

DHERN June 2025 Newsletter

DHERN Announcements

- Join us for our June DHERN meeting, “At the Margins of Care: Uncovering Health Inequities Faced by Refugees with Disabilities Living in the U.S.,” featuring Mustafa Rfat, PhD! Dr. Rfat is a Ph.D. candidate in Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis and a McDonnell Scholar. His research focuses on the intersection of forced displacement, disability, and structural inequities. CART and ASL interpretation will be available. [Register now](#) to attend on June 24th, 2-3pm ET.
- At the conclusion of the June 24th DHERN meeting, there will be a mentoring session from 3:00-3:30 PM ET for graduate students and postdocs working in disability health equity. Mustafa Rfat, Bonnie Swenor, and Scott Landes will be in attendance to talk with students and postdocs about their work as disabled scholars in the disability health equity space. This post-meeting session is open to all graduate students and postdocs.
- **Save the date for the annual DHERN 2025 conference** on September 16th from 10 AM to 2 PM EST. We are thrilled to announce the theme of this year is Global Perspectives on Disability Equity. [Register for our conference now!](#) The agenda will feature a keynote address and the following session topics:
 - Advancing Global Disability Data Equity
 - How Data Informs Global Disability Rights
 - Participation and Disability, Global Development, and Systems Change
- The Institute for Health and Disability Policy Studies at the University of Kansas is recruiting adults in the U.S. with physical, mental, emotional, or other health conditions to take the [2025 National Survey on Health and Disability](#). The goal of this survey is to better understand how access to health care services and types of insurance coverage affect the daily life, health, and community participation of people with disabilities. Responses will help shape future policies and resources. This survey is available in English, Spanish, and ASL, —online, by phone, or via Zoom. For questions, contact healthsurvey@ku.edu.
- Funding for the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) is in serious jeopardy amidst the [proposed restructuring of HHS](#). The administration is proposing eliminating NIDILRR. NIDILRR is part of the Rehabilitation Act and for over 46 years has provided the infrastructure for applied disability research across all populations and the lifespan. NIDILRR plays a unique role in supporting research that promotes health, employment, and community living. Much of the data and research the disability and aging community uses to inform and advance policy and practice comes from NIDILRR. To support NIDILRR advocacy efforts:

1. Use NIDILRR advocacy materials in any conversations or posts you may be having. The American Association on Health & Disability has created an easily accessible [NIDILRR Support Toolkit](#) with flyers and graphics pre-formatted for Instagram and Bluesky.
 2. Send a pre-written message to your representatives about NIDILRR funding using this [action alert](#). Feel free to tweak it to make it your own!
- Congress is considering a budget that would cut at least \$715 billion from Medicaid, threatening health insurance for 13.7 million Americans and affecting SNAP benefits for 40 million people. [AAPD's Medicaid Defense Hub](#) has updates, toolkits, and resources to help you use your power to protect Medicaid and SNAP. Take action today by calling and writing to Congress using [AAPD's easy advocacy tool](#).
 - Share your recent publications, upcoming events, job opportunities with the DHERN community! To contribute to the next newsletter, please send details to us at dhern@jh.edu by the 28th of June.

STUDY RECRUITMENT

- We are seeking volunteers for a research study to improve the experience and accessibility of making healthcare appointments online. Individuals with one or more disabilities or chronic illness and are 18+ years old may be eligible. If you are interested, complete our [short screening survey](#). For questions, contact tbernst4@jh.edu. The Principal Investigators for this project are Dr. Theodore J. Iwashyna and Dr. Bonnielin Swenor. The Johns Hopkins Medicine Institutional Review Board has approved of this project under IRB#00463432.
- The Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) is working on a [research project](#) to develop a phone app for people with developmental disabilities, including autism and intellectual disabilities. The app will help people decide whether they want to get pregnant and provide accessible resources and information about pregnancy. Researchers are seeking participants for an online survey to ensure the app meets community needs. Individuals who are 18-50 years old, live in the US, have a developmental disability (including intellectual disability and autism), and are able to get pregnant (even if unlikely) may be eligible. Participants will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card for completing the survey. For questions, contact dorank@ohsu.edu.

Disability and Health Journal Featured Article

- Brucker, D. L., Kim, H.J., Potvin, B.E., [Is participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program associated with physical food security among people aged 16 to 64 with disabilities in the U.S.?](#) Disability and Health Journal, 101831

Using nationally representative NHANES data from 2013 to 2018, this study tested whether SNAP participation improves *physical* food security (PFS)—a novel measure reflecting how physical limitations affect access to food—among working-age adults with disabilities. Researchers found that SNAP participation was not significantly associated with improved PFS, suggesting that economic food assistance alone may not address physical access barriers. The study emphasizes the need for disability-inclusive nutrition and food access strategies that go beyond economic supports.

Disability Data Equity Research Working Group Featured Article

- Salinger, M.R., Feltz, B., & Chan, S.H., Gosline, A., Davila, C., Mitchell, S., & Iezzoni, L. I. (2023). [Impairment and Disability Identity and Perceptions of Trust, Respect, and Fairness](#). *JAMA Health Forum*, 4(9), e233180-e233180.

Using a nationally representative survey, this study found that people with impairments reported worse experiences with trust, fairness, and respect in health care. Those who also identified as disabled reported more clinician effort and understanding but still perceived greater disrespect and unfairness. The findings underscore that disability identity and functional impairment are distinct—and both matter when addressing disparities in care.

From,
The DHERN Team

To receive the DHERN newsletter, please email dhern@jhu.edu with the subject line “subscribe.” To stop receiving the DHERN newsletter, please email dhern@jhu.edu with the subject line “unsubscribe.” Thank you!