Doctoral Dissertation Defense Announcement


Lisa Sanders
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School of Graduate Studies
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Committee in Charge:
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Date: Thursday, June 6, 2024
Time: 12:00 PM (CST)
Zoom: https://mcw-edu.zoom.us/j/92746875320
Meeting ID: 927 4687 5320 Passcode: AgF36rKn
Graduate Studies:
Public Health Practice I - Building a Foundation for Public Health
Public Health Practice II - Building Community Partnerships and Coalitions
Public Health Practice III - Strategies to Eliminate Health Disparities
Public Health Practice IV: Public Health Applied Research
Research Theory
Public Health Research Study & Design
Introduction to Community Engagement
Data Collection and Analysis
Executive Communication in Public Health
Executive and Organizational Leadership
Doctoral Seminar
2nd Year Doctoral Seminar
Doctoral Dissertation
Dissertation


Background: The Washington State Department of Health (WA DOH) HIV Community Services peer navigation programs support people living with HIV across the State. As part of a strategy to provide support at an individual, group, or community level to support and engage clients in care, it employs peers with lived experiences relevant to their role (Washington State Department of Health, 2021). This study aimed to evaluate these programs through client and navigator perspectives and client quality of life measurement. Study outcomes will inform future program evaluation and improvements.

The study objectives were to characterize client and navigator experiences with these HIV peer navigation programs, including perceived benefits and unmet needs, and aspects of their well-being, including facilitators and barriers to quality of life.

Methods: This mixed-method study employed qualitative semi-structured interviews of peer navigators (n=11) and clients (n=19) and a preliminary DOH quality-of-life survey. This program evaluation followed an exploratory approach, guided by study questions and a logic-model-based framework.

Results: Open coding and thematic analysis were used to discern six essential themes from interviews:

1. Clients face mental, physical, and social health challenges, and aging related concerns.
2. Self-sufficiency and navigator- or social-network-provided psychosocial support are critical to client well-being.
3. Logistics and resource navigation support client well-being.
4. Clients appreciate person-centered navigation approaches.
5. Navigators bring unique perspectives and experience general satisfaction with their role.
6. There is a need for continued and enhanced person-centered support for clients and navigators.

A DOH adaptation of the validated PozQoL quality of life survey measured four self-reported quality of life domains: psychological, social, health concerns, and functional (Brown et al., 2018). The “PozQoL Score Calculator for Groups and Comparisons,” basic descriptive statistics, and the Kruskal-Wallis Test were used to analyze survey data from one Peer Navigation organization. This subset of the client population (n=49) might overlap with the set of interview participants. The average group scores were "moderate" for all domains (psychological, social, health concerns, and functional). Among available 6-month follow-up survey data (n=12), the analysis revealed group-wise domain score increases since baseline, but the extent of changes varied. Results for two DOH-specific (non-domain) questions indicated that clients know where to get help if they are
having trouble getting HIV care and have a low level of worry about having to
disclose their HIV status when getting medical care. Neither of the latter two
questions had noteworthy changes at 6-month follow-up. Overall, survey results
highlighted the impacts of peer support on social and health concern quality of
life domains.

**Conclusion:** Study results include suggestions for recurring program evaluation
and supporting peer client and navigator well-being.
CURRICULUM VITAE
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EDUCATION:
2021 – 2024 (Expected) DrPH, Medical College of Wisconsin Graduate School, Milwaukee, WI
2009 – 2011 M.S., University of California at Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA
2005 – 2009 B.A., Willamette University, Salem, OR

RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT:
08/2022 – Present Research Project Manager I, Statistical and Data Management Center, HIV Vaccine Trial Network (HVTN) of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.
06/2021 – 07/2022 Lead Microbiologist (Microbiologist 3), Department of Health, Shoreline, Washington, U.S.A.
08/2018 – 06/2021 Laboratory Protocol Coordinator, Laboratory Center, HIV Vaccine Trial Network (HVTN) and COVID-19 Prevention Network (CoVPN) of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.
05/2018 Non-Permanent Microbiologist 1, Department of Health, Shoreline, Washington, U.S.A.
02/2013 – 06/2014 and 05/2015 – 01/2018 Public Health Microbiologist/Senior Public Health Microbiologist, Contra Costa County Public Health Laboratory, Martinez, California, U.S.A.
06/2012 – 01/2013 Microbiology Laboratory Technician, Analytical Lab Group (ALG, formerly Microbiology and Quality Associates, Concord, California, U.S.A.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:
Graduate Student, August 2021 – Present
Medical College of Wisconsin, Doctorate of Public Health
Dr. Staci Young, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Dr. Leslie Ruffalo, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Dr. Steven Erly, Office of Infectious Disease, Washington State Department of Health

Graduate Student, June 2009 – July 2011
University of California, Santa Cruz, Masters of Science
Dr. Karen Ottemann, Microbiology and Environmental Toxicology

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS:
2019 – Present American Society for Clinical Pathology, M(ASCP)cm Technologist in Microbiology
2018 – Present Copyediting Certificate
2013 – Present California Department of Public Health, Public Health Microbiologist
AWARDS AND HONORS:

2023  University of Washington 31st Annual Principles of STI/HIV Research and Public Health Practice Course Scholarship

2011  Outstanding Teaching Assistant, University of California, Santa Cruz

2009-2010  Graduate Division Tuition Fellowship, University of California, Santa Cruz

2009-2010  Regents Fellowship, University of California, Santa Cruz

2008-2009  Mortar Board Senior Honor Society

2008-2009  Martha Springer Scholarship

2008-2009  Mary L. Collins Scholarship

MEMBERSHIPS IN HONORARY AND PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES:

2023 – Present  American Public Health Association (APHA) Student Member

2022 – Present  Northwest Science Writers Association (NSWA) Member

2018 – Present  American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Young Professional Member

PUBLICATIONS, POSTERS, and PRESENTATIONS:

PUBLICATIONS


POSTERS


TEACHING:

Undergraduate Student Education Teaching Assistantship

01/2011 – 03/2011  University of California, Santa Cruz, Microbiology (METX 119)

01/2010 – 03/2010  University of California, Santa Cruz, Microbiology Lab (METX 119L)