

# Community Matters

## A Community Research Poster Forum



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2025  
6:00-8:00PM  
MCW-Green Bay  
Gehl-Mulva Science Center, St. Norbert College



## Welcome from our Campus Dean



I hope you enjoy exploring the scholarly projects that our medical students have completed in partnership with local community organizations.

The student projects link medical education with the resources and needs of Green Bay-area communities to promote health in northeastern Wisconsin. This unique MCW experience is designed to cultivate medical skills and interests, deepen ties to the community, and provide an appreciation for the physician's potential role and impact on local health needs.

I would like to recognize the partner organizations and community mentors who volunteered with our medical students on these projects. You are a critical element to their medical education and we could not have accomplished this work without your support. ■

## Physicians in the Community Course Directors



Welcome to the MCW-Green Bay community research poster forum. Our medical students complete a Community Oriented Primary Care (COPC) scholarly research or quality improvement project in collaboration with one of our fantastic community partners. The projects emphasize community and individual health, combining elements of epidemiology, primary care, preventive medicine, and health promotion. Through the Physicians in the Community Pathways Course and other aspects of the curriculum, our students establish relationships with many local organizations directly involved with the health and well-being of our community. Working with our partners, students identify health needs, design appropriate interventions, and assess the effects of these interventions, culminating in a public poster presentation. Our goal is to help students become community-engaged physicians, moving us from the care we have to the care we need.



We want to thank Katrina Rosculet, MD, and Chrystal Woller, BSN, RN, City of De Pere Health Director, for their assistance in working directly with the students to get their projects off the ground. A special thank you also goes to Jamie Lynch, Ph.D., Dean of Arts and Sciences, St. Norbert College, for supporting study design and data analysis. We would also like to express our appreciation and gratitude to all our community partners, those represented in the poster presentations, and those who give generously of their time and expertise in countless other ways to help MCW Green Bay achieve our lofty goals. Please enjoy the surprising variety of community projects on display today. ■

## Scholarly Project Presentations

Time Location	Student(s) Project
6:00-6:50pm First Floor Atrium Keefe Science Gallery 1098 and 1099	All Students Scholarly Project Poster Review <i>Engage with the students and their Pathways Posters to learn more about their projects, feel free to ask questions, find out the pros and cons they faced while completing their projects and what path they will take next.</i>
7:00-7:05pm Room 1097	Introductions from Dr. Ferguson and Dr. Rassi
7:05-7:15pm Room 1097	Tristin Aguiar <i>Assessing the Prevalence of Presbycusis in Adults</i>
7:15-7:25pm Room 1097	Paige Bruggink <i>Investigating the School-to-Suicide Pipeline for Youth in Milwaukee, WI</i>
7:25-7:35pm Room 1097	Tyler Ehrke <i>The Effects of Isolated Fine Motor Exercises on Parkinson's Hand Tremor</i>
7:35-7:45pm Room 1097	Brandon Harrison and Cole Stodola <i>The Effects of Nicotine on Burnout Rates Among Undergraduate Students</i>
7:45-7:55pm Room 1097	Levi Lauren <i>Enhancing Rural Bystander Readiness Through Community-Based First Aid Training</i>
7:55-8:00pm Room 1097	Q&A Conclusion

# WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

## THANK YOU!

A special thank you to our many community partners for your time and investment in our students.

### Abstract # Partner

- 1 ADRC: Heather Flick
- 2 Prevea, West De Pere Family Medicine Clinic: Steven Gale, MD
- 3 Oral Health Partnership: Beth Wavrunek, Terri Trantow, Katy Compton;  
MCW-Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD, Sahar Rassi, MD
- 4 Milwaukee Public Schools; Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office;  
Comprehensive Injury Center: Dr. Sarah Kohlbeck
- 5 Greater Green Bay YMCA: Katie Mandell; MCW-Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD
- 6 SNC Department of Health & Wellness: Erin Bongers, BSN, RN, PHN, Mason VanRossum;  
MCW-Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD, Sahar Rassi, MD
- 7 Oneida Comprehensive Health Division: Debra Danforth, Diana Hernandez
- 8 MCW-Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD;  
UP Health System-Marquette: Ann Clancy, RN, BSN, CCRN, Trauma Department;  
Michigan Region 8 Trauma Network: Lyn Nelson, Trauma Coordinator
- 9 Wisconsin 4-H: MaryBeth Wholrabe; MCW-Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD
- 10 Regional Surgical Practices; MCW-Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD
- 11 Oral Health Partnership: Terri Trantow
- 12 N.E.W Community Clinic: Chris Guyette, BSN;  
MCW- Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD, Sahar Rassi, MD
- 13 Green Bay Oncology: Dr. Brian Burnette, Kelly Jefferson;  
MCW- Green Bay: David Ferguson, MD, Sahar Rassi, MD
- 14 Wisconsin Family Connections Center, West Allis: Natalie Underwood, Mai Her-Lee, Oriana Carey

