautam, has provided a 3 part lecture series on biostatistics to the Department of Psychiatry residents and several CHEQR faculty have participated in a multi-day training for Department of Surgery residents on research methods and analysis.

CHEQR faculty also provide lectures and tutorials by request, on topics such as grant writing, manuscript development, and effective research presentations.

Dr. Shiva Gautam also taught a independent study course in Medical Sciences (GMS6905) on biostatistical methods for clinical research. This course was taught to Dr. Faheem Guirgis (Emergency Medicine) as part of his K-award curriculum.

CHEQR faculty and staff are preceptors for the University of North Florida Master in Public Health (MPH) program. This past year, two MPH students did their summer internship with CHEQR as part of their requirement for graduation. One student is now a research coordinator for UF Health Jacksonville.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH

CHEQR is focused on the community through partnerships with community agencies with an emphasis on improving health and ending health disparities and inequities. Examples of this work include:

Jacksonville Health Equity Research Organization (JaxHERO)
CHEQR provides management and research support to JaxHERO. This is registered by the Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ) as a Primary Care Practice-Based Research Network. JaxHERO is composed of primary care centers from UF Health Jacksonville, Florida Department of Health-Duval, Mayo Clinic and St. Vincent’s Family Residency program. This network of primary care centers serve over 150,000 patients, many who are disproportionately minority and poor with high rates of diabetes, hypertension, cancer and other conditions. This network is also part of the OneFlorida Clinical Research Consortium funded by the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). JaxHERO has collaborated with UF researchers on numerous research projects in the areas of diabetes (Dr. Hall), obesity (Dr. Tucker), pain management (Dr. Harle), and health risk assessments (Dr. Shenkman). Most recently JaxHERO collaborated with Dr. Rhonda Cooper-DeHoff, PharmD on a project entitled OPTImizing Precision of Hypertension Care to Maximize Blood Pressure Control Pilot (OPTI-BP Pilot). These projects have resulted in multiple publications and grants.

Florida Public Health Practice-Based Research Network (FL-PBRN)
CHEQR is also the Statewide Coordinating Center for the FL-PBRN. The FL-PBRN includes all 67 county health departments, the Florida Department of Health, and university partners representing the major public health colleges throughout the state. The network has been awarded two Robert Wood Johnson Foundation research grants.

Academic Community Partnership & Youth Advisory Board
An NIH academic–community partnership grant supported CHEQR efforts to engage the broader Jacksonville community through an adolescent youth research advisory board. NIH support enabled CHEQR to submit applications for other NIH funding opportunities, and illustrates the application of engagement and participatory research with a broad range of communities.

Project to Learn About Youth (PLAY) - Mental Health Jax.
This is a CDC funded community-based study to examine the epidemiology of specific mental health issues in youth facilitated through the Duval County Public Schools. CHEQR provides biostatistical and research assistance to this project. Dr. Steven Cuffe, Chair of Psychiatry, is the PI.

ENabling Reduction of low-Grade Inflammation in SEniors (ENRGISE) Pilot Study.
This is a NIH funded feasibility study by Dr. Marco Pahor at the Institute for Aging, UF Gainesville. Dr. Lori Bilello serves as the local Jacksonville PI for the study, along with multiple CHEQR staff who implement the study protocol. The purpose of the study is to determine if two interventions (Losartan and/or Omega 3 fish oil) can reduce inflammation and improve mobility in people 70 and older. ENRGISE relies on community networking for referrals to the research through community outreach from groups including The 100 Grandmas, The Schell Sweet Center at Edward Waters College, and the UFCOM-J Department of Family and Community Medicine. ENRGISE is also connected to UF COM-J Cardiology Research Laboratory, Brooks Rehabilitation Services, and HealthStreet community health workers’ outreach.
EVALUATION SERVICES

Evaluation is a critical component of many community, health care, and health professions grants. We provide tailored evaluations that are rigorous and meaningful to programs and funders. CHEQR faculty and staff has extensive experience providing program evaluation and quality improvement consulting including to:

- non-profit organizations
- local and state public health organizations
- K-12 public school systems

During the past year, we provided evaluation services to two multi-million dollar federal grants – SAMHSA System of Care Initiative and the CDC Partnerships to Improve Community Health as well as other programs in the community and within UF Health Jacksonville.

**SAMHSA System of Care Initiative** – Jacksonville System of Care Initiative (SOCI) was awarded a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to benefit the system for children’s mental health services within Duval County, Florida. Subsequently, CHEQR was awarded a subcontract through the City of Jacksonville and Managed Access to Child Health (MATCH, Inc.) to evaluate the Initiative. This evaluation is required by the SAMHSA Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Families Initiative (CMHS). In addition, each grantee has local evaluation activities that focus on key issues that are important to the local initiative and the community. Additionally, CHEQR provided evaluation services to an expansion grant for the System of Care that was awarded in 2016 that focuses on children and youth involved in mental health crisis stabilization facilities.

**CDC Partnerships to Improve Community Health** – Broward Regional Health Planning Council was granted a Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH) award, one of only 39 grants awarded throughout the United States. The PICH initiative is a true collaborative working with multi-sector community organizations and agencies to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke, improve nutrition, increase physical activity and improve access to programs for preventing and managing chronic diseases. Over 25 organizations are part of the PICH initiative and includes 20 community based projects including implementing Healthy Community Zones, Complete Streets, “Go, Slow, Whoa” food labeling system throughout Broward county. CHEQR is the lead evaluator for this 3 year grant and it provides evaluation and implementation support of several of their county-wide projects.

**W. Martin Smith Interdisciplinary Patient Safety Awards Program** – CHEQR is the evaluator of a grant received by Dr. Christopher Scuderi, the chair of JaxHERO, for a project called “Practice Transformation Improving Quality Using a Team Based Approach.” This a pilot study uses AHRQ’s TeamSTEPPS program to improve team based care in six of the primary care practices in the UF Jacksonville Primary Care Network. It involves training sessions that focus on the 4 core competency areas of TeamSTEPPS (team leadership, mutual performance monitoring, mutual support, and communication) and on the basic concepts of team-based care in a patient centered medical home (PCMH) model. We are evaluating the impact of the implementation of the TeamSTEPPS program on employee satisfaction and improved teamwork as well as the impact on the management of chronic care patients, especially those with diabetes.