

# Public Health Research



## Public Health Research

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Public health officials are faced with many ongoing and emerging challenges: determining the impact of the Affordable Care Act, strengthening our public health infrastructure, reducing health disparities, emergency preparedness, monitoring chronic disease, and understanding the relationship between health and the environment. Public health decision makers need high quality data and analyses to help them address these issues.

NORC's Public Health Research department offers a range of research capabilities, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The Public Health Research team includes prominent health policy experts, nationally recognized public health researchers, and leaders in the field of survey design and implementation. The staff represents a broad multidisciplinary spectrum spanning public health, epidemiology, statistics, policy, psychology, economics, sociology, social work, and political science.

The Public Health Research team is committed to NORC's core mission of conducting research of the highest quality that serves the public interest, and builds long-term relationships among staff, partners, and sponsors through collaborative efforts to improve health and health care for all people.

### Areas of Expertise:

- Human development
- Maternal and child health
- Vaccines and immunization
- Influenza
- Health information technology
- Environmental health
- Public health systems and services research
- Health disparities
- Rural health
- Disease prevention surveillance
- Medicare and Medicaid
- Simulation and econometric modeling
- Health workforce
- Public health economics

### Major Capabilities:

- Telephone, mail, web, and in-person survey data collection
- Survey design
- Cognitive interviewing and focus groups
- Sample design and survey methods
- Program evaluation
- Performance measurement
- Biomeasure and environmental data collection
- Database design and implementation
- Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
- Technical assistance and program support
- Stakeholder interviews and site visits
- Data translation and dissemination



## Sample Projects

**Assessing the Affordable Care Act-Related Impacts and Opportunities for Public Health and Prevention Programs.** NORC is developing a series of four quick turnaround analytic papers addressing issues and initiatives related to the Affordable Care Act and health prevention programs: 1) Intended and unintended impacts of ACA provisions on HHS programs, policies, and services; 2) Reviewing and analyzing the methods and data that provide the basis for making the prevention service recommendations; 3) Assessing the barriers and challenges to making effective and sustainable linkages between the community prevention services and the clinical prevention service systems; and 4) Reviewing where prevention happens and describing the historical trends and potential setting changes due to ACA implementation and shifts in public health and health care.

**National Children's Study (NCS).** The NCS is a landmark, longitudinal cohort study sponsored by the National Institute of Health (NIH). The NCS will examine the effects of environmental influences on the health and development of 100,000 children in 105 locations from preconception to 21 years of age. During the current pilot phase, NORC serves as the Field Support Coordinating Center to NIH—assisting 40 study locations—and manages the Regional Operating Centers (ROCs) for the Central and Eastern regions of the US. Through these centers, we provide statistical, methodological, community outreach and data-collection services.

**Formative Research to Assess Injection Behaviors Among Young Persons Who Inject Drugs in Rural and Suburban Settings.** The Division of Viral Hepatitis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has hired NORC to survey young injecting drug users while simultaneously administering a rapid antibody test for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. NORC's project team developed a prospective injection drug use survey based on five primary hypotheses of determinants of increased risk for HCV acquisition. The project will use an innovative respondent-driven sampling recruitment methodology to reduce selection bias between heavy and episodic drug users.

**National Immunization Survey (NIS).** Administered on behalf of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention by NORC since 2005, the NIS monitors childhood immunization coverage. This household survey screens more than 6 million sampled telephone lines yearly. The NIS Provider Survey requests permission to contact eligible children's medical providers, and sends those providers an immunization history questionnaire. Household and provider data are combined to produce timely estimates of children's vaccination coverage rate for national, state, and local areas. A companion survey, the NIS-Teen, monitors vaccination coverage among teenagers aged 13-17 years.

**Tribal Health Profession Opportunity Grants Program.** For the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), NORC is leading a comprehensive evaluation of the design, implementation and outcomes of the five Tribal Health Professions Opportunities Grants. Activities include reviewing documents and curricula, conducting site visits and interviews with grantee administrative staff and partners, interviewing local employers, conducting focus groups, and analyzing program operations data as part of this evaluation.

## Other Projects

Access to Rural Public Health Services

Assessment of the Sustainability and Impact of Community Coalitions Once Federal Funding has Expired

Department of Veterans' Affairs Office of Rural Health, Policy, and Planning Group

Disparities in Substance Abuse and Mental Health in the Appalachian Region

Evaluation of Advancing System Improvements to Support Targets for Healthy People 2010 (ASIST2010) Program

Evaluation of the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Beta Test

Frontier Community Health Integration Model Demonstration

HRSA Health IT Toolkit

Modeling the Impact of Urban Evacuation on Surrounding Jurisdictions

National Flu Survey Series

National Survey of Adoptive Parents (NSAP)

National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs

National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)

Office of Rural Health Policy Rural Health Outreach Tracking and Evaluation Program

The Impact of the Economic Downturn on Rural Health Clinics

Trends in U.S. Public Awareness of Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health

## SENIOR STAFF

**Michael Davern, Ph.D.**  
Senior Vice President

Population health, health insurance coverage, access to health care, data linkage, data dissemination

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Health surveys, hard-to-reach populations, health disparities, children's health

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Program evaluation, qualitative research, disease prevention and health promotion

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Survey Methodology, quantitative analysis, complex data manipulation, social media analysis

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Program evaluation, public health systems, community outreach and engagement

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Design and evaluation of social marketing/change campaigns, policy and behavioral research, survey methods, program evaluation

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Survey management, public health, children's health, health disparities, international health

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Maternal and child health, questionnaire development, quantitative analyses, program evaluation

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Rural health, public health infrastructure, health services research

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Public health, data dissemination, demography, health disparities

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Environmental health, exposure assessment, environmental epidemiology, environmental measurements, health disparities, children's health, quantitative analyses, study design

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