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## Assessing the Prevalence of Presbycusis in Adults

TRISTIN AGUIAR



### Introduction

Half of adults aged 70 and older experience some degree of hearing impairment, with age-related hearing loss (presbycusis) being the most prevalent form. Research has linked hearing loss to negative impacts on quality of life, cognitive decline, and even dementia. While treatment options exist, including hearing aids and assistive devices, many individuals remain untreated. This study assesses the prevalence of untreated presbycusis within the community.

### Methods

Participants completed a validated hearing screening survey known as the Hearing Handicap inventory for the Elderly Screening Version (HHIE-S). The survey consists of 10 questions with a simple yes/no/sometimes format in which each question addresses a specific social or emotional consequence of hearing loss.

### Results

Of 33 respondents, 19 were aged  $\geq 70$  years; most were white ( $n=32$ ) and female ( $n=31$ ). Nine had undergone audiologic assessment and four used hearing assistive devices. Hearing difficulties were concentrated in the 70+ and 60–69 age groups, with minimal impact reported under age 50. Common issues included difficulty hearing soft speech, following conversations in restaurants, and needing higher TV volume.

### Conclusions

Hearing difficulties were prevalent among older adults in this community sample, yet most had not undergone formal assessment and few used assistive devices. Given the established link between untreated hearing loss and cognitive decline, these findings underscore the need for targeted screening and intervention strategies, as well as further research on how early treatment may preserve cognitive health in aging populations. ■

## Barriers to Physical Activity

### Introduction

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity exercise a week. Yet, many Americans do not meet these criteria. This can have adverse effects on the long-term health of patients.

### Methods

Patients of Dr. Steven Gale at the Prevea West De Pere clinic were given the option to participate in the study. Participation involved completing an online survey that evaluated possible reasons for why patients do not meet physical activity guidelines set by the AHA. Possible barriers included: finances, mental health, environmental, time constraints, seasonal/weather patterns, and fear of being injured.

### Results

Four surveys were completed. This led to an inability to analyze the data to any statistical significance. From the data available, Time Constraints was rated higher than any other barrier to physical activity. Other notable barriers included *Fear of becoming injured* and *Seasonal/Weather patterns*.

### Conclusions

From the data collected, *Time Constraints* appears to be the largest barrier to physical activity. However, due to a low sample size affecting the power of this study, statistically significant conclusions were not calculable. Further research is needed to identify true barriers to physical activity, and possibly, what this may look like when compared to individuals of different income levels and ages. Ultimately addressing these barriers can aid patients in living their healthiest lifestyle. ■

DRAKE BEST



## Expanding Reach and Impact of School-Based Dental Care Program

LAURA BIESTERVELD



### Introduction

Oral Health Partnership (OHP) provides school-based dental care in Brown County, helping to increase access to dental care by overcoming barriers to care, including affordability, work schedules, and transportation. Obtaining consent to treat from the student's parents is a critical component to the success of school-based programs; low consent rates limit program reach and impact.

### Methods

A survey was distributed via email and text to parents and guardians of students at participating Green Bay Area School System schools. The survey assessed participation in school-based programs, as well as evaluated motivation to participate and perceived importance of dental care. It also gathered feedback regarding consent form distribution, program visibility, and recommendations for improvement.

### Results

Of those surveyed, 57% participated in OHP's school-based dental program. Among those that did not participate, lack of awareness of the program was the most frequently cited obstacle to participation ( $p = 0.0098$ ). Those who were aware of the program reported learning about the program through school or teacher communication. The most suggested improvements were to increase advertising and program information.

### Conclusions

Findings indicate the primary barrier to participation is a lack of awareness of the school-based program. Current participants reported that teacher involvement in recruitment, increased advertisement, and better understanding of services are main contributors to program utilization. Focusing on improvement in these areas can help to bolster school-based dental care utilization and improve consent form return rates. ■

# Investigating the School-to-Suicide Pipeline for Youth in Milwaukee, WI

## Introduction

The rising incidence of youth suicide is a critical public health challenge. This study examines pathways leading to suicide among youth, with a focus on school-related stressors. We had two aims: (1) analyze school interventions among students who died by suicide from 2013–2022, and (2) assess the availability and awareness of mental health resources for school staff.

