



Doctoral Dissertation Defense Announcement

“Housing needs and challenges during the perinatal period: Perspectives of birthing persons and service providers”



Rosamaria Martinez

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School of Graduate Studies

Medical College of Wisconsin

Committee in Charge:

Katherine Quinn, PhD (Mentor)

Staci Young, PhD

Emmanuel Ngui, PhD

Date: Monday, April 8, 2024

Time: 1:00 PM (CST)

Defense Location: MEB - M1060-Alumni Center

Zoom: <https://mcw-edu.zoom.us/j/94954068636?pwd=anV6NDdZeHNaY2RUVlhHQldEV2ZSzz09>

Meeting ID: 949 5406 8636

Passcode: 5dVhxda

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

Data Collection and Analysis

Public Health Research Study & Design

Executive Communication in Public Health

Introduction to Community Engagement

Executive and Organizational Leadership for the Public's Health

Doctoral Seminar

Applied Practice Experience

Doctoral Dissertation

Dissertation

“Housing needs and challenges during the perinatal period: Perspectives of birthing persons and service providers”

The 2021 Milwaukee Fetal Infant Mortality Review Report identified complications of prematurity as one of the leading causes of infant mortality. It further underscored the high rates and racial disparities of infant mortality in Milwaukee, WI. Given this data, birth outcomes in Milwaukee have been a priority and area of investment for the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD). Literature has associated housing instability with poor birth outcomes, including prematurity and low birth weight. Research suggests addressing housing instability among pregnant people is a critical aspect of addressing poor birth outcomes. This study is aimed at understanding birthing parent's unique experiences and challenges with housing instability during pregnancy through one year postpartum. The outcomes of this study will inform MHD programs, policies, and partnerships related to improving birth outcomes.

The objectives of the study were to 1) Examine experiences with housing instability and identify the barriers and facilitators to accessing housing support among pregnant and postpartum people in MHD's home visiting programs 2) Explore housing resources and programs available to pregnant and postpartum people in Milwaukee and identify the challenges organizations face in meeting the housing needs of pregnant/postpartum individuals.

This study integrated qualitative data from two primary sources: seventeen in-depth interviews with parents in MHD's home visitation programs and thirteen key informants from Milwaukee area housing support organizations. A phenomenological approach was utilized to understand lived experiences. Through the process of inductive thematic analysis, the researcher developed the following five central themes 1) There are systemic barriers to housing stability that make it difficult for pregnant people and families to access affordable housing in Milwaukee; 2) Given these barriers, pregnant people are unable to move or complain about housing conditions; it becomes a take-what-you-can-get situation where women are subjected to poor housing; 3) There are health and safety concerns associated with this substandard housing; 4) There are mental health consequences associated with the stress of housing instability; 5) There are opportunities for improvement. Results suggest a lack of housing resources for pregnant and postpartum persons, which may have mental health and safety implications.

Rosamaria Martinez

Curriculum Vitae

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EDUCATION

May 2000	Bachelor of Science in Dietetics Mount Mary University, Milwaukee, WI
May 2007	Master of Business Administration University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, WI
May 2024 (Expected)	Doctorate in Public Health Medical College of Wisconsin, Wauwatosa, WI

RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT

Milwaukee Health Department (MHD)

Milwaukee, WI

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Director

September 2022- Present

- Oversee programs in the Maternal and Child Health Division (Empowering Families of Milwaukee, Women Infants and Children's Program, DAD Project, Strong Baby, Community Health Assistance Program and Doula Programs.)
- Supervise a team of managers, supervisors, coordinators, and oversee recruitment, selection, assignment, and performance management 70+ department staff.
- Lead the WIC Program's transition of 2000+ participant case load transfer from another WIC clinic.
- Assess, strategize, and streamline internal processes and administration, in collaboration with Deputy.
- Contribute to strategic planning relative to objectives and goals, budgeting and cooperation within and outside the division.

Sixteenth St. Community Health Centers

Milwaukee, WI

Vice President of Community Health Initiatives (CHI)

August 2017- August 2022

- Provided strategic guidance, direction and ongoing support to all departments within CHI (Environmental Health and Community Wellness, HIV, Parenting Resource Center, Social Services, AmeriCorps, and Women Infants and Children- WIC).
- Led strategic planning engagement sessions to ensure initiative-wide strategies support client and community health needs.

- Oversaw divisional budget totaling over \$5 million and comprised of nearly 40 governmental and private grants, including review of grant applications and reporting.
- Supervised division directors and managers and oversee recruitment, selection, assignment, performance management and development of 55+ department staff.

Women Infants and Children Director

December 2015- August 2017

- Responsible for overall department program and fiscal management of \$1.4 million, including interpretation, implementation, monitoring and compliance of all protocols and procedures.
- Oversaw twenty staff members and recruited, selected, and oriented new staff.
- Launched and oversaw clinic flow modification, decreasing wait time by an average of 11 minutes.
- Led transition to electronic document management system, shifting to more efficient and responsive paperless system.

VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Harbor District Inc, Executive Board Member

July 2018- Present

UW- Madison, Division of Extension, Board of Visitors Member

Oct 2018 -Present

WI Breastfeeding Coalition, Treasurer

Nov 2016 – Aug 2017

Wisconsin WIC Association (WWA), Finance Chair

Sept 2015 - Aug 2017

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- Center for Urban Population Health (CUPH) 20th Anniversary Seminar Series "Sixteenth Street and CUPH: Partnering to Address Community SDoH" July 15, 2022
- National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) Webinar Panel "Practical Strategies for Social Risk Screening during COVID -19", Oct 22, 2020
- Data You can Use Presentation- "Health Beyond the Clinic Walls," Oct 21, 2020