

# The WREN Review

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## WREN provides research support for two DFM projects

This spring, WREN jumped in to provide recruitment and project management services for two Department of Family Medicine (DFM) research studies, already underway.

When Northeast Family Medicine Clinic lost their study coordinator in January, WREN Steering Committee member and DFM Research Director Mary Beth Plane saw an opportunity to use the research infrastructure already in place at WREN to step in when help was needed.

As a result, WREN is now providing study coordination services for the CAPTION study (Collaboration Among Pharmacists & Physicians to Improve Outcomes Now) at Northeast Family Medicine Clinic in Madison.

Northeast clinic is one of 27 clinics across the country participating in CAPTION, an NIH-funded multi-center clinical trial to determine the extent to which physician-pharmacist collaborative management (PPCM) of chronic disease states will be adopted in diverse types of clinics. This national research study will also examine whether PPCM improves health outcomes for people with high blood pressure or asthma.

WREN Regional Research Coordinator (RRC) Kate Judge is working with Dr. Louis Sanner, the local investigator,

and Carrie Stoltenberg, the study pharmacist on the project.

Kate began patient recruitment in April after obtaining IRB approval to fine-tune study procedures to include patient compensation and the use of electronic health records to screen for eligible patients.

WREN also stepped in to provide research support for a DFM study headed by Aleksandra Zgierska investigating whether mindfulness meditation can help recovering alcoholics stay sober. In this NIH-funded study, participants will learn how to practice meditation during an 8-week course guided by an experienced instructor.

To help speed up recruitment, Dr. Zgierska enlisted WREN RRC Mark Remiker. With his help, the project recruited 12 participants in the last round, bringing the project to the half-way point towards the recruitment goal of 112 total subjects. Recruitment will resume later this summer.

WREN Director Paul Smith hopes that more investigators will become aware of the research support services WREN can provide. "Our expertise with conducting research in practices can be a true asset to researchers in Wisconsin who choose to access it."

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*Health Literacy Summit: The crowd (above) and speaker Andrew Pleasant (below)*



## Survey Group Project Underway; Recruitment Efforts Continue

Since launching the Primary Care Survey Group last November, WREN and the Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians (WAFP) have completed five surveys on diverse topics, including primary care clinician confidence concerning care for patients with chronic kidney disease, acute pain treatment in primary care, and legislation on insurance policy readability.

The latter survey was a particularly exciting use of survey group input. WREN Director Paul Smith was able to use the information gathered from the survey group on this issue during his testimony at a legislative hearing the day after it was collected.

As the state of Wisconsin wrestles with difficult budget considerations this year, the survey group will likely have

more opportunities to weigh in on legislative actions important to primary care practice.

Recruitment to the survey group continues. Survey group membership is just past the halfway point in reaching the goal of 200 total participants.

In addition to the opportunity to contribute knowledge to primary care research, WREN and WAFP have added another incentive to participate in this group. Anyone who has signed on by June 30th will be entered into a drawing for an iPad. The drawing will only be held if the recruitment goal is met.

Interested primary care clinicians can sign up for the survey group by clicking on the "Join the Survey Group" link at [www.wren.wisc.edu](http://www.wren.wisc.edu).

## WREN projects in the field

Dr. Enid Montague's study, *Understanding Patient Trust in Physician and Patient Outcomes*, is nearing completion of the data collection phase. WREN helped to recruit two physicians at each of five clinics, and the study team has videotaped over 75 of the 100 patient visits needed for the study. Next, researchers will analyze the video recordings of doctor-patient interactions and evaluate the factors that influence a trusting doctor-patient relationship.

*The SAFE-C study* has moved into the implementation stage, with the launch of its pre-intervention phase at four participating clinics in May. The four practices are off to a great start, beginning data collection shortly after receiving training from the study team. This phase of this project will continue through late summer and fall, and will be followed by the six month intervention.

WREN staff have been hitting the road to introduce participating practices to its new quality improvement project which aims *to improve implementation of evidence based guidelines for chronic kidney disease care*.

Already, practices have begun to identify areas for improvement in the care of CKD patients and are working with WREN Regional Research Coordinators to begin Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles. Clinicians participating in the project are eligible to receive CMEs as well as Part IV Maintenance of Certification credit. Five of eight practices have begun the project, while WREN recruits the three additional practices to participate.

### Researcher Resources: County Health Rankings

A collaboration between the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the County Health Rankings, ranks all counties within each state on their overall health.