## Methods

Using records from the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner’s Office matched with Milwaukee Public Schools attendance and disciplinary data, we identified decedents and examined their demographics and school histories. Semi-structured interviews with school staff further evaluated available resources.

## Results

Results showed that 50.8% of decedents were Black/African American, 92.6% were male, and the average age was 17. The mean attendance rate was 78%. Poverty, proxied by food service status, and Black race were significant indicators among decedents. Black males were notably overrepresented.

Staff interviews highlighted three barriers to addressing student mental health: administrative limitations, trauma and adverse experiences, and challenges with student engagement.

## Conclusions

Findings suggest that poverty and racial disparities compound suicide risk and that systemic barriers limit schools’ capacity to respond. Addressing youth suicide will require a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates both school-level interventions and broader community support. ■

PAIGE BRUGGINK



## The Effects of Isolated Fine Motor Exercises on Parkinson's Hand Tremor

TYLER EHRKE



### Introduction

Parkinson's Disease (PD) is a neurodegenerative disorder characterized by bradykinesia, rigidity, and tremor. Hand tremor is among the most prevalent and disabling PD symptoms interfering with patients' activity of daily living. Exercise-based rehabilitation has gained interest as an adjunct therapy for PD, but most programs target gait and balance, whereas fine motor dysfunction receives less attention.

### Methods

25 adults with PD were recruited from the Green Bay YMCA "Exercising with Parkinson's" group class. Participants underwent a 16-week exercise protocol focusing on grip strength and fine motor coordination. Improvement was measured with International Parkinson and Movement Disorder Society QUEST (Quality of Life in Essential Tremor Questionnaire) survey administered at baseline and after 16-week exercise protocol.

### Results

The exercise program was associated with a significant reduction in overall tremor burden, with the QUEST survey total score improving by -6.06 points (21.3%) ( $t_{15} = -4.97$ ;  $P < .001$ ). Conducting analysis on individual QUEST survey domains showed that Psychosocial (-2.31; 28.7%;  $P < .001$ ) and Physical (-2.62; 21.8%;  $P = .003$ ) domains demonstrated statistically and clinically meaningful improvements.

### Conclusions

A dexterity focused exercise program can be associated with relevant reduction in tremor burden affecting those with Parkinson's disease. Further research could focus on increasing sample size, incorporating objective measurements, and data collection at multiple intervals throughout an extended duration. ■

# The Effects of Nicotine on Burnout Rates Among Undergraduate Students

## Introduction

Burnout is a state of exhaustion that develops from continual stress and work, a phenomenon commonly observed among undergraduate students. New research shows that 16.5% of college-aged individuals in the United States claim to have used some form of nicotine product in the past month [1]. This behavior is concerning as nicotine use is linked to long-term cognitive, emotional, and cardiovascular risks [2]. This study can hopefully lead to more selective smoking intervention protocols being implemented at undergraduate campuses, as well as highlight the benefits of a potentially nicotine-free campus.

## Methods

Campus wide survey was administered to all Saint Norbert College undergraduate students. The survey obtained details about nicotine usage as well as lifestyle factors. Burnout was quantified using a modified version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory.

## Results

There was no significant relationship between nicotine usage and burnout rates among undergraduate students at St. Norbert College. Students who slept >8 hours/night were significantly less likely to experience burnout compared to students who slept between 4-8 hours/night. No significant relationship was observed between burnout rates and exercise or fruit/vegetable consumption.

## Conclusions

While the results are contrary to our hypothesis, our sample size and various confounding variables are potential explanations for these insignificant findings. Results also could have been altered due to the data being collected at St. Norbert College, which is a nicotine-free campus. ■

BRANDON HARRISON



COLE STODOLA



# Trends of Screening Rates & Prevalence of Colorectal Cancer within Adults in the Oneida Nation Community Compared to the Wisconsin Adult Population

MINGEE KIM



## Introduction

Colorectal cancer (CRC) remains a leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States, yet disparities exist in screening and detection among different populations. This study aims to assess CRC screening trends within adults in the Oneida Nation community.

## Methods

We conducted a retrospective chart review using the Oneida Comprehensive Health database, analyzing CRC screening rates among adults from 2019 to 2023. Screening data were stratified by sex, age, and tribal affiliation with annual patient counts recorded. We will calculate screening proportions with 95% confidence intervals and compare them to state-level data from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

## Results

A total of 1,218 screenings were performed over the five-year period. Preliminary data suggest fluctuating screening rates, with notable increases post-2020, potentially reflecting recovery from COVID-19-related healthcare disruptions. While male screening rates reflect a positive trend over time, females accounted for 67-73% of screenings annually, underscoring a persistent gender disparity. Comparative analyses with Wisconsin state averages will clarify whether the Oneida community is under- or overperforming in CRC screening benchmarks.

