

COMMUNITY NEWS

WEST VIRGINIA PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH NETWORK
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

2021 WVPBRN Retreat held virtually in August

The 8th Annual WVPBRN Retreat was held virtually in August. This year's retreat was planned to be in-person, but had a lastminute shift to a virtual format due to the rise in COVID-19 cases. The retreat kicked off Thursday evening with a virtual networking event, complete with a Beat the COVID-19 Blues Trivia Night Social. Attendees enjoyed three rounds of trivia questions about WV's history, interesting facts, and famous people. A lot of laughter and memories were shared throughout the event.

With 43 attendees, Friday's main session began with the WVPBRN Co-Directors Bill Lewis, MD and Jennifer Boyd, PA-C, who kicked off the morning with a Year in Review, an overview of the Network's comprehensive/notable progress. Since last year's retreat submitted 17 grant applications, was awarded 7 externally funded grants, received 7 WVPBRN 2021 CORE Survey submissions, has 5 new projects in development, and cur-

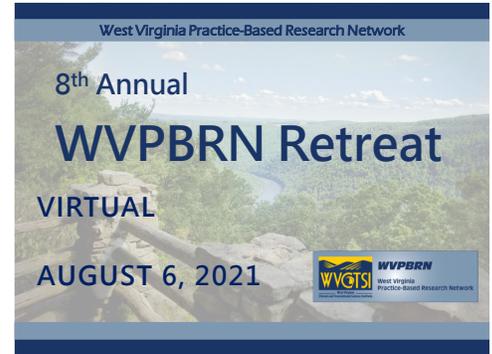


rently has 37 active projects.

There were three WVPBRN CORE Survey Oral Presentations given, highlighting the 2020 results from the annual questionnaire. The CORE Survey provides a competitive researchers to survey the Network, on various project proposal ideas in a comprehensive survey consisting of the top-three selected proposals.

The retreat's annual Poster Session was spread out at various points of the day, where presenters and participants were divided into 2-3 breakout groups, creating the opportunity for the delivery of more personalized and open Q&A. Following the first session, the group reconvened for a WV COVID-19 Response panel discussion centered on the efforts across the state. The panelists spent time focusing on various successes of the culturally relevant response efforts impacting West Virginia.

This year featured a working lunch, the WVPBRN Lunch Presentation by Nicole Stout, PhD, on the current statewide West Virginia Cancer Survivorship Needs Assessment Project. The research team is actively evaluating provider and patient needs and challenges associated with cancer treatment and survivorship services that are offered throughout the state.



Attendees learned more about the importance and need for this work, and that any credentialed healthcare professional may help support this ongoing effort.

The retreat concluded with a Future Directions for the Network. Discussion involved the effective engagement of clinics and providers with both the incorporation of implementation science strategies,

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and the developing Mobile Clinical Trials Program, both of which have an emphasis on evidence-based interventions and CBPR to support future sustainability and policy change.

Save the date: WVPBRN 2022 Annual Retreat, May 5-6, 2022 at Stonewall Resort. For more information on details presented during the retreat, contact Jen Lukas at jen-nifer.guess@hsc.wvu.edu.

WVPBRN SPOTLIGHT:

ANGELA BARKER, PA-C, MPAS
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
NEW RIVER HEALTH
ASSOCIATION



Angela Barker, PA-C, MPAS, serves as the Chief Medical Officer at New River Health Association. She graduated from West Virginia University's School of Dentistry in 1999, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Dental Hygiene, and received a Physician's Assistant degree from Mountain State University in 2002. She went on to obtain a Master's Degree in 2004, from the University of Nebraska. Angie joined New River Health Association in 2005 at Richwood Wellness Center, and was the medical provider there, until the flood of 2016 condemned the school. Angie became the Chief Medical Officer in 2013 and still holds this position. She started the MAT department in 2019, and has guided several patients to a life of recovery. Angie is also active with the WV Primary Care Association, and works with WVU on several clinical quality initiatives.

In April 2020, the NIH launched the Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics

(RADx) initiative and the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute (WVCTSI) received an award to enhance COVID-19 testing through our network of primary care clinics and communities across WV. Angie and her team have been instrumental in determining best practices for enhancing access to testing and the capacity to test in primary care, as well as implementing those activities over the last year. They have maintained COVID-19 testing, serving their patients and the larger community.

In addition to RADx, Angie and New River Health Association have participated in projects focusing on chronic pain management, obstructive sleep apnea, substance use disorder, and back pain treatments, just to name a few.

Outside of work, Angie enjoys working out, running, hiking, traveling, boating on Summersville Lake, and attending WVU Mountaineer sporting events.



Project ECHO and WVPBRN part of grant to integrate HIV, hepatitis C, and substance use disorder care

WVCTSI's Project ECHO and the West Virginia Practice-Based Research Network are participating in a new grant to integrate care for hepatitis C, HIV, and substance use disorder across the state.

A team of experts at Yale University and West Virginia University is awarded over \$6.6 million from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to address the volatile opioid epidemic in the state with the highest overdose rate in the country and where numerous outbreaks of HIV and HCV infections have occurred. Unlike the rest of the country, the opioid epidemic in West Virginia occurs mostly in rural settings where primary care providers are uniquely positioned to reduce the harms of opioid misuse. The goal of the project is to integrate and scale-up services for opioid use disorder, HIV and HCV infection in primary care clinics throughout the state.

Professor Rick Altice, one of the principal investigators on the research, states “this research has great potential to effectively address the intertwined opioid and HIV epidemics in a state that is most profoundly impacted by both conditions.” Altice is joined by Assistant Professor Lynn Madden at Yale and Professor Judith Feinberg at West Virginia University as co-principal investigators.