The report, new in 49 states, is well-known in Wisconsin. It was here that the Population Health Institute, which is part of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, developed the County Health Rankings in 2003 and has ranked counties each year since.

The Rankings are based on a model of population health that emphasizes the many factors that, if improved, can help make communities healthier places to live, learn, work and play.

The Rankings serve as a call to action and help community leaders identify factors that make residents unhealthy and mobilize communities to develop solutions.

You can see how your county stacks up by visiting [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).

## New staff help to launch projects; Fall forum collaboration



Last fall, I reported that we were happy to welcome two new staff to the WREN team, Veronica Harper, WREN Research Program Assistant, and Mark Remiker, WREN Regional Research Coordinator.

Although only a few months have passed, this time around I am pleased to welcome Kate Judge and Hannah Louks, both Regional Research Coordinators, to the WREN staff. Kate has been with us since January, and has hit the ground running, and Hannah has done the same in the few weeks she has worked with us. We are thrilled to be fully staffed once again, and excited about the skills this group brings to WREN.

Luckily for us, we were too busy coordinating the 4th Biennial Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit in partnership with Wisconsin Literacy to take much notice of the miserable “spring” weather outside.

The Summit was held in Madison on April 12 and 13, and was truly a great success. We had record attendance and a lot of energy, enthusiasm, and inspiration focused on tackling the issue of improved health literacy in this state and beyond. You can see for yourself

by watching the video recordings of many of the speakers on our website at [www.fammed.wisc.edu/wisconsin-health-literacy-summit-2011-media](http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/wisconsin-health-literacy-summit-2011-media).

With the Summit behind us, we are now looking ahead to September when we will host our annual research forum. This year, we are collaborating with several other organizations and networks that share our goal of conducting high quality research and quality improvement projects throughout the state of Wisconsin. We believe these partnerships will make for a more dynamic meeting, and are looking forward to a great event this year.

As we move into the summer months, we are focused on the launch of two projects, the SAFE-C study led by Bentzi Karsh of the UW Department of Systems and Industrial Engineering, to improve care of the elderly, and a collaboration with three other practice based research networks to improve implementation of National Kidney Foundation guidelines for treatment of chronic kidney disease in primary care. We also recently took on recruitment and coordination duties for two Department of Family Medicine projects.

Have a wonderful summer, and we'll see you in the fall!

Paul Smith, MD, WREN Director

## WREN STAFF

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## SAVE THE DATE

### Wisconsin Health Improvement and Research Partnerships Forum

September 14-16, 2011 • Fluno Center, Madison, WI • [www.wren.wisc.edu](http://www.wren.wisc.edu)

## Expanded focus for 2011 forum

WREN is partnering with several organizations and research networks in an effort to expand the reach of its annual research forum to new audiences this year. WREN will work with the Wisconsin Network for Health Research, Community Health Connections, the Wisconsin Public Health Practice-Based Research Network, Medical College of Wisconsin, Pharmacy Practice Enhancement and Action Research Link, and the Community Academic Aging Research Network to plan the 2011 meeting.

To emphasize this collaboration, the forum planning group has identified a new name for the meeting -- the Wisconsin Health Improvement and Research Partnerships Forum.

The forum will provide these organizations and other attendees an opportunity to learn about each other and the work they do, and identify areas to work together.

The forum will facilitate networking for investigators and community leaders with common interests, and provide the opportunity for individual researchers and project leaders to present their results or describe works in progress.

Keynote speakers include Humberto J. Vidaillet Jr., MD, Director of Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation and Paul Targonski, MD, PhD, Director of the Mayo Practice-Based Research Network.

The forum will be held September 14-16th at the Fluno Center in Madison, WI.

## Meet the new WREN staff

WREN members and clinic staff will notice some new faces as WREN kicks off two new projects this spring and summer. WREN has added three Research Coordinators to its ranks; Kate Judge and Mark Remiker will work from the Department of Family Medicine office in Madison, and Hannah Louks will be housed in the Center for Urban and Population Health in Milwaukee.

This new group brings diverse research interests and skills to WREN. Mark Remiker completed his MA in Anthropology at Washington State University where he developed his research interests in behavioral economics, personality and individual differences, social networks, and the evolution of cooperation.

Mark has been juggling work on several WREN studies since beginning in December, and looks forward to applying his expertise in research methodology and analysis to current and future WREN projects.