## Conclusions

Identifying trends and gaps in CRC screening within the Oneida Nation is critical to addressing health disparities and guiding targeted interventions. This study will provide evidence to inform tribal health leaders and public health stakeholders, promoting equity in cancer prevention and early detection efforts. ■

PARNIKA SHUKLA



# Enhancing Rural Bystander Readiness Through Community-Based First Aid Training

## Introduction

Trauma remains the leading cause of death among Americans under 46. In rural settings, delayed EMS response significantly increases mortality risk, underscoring the importance of timely bystander intervention. This study aims to assess the impact of a brief, community-delivered first aid training course on participants' self-reported knowledge, confidence, and willingness to assist at the scene of an accident.

## Methods

Adults aged 18 and older (N = 64 general public; 40 pre- and 36 post-intervention respondents) completed a standardized 5-point Likert scale survey assessing five key domains. Paired-sample t-tests assessed changes from pre- to post-course, supported by Mann-Whitney U tests for non-parametric validation and z-tests for proportions. Cohen's d was used to estimate effect sizes.

## Results

Willingness to provide aid significantly increased post-training (M = 4.56, SD = 0.67) compared to baseline (M = 3.48, SD = 0.77),  $t(70.6) = -3.77$ ,  $p < .001$ , with a large effect size ( $d = 1.49$ ). "Strongly agree" responses rose from 15% to 67% ( $p < .001$ ). Improvements were observed across all five measured domains. Post-intervention responses closely aligned with those of the general public cohort, although this may reflect selection bias within the comparison group.

## Conclusions

A brief, community-delivered first aid course significantly improved rural participants' preparedness and willingness to act in emergencies. These findings support the scalability of low-barrier training models to address critical gaps in prehospital trauma response in underserved areas. ■

LEVI LAUREN



## Assessing Health Literacy among Middle and High School Students Considering Careers in Healthcare.

ALEXIS LUEDTKE



### Introduction

Health literacy—the ability to access, understand, and use health information—is a valuable skill for adolescents to master as they transition into independent health decision-making. Interventions in health literacy among this population could empower adolescents with the information and skills necessary to make healthy decisions and live healthier lives.

### Methods

This study evaluated the effect of a brief educational workshop on health literacy knowledge. Eleven participants completed a knowledge assessment before and after the intervention, with scores recorded as proportions (0 to 1). The intervention consisted of a short educational session focused on core health literacy concepts. Normality of the difference scores was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test ( $P = .45$ ), supporting the use of a paired  $t$  test to compare pretest and posttest means.

### Results

Eleven participants completed both pretest and posttest assessments of health literacy following a brief educational intervention. The mean (SD) pretest score was 0.73 (0.13), compared with a mean (SD) posttest score of 0.89 (0.07). A paired  $t$  test demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in scores ( $t_{10} = -5.33$ ;  $P = .0003$ ) following the intervention.

### Conclusions

Following the workshop, participants were surveyed on a 5-point Likert scale regarding their opinions of the effectiveness of the intervention. The intervention was overwhelmingly positively received. Given the positive feedback on the applicability and preparedness for future healthcare encounters, this simple intervention appears to be worthwhile. ■

# Burnout and Job Satisfaction in Wisconsin Physicians

## Introduction

Wisconsin physicians are experiencing burnout at levels surpassing national benchmarks. Burnout is a problem that not only affects physicians, but also their families and patients as well. The objective is to analyze the variables that may contribute to an increased level of burnout that surpasses the national average.

## Methods

Surveys were sent to HR managers at three private practice locations in northeast Wisconsin. HR managers distributed the survey via email to all physicians within their workplace to maintain anonymity. The survey was open for one month, and all partially completed responses were suppressed. The data was analyzed, examining levels of burnout against various demographic and institutional factors.

## Results

There was a strong correlation between use of the EMR/EHR and frustration. Furthermore, the most reported reasons for burnout include the EMR/EHR, administrative requirements, and patient demands.

## Conclusions

The electronic medical record (EMR) has been one of the leading stressors for physicians in recent years. Over 66% of physicians reported agreeing or strongly agreeing that the EMR adds frustration to their day. No statistically significant difference was found in levels of burnout between males and females. There is moderate correlation between the average hours worked and level of burnout. The most reported reasons for burnout are EMR/EHR, administration, and patient care. Analysis was limited by sample size of 30 participants. Future studies could look at what specific aspects of the EMR/EHR cause the greatest burden on physicians. ■

DYLAN NATROP



## Investigating factors that affect Dental Care Perception in Green Bay

IHSAN RIZKY



### Introduction

Oral health is a vital component of overall health and plays a critical role in children's growth and development. However, one in three children in Wisconsin suffers from untreated dental decay. Additionally, significant disparities in access to oral health care persist among minority and low-income populations.

