

BIOSKETCHES

APHA Session 4410

OMH's Performance Improvement and Management System (PIMS): A Model for Generating Evidence of Intervention Effectiveness and Best Practices in Programs Addressing Minority Health and Health Disparities

Jennifer K. Benz, PhD, serves as a Research Scientist in NORC's Public Health Research Department. Dr. Benz's project work focuses on program evaluations, prevention programs, health disparities, and issues in primary care. Examples of her current project work include serving as the lead evaluator and technical assistance provider for the PIMS Evaluation Technical Assistance Center (ETAC) where she provides training to grantees of the US Department of Health and Human Service (HHS)'s Office of Minority Health (OMH) to design, collect, and report on funded efforts to demonstrate intervention effectiveness. She serves as project manager and a technical assistance provider for a NORC sub-contract to James Bell Associates to conduct an evaluation of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) grantee efforts to spread comparative effectiveness research findings through existing AHRQ networks. Dr. Benz also serves as the quantitative task leader for an assessment of community coalition sustainability for the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), where she is responsible for developing the data collection instrument, pilot testing the instrument, attaining clearance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the project, and conducting data analyses. Recently completed projects include serving as the senior analyst for the *Trends in U.S. Awareness of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities* surveys for OMH which include the collection and analysis of data required by OMH for performance measurement purposes under the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act (GPRA) of 2010; and serving as the public comment task leader for the *Healthy People 2020* objective development project for the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), where she assisted in designing a public comment data collection system, analyzed nearly 5,000 public comments, and produced reports and briefings for HHS officials, the Secretary's Federal Advisory Committee, and the Federal Interagency Workgroup. Dr. Benz earned her PhD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where her research focused on individual political advocacy and state-based health care reform.

Oscar J. Espinosa, M.A., is a Senior Research Scientist at NORC, at the University of Chicago's Public Health Research Department. He is an experienced health services researcher and project director with over 10 years of federal project management experience. His primary area of expertise is program evaluation and survey research, and he specializes in the evaluation of programs that deliver health services to minorities and other vulnerable populations. Mr. Espinosa currently serves as the co-project director for the HHS OMH's Performance Improvement and Management System (PIMS) development project. He also has directed other projects for OMH, including: a national survey of awareness of racial and ethnic health disparities among the general population and of practicing physicians, the evaluation of the OMH Resource Center, and a national survey of managed care organizations (MCOs) which investigated the nature and extent of culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) provided by MCOs. In addition, Mr. Espinosa has led various projects that evaluate the delivery of language assistance services in public health centers and hospital systems, and interventions that deliver health education materials to vulnerable populations. Mr. Espinosa completed his M.A. in Sociology with a focus on survey research methods from George Mason University.

Elizabeth C. Hair, PhD, is a Senior Research Scientist in the Public Health Area at NORC at the University of Chicago. She has over 20 years of experience in conducting research on child and family well-being. Dr. Hair has conducted research on issues related to children's health and mental health, childhood obesity, health risk behaviors among adolescents, vulnerable youth, and the transition to adulthood. She has expertise in program evaluation, survey and questionnaire design, survey research and in synthesizing and reporting on effective program practices and policies aimed at improving the well-being of individuals. She has extensive experience related to evaluation, technical assistance and performance measurement. She is currently the co-project director for the HHS Office of Minority Health's (OMH) Performance Improvement and Management System (PIMS) development project. Specifically, she is working with OMH to improve their data collection methods for performance measurement and providing technical assistance to OMH grantees on their evaluation plans. Dr. Hair has also provided expertise on de-identifying health data for research, especially data that meet the requirements for HIPAA Safe Harbor. She has received funding from federal agencies such as NIH, MCHB, ASPE, OMH, ONC, CMS, and SAMHSA. She has also been funded by several major US foundations. Dr. Hair has published her work widely in leading research journals including *Development Psychology*, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, and *Journal of Maternal and Child Health*. Prior to her work at NORC, Dr. Hair was the Program Director of the Health Area at Child Trends for 10 years. Dr. Hair completed her Ph.D. in Psychology from Texas A&M University.

Valerie A. Welsh, MS, CHES, is a Senior Health Policy Analyst and the Performance Improvement/Evaluation Officer in the HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), in Rockville, MD. She currently manages and oversees OMH-wide efforts to comply with the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, address requirements by HHS and the OMB relative to performance budgeting and reporting, and assess program effectiveness and 'returns on (programmatic) investments' via a portfolio of policy-relevant studies and program evaluations. Within OMH, Ms. Welsh has also served as the lead analyst/advisor on efforts related to HHS disease prevention/health promotion and health disparities initiatives under the Clinton, Bush, and Obama Administrations, strengthening the public health system/infrastructure, health care quality improvement, and promoting informed consent and trustworthiness in health care and research. Other significant positions she has held during and prior to her 22-year tenure with HHS include: Principal Prevention Policy Advisor in the former OASH Office of Health Planning and Evaluation; Manager, Health & Legal Services Unit, Government Services Division of Aspen Systems Corporation (Rockville, MD); Director, Health Promotion and Wellness, Group Health Association (Washington, DC); Member Health Education Administrator, Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program (Southern California); full-/part-time lecturer, Health Education/Sciences Department, California State University & College System (Los Angeles, Fullerton, & Long Beach campuses); Health Care Planner/Researcher, Department of Health Care Planning, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (Carbondale, IL).