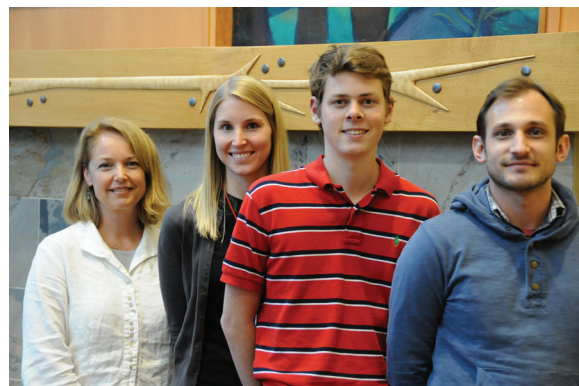
Kate Judge, MSSW, came to WREN from the shortest distance, having previously worked just down the hallway on a research project that ended last year. In addition to managing data collection and developing study procedures for that project, Kate has research experience from her time in the School of Social Welfare doctoral program at the UW-Madison. While in that program, Kate received an individual NIH predoctoral training grant to support her work in mental health services research.

With WREN, Kate is coordinating the CAPTION study at Northeast Clinic, and works with Richland Medical Center Clinic and Wildwood Clinic on the SAFE-C and CKD projects.

Hannah Louks is a graduate of the UW-Madison in Psychology, and has worked as a Research Assistant in the UW Departments of Psychology and Surgery. She is interested in research methodology, item response theory, and substance abuse research. Although she started with WREN just a few weeks ago, she has already jumped into working with two practices on the WREN chronic kidney disease project.

The latest addition to the WREN staff is Chris Conway, a UW student who will assist with data entry for the CAPTION and SAFE-C projects. Chris will finish his degree in Political Science and Legal Studies next May, and has plans to continue on to law school in 2012.

These new staff members join Veronica Harper, Research Program Assistant, Peggy O'Halloran, Research Coordinator in Eau Claire, and Mike Grasmick and Paul Smith, WREN leadership, to complete the WREN team.



*Kate, Hannah, Chris, and Mark*

## Over 300 attend Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit

The Wisconsin Education and Research Network (WREN), along with Health Literacy Wisconsin co-presented the 4th Biennial Wisconsin Health Literacy Summit, held in Madison on April 12 and 13, 2011.

Over 300 health care providers, adult literacy providers, patient educators, and policymakers from 28 states attended the event.

Attendees took home a robust understanding of how health literacy—the ability for people to understand health-related information and make informed decisions—impacts health reform, chronic disease management, and health care quality, safety, and cost.

The summit kicked off with an energetic and eloquent keynote address by Richard Carmona, MD, MPH, FACS, the 17th Surgeon General of the United States.

Dr. Carmona recounted his unique life journey from high school dropout to decorated soldier and combat medic to US Surgeon General, or as he called it, “doctor of the people.”

He pointed out that under his administration, every Surgeon General’s Report was translated into a plain-language “People’s Piece” understandable by all.

Dr. Carmona went on to discuss how health literacy is critical to health care, not just locally and nationally, but globally. “Health literacy is the currency for success in everything we do,” he explained. “In search of the holy grail for healthcare, we can no longer afford to keep health literacy on the sidelines.”

Later, Toni Cordell, a national health literacy advocate, shared her own moving experiences as a patient with literacy challenges. Andrew Pleasant, PhD, health literacy and research director of the Canyon Ranch Institute, discussed

best practices for health literacy measurement.

Other experts included Cindy Brach of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Darren DeWalt of the University of North Carolina, and Christina Cordero, associate project director at the Joint Commission, who talked about how to apply new Joint Commission standards for patient-centered communication in the hospital setting.

Over the course of the two day summit, attendees chose from 36 breakout sessions organized over five tracks: health care providers, adult literacy providers, patient education, vulnerable populations, and organizational change.

Many of the general and breakout sessions were video-recorded and can be viewed online. For a complete account of the health literacy summit, visit [www.fammed.wisc.edu/our-department/newsletter/spring-2011](http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/our-department/newsletter/spring-2011).

## Sign up for the Primary Care Clinician Survey Group by June 30, and you could win an iPad

- Influence WAFP internal policies and positions on state legislative issues
- Contribute to research to create new medical knowledge
- Become a WREN Affiliate Member, at no cost to you, with all the associated benefits



Register now at [www.wren.wisc.edu](http://www.wren.wisc.edu)