In 2019 alone, there were 70,630 deadly overdoses nationally - this translates to nearly 200 people dying per day from overdoses, making this an urgent issue to address. “If a jet filled with 200 people crashed every day, don’t you think that there would be more urgency in addressing this problem?” stated Madden, also a CEO for a large addiction treatment program with over 7400 patients with opioid use disorder.



The team proposes to use a number of innovative tools like automating screening for opioid use disorder, HIV and HCV, creating opportunities for rapid evaluation and immediate treatment, and combined with an innovative clinical monitoring dashboard within the electronic medical record.

These tools will be linked with expert facilitation and process improvement using the NIATx model along with ongoing clinical education and support delivered using Project ECHO to primary care clinicians who may not feel expert in treating what others may call specialty conditions. Achieving integrated care for

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The mission of the WVPBRN is to improve the health of West Virginians by collaborating with primary care practices to conduct translational practice-based research.



WVPBRN

West Virginia
Practice-Based Research Network

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people with substance use disorders is a recommended best practice, yet it is seldom achieved.

The research team will work alongside the West Virginia Primary Care Association and

the West Virginia Practice-Based Research Network at West Virginia University to conduct the research at 20 federally qualified health centers across the state. Findings will be disseminated broadly to help address the opioid epidemic elsewhere.

For information on how you can participate or to find out the clinical/provider benefits to participating, please contact WVPBRN Manager, Jen Lukas, jennifer.guess@hsc.wvu.edu.

WVPBRN Open Projects

Appalachian Mind Health Initiative (AMHI)

AMHI is a pragmatic clinical trial of internet-based psychotherapy (eCBT) for patients being treated for Major Depressive Disorder funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Participants will receive additional support and resources to supplement their provider's treatment plan. This is very important and impactful work benefiting West Virginia patients, particularly given the mental health challenges this pandemic has brought. The project team has recorded a special webinar for interested providers this past week. Please contact Jen Lukas at jg0138@hsc.wvu.edu for the recording or for more information on the study.



Families Strong

Attending a support group can be intimidating but it is important to remember that you set the pace for what you are comfortable sharing. A Families Strong support group

is a safe, confidential place for you to share, learn, and feel supported by others who are experiencing similar circumstances.

Patient sign ups can be found at familiesstrongwv.com while spaces are available. In addition to the support offered through the group, participants also earn incentives for their participation-up to \$50.00! For more information please contact Dawn Brown, Families Strong Coordinator by either calling 443-525-1976 or email dbrown@groupmosaic.com.



Cancer Survivorship Project

This year featured a working lunch, the WVPBRN Lunch Presentation by Nicole Stout, PhD, on the current state-wide *West Virginia Cancer Survivorship Needs Assessment Project*. The research team is actively evaluating provider and patient needs and challenges associated with cancer treatment and survivorship services that are offered throughout the state. Attendees learned more about the importance and need for this work, and that any credentialed healthcare professional may help support this ongoing effort.

See information below.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS
Tell us about YOUR experiences working with survivors and help us improve cancer care for everyone!

Use the QR Code or visit our website!

<https://bit.ly/3vozenD>

Barriers to care for Obstructive Sleep Apnea

Robert C. Stansbury, M.D. is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Director of the West Virginia University Sleep Evaluation Center, and the Sleep Medicine Fellowship Program Director at WVU. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Disease, Critical Care Medicine, and Sleep Medicine.

Dr. Stansbury is an active member of the American Thoracic Society and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and has served in multiple leadership roles including as committee chair for these societies. He is cur-



rent the President of the West Virginia Sleep Society and an active member of the West Virginia Rural Health Association.

Dr. Stansbury's research has involved team science and collaboration across multiple institutions. His interest and investigations broadly focus on three main areas 1) Rural health inequity 2) Novel approaches to the diagnosis and management of sleep apnea and 3) The physiology of occupational lung disease. Dr. Stansbury has published multiple research and review articles in these domains and multiple books chapters focused on sleep medicine and occupational lung disease.

Dr. Stansbury has put together an impressive project team, who has been working to improve the understanding of facilitators and barriers to care for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), from both the patient and primary care provid-

er perspectives in rural areas. Dr. Stansbury has worked side by side with WVPBRN staff to partner with carefully selected locations, from Network sites within FamilyCare of West Virginia, and the New River Health Association. He has successfully met with and conducted a handful of focus groups at FamilyCare's Madison and Eleanor clinics, and the Fayetteville & Scarboro clinics of New River. The project team is actively evaluating the collected information, which includes challenges identified by primary care physicians, which are often encountered in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease. This important research will help to address the barriers to effective care delivery in OSA. Dr. Stansbury plans to use the data to develop educational material and curriculums, to better train primary care medical professionals in rural communities in sleep medicine.

RADx-UP COVID-19 Project Provides over 33,000 Tests

As you recall, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently awarded the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute (WVCTSI) a \$4.78 million grant in September 2020, to increase testing for the novel coronavirus (SARS CoV-2) across the state. The NIH launched the Rapid Acceleration of

Diagnostic (RADx) program in 2020 to address development of effective strategies for diagnosis of SARS CoV-2. The awarded grant falls under the RADx-Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) subsection which aims to develop strategies to reduce disparities in testing, while working with established community partners.

At the project 1 year mark on October 1, 2021, WV RADx-UP has provided 33,147 COVID-19 tests across the state.

- 26,059 tests at WVPBRN sites
- 1,609 tests by the project Communities of Color events
- 66 home test kits returned
- 5,413 by National Guard Vans