### Methods

This study was conducted at Oral Health Partnership locations in Green Bay. A confidential QR code was given to patients at the time of check-in for their appointment.

### Results

Out of 228 responses, 17% of patients reported driving 25+ miles to reach a clinic location. Chi-square test for clinic location yielded a p-value of 0.0523 (20.87 chi-square stat) and (12 degrees of freedom), which shows that clinic location may influence distance. Chi-square analysis of reason and clinic location found no significant relationship between clinic distance (0.1175), Dental Team (0.1813), better care (0.2251), and soonest availability (0.34). Chi-square test of zip code vs travel distance found a p-value of  $<0.0001$  (180,60), Cramer V (0.514) -> which indicates a strong correlation between zip codes and travel distance.

### Conclusions

Overall, patients at OHP prioritize appointment availability over clinic location, which is an interesting finding. Notably, barriers to care were often related to factors such as children's anxiety and the difficulty of scheduling appointments for multiple children. Moving forward, it would be valuable to explore patients' perceptions of the importance of dental care compared to yearly physical exams. ■

# Cultural Influences on Clinical Education and Treatment Plans

## Introduction

Individuals who enter a community without speaking the language often face barriers beyond transportation, employment, and food access, including healthcare challenges and navigating care (Hacker et al., 2015). The N.E.W. Community Clinic provides care regardless of income, employment, or insurance status.

Hispanic adults are less likely to have a primary care provider or health insurance (Tyson, 2023). They also tend to have lower socioeconomic and education levels than non-Hispanics (Escarce & Kapur, 2006), which can affect communication with physicians and visit understanding.

## Methods

Surveys were distributed at the N.E.W. Clinic over one day. Willing participants completed the anonymous survey in their desired language.

## Results

Participants consisted of 15 native Spanish speakers and 2 native English speakers. Due to the small English sample, their results were insignificant ( $p = 0.351$ ), showing no association of cultural factors in care. In contrast, Spanish-speaking respondents showed significant results ( $p = 0.00434$ ), with low variance in questions 7, 8, and 10, suggesting cultural factors positively or negatively influence care.

## Conclusions

Due to limited responses, English and Spanish-speaking participants could not be directly compared. However, the significant p-value among Spanish speakers suggests cultural factors may influence treatment adherence. Low variance in questions 7, 8, and 10 reflected most felt they understood their care, communicated well with physicians despite language barriers, and were not hindered by family demands.

Future studies with larger, more diverse samples, and broader survey distribution may provide clearer insights into cultural influences across clinics. ■

LETITIA SIERS



## Radiation Oncology Travel Distance in the Upper Peninsula: Geographic Barriers to Care

ABIGAIL SWENSON



### Introduction

Rural residents in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP) often travel long distances for specialized oncology care. Prior research links extended travel to reduced radiation therapy adherence and poorer outcomes.

### Methods

A retrospective review was conducted for adult cancer patients referred to radiation oncology at OSF St. Francis Hospital between 2020–2025. Demographics and home ZIP codes were extracted from the electronic health record. Great-circle travel distances from patient residences to treatment centers were calculated and categorized (<25, 25–50, >50 miles). Compliance data were requested but unavailable in the current dataset; association analyses will be performed when complete records are obtained.

### Results

Among 179 patients with non-missing distance data, the median one-way travel was 68 miles (IQR: 42–109). Seventy-nine percent traveled more than 50 miles, while only 6% lived within 25 miles of treatment. Most high-volume referral cities were more than 50 miles from the nearest center, highlighting significant geographic isolation.

### Conclusions

Most radiation oncology referrals in the UP involve substantial travel distances, suggesting a high potential for treatment access barriers. While compliance data were unavailable for this analysis, these findings establish a geographic baseline for future work linking travel distance to adherence. Identifying distance thresholds where compliance declines could inform interventions, such as mobile treatment units, transportation support, or new facility placement, to improve equity in rural cancer care. ■

# Implementing Technology for Client Attraction and Retention: Supporting the Wisconsin Family Connections Center

## Introduction

Oral health is a vital component of overall health and plays a critical role in children's growth and development. However, one in three children in Wisconsin suffers from untreated dental decay. Additionally, significant disparities in access to oral health care persist among minority and low-income populations

## Methods

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BRENT THIEL





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110 Grant Street | De Pere, WI 54115