

DHERN March 2025 Newsletter

DHERN Announcements

1. Join us for our March DHERN meeting, “Designing Digital Health and Broader Structures with the Disability Community,” featuring Rupa Valdez, PhD! Dr. Valdez is a Professor of Systems and Information Engineering and of Public Health Sciences at University of Virginia. CART and ASL interpretation will be available. [Register now](#) to attend on March 25th, 2-3pm ET.
2. 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.

Opportunities

- **CONFERENCES**

- a. [CALL FOR ABSTRACTS — APHA 2025 Annual Meeting and Expo, Disability Section](#)
 - The American Public Health Association is now accepting abstract submissions for oral and poster presentations for the Annual Meeting and Expo in Washington, DC, November 2-5, 2025. Authors are encouraged to submit abstracts on the meeting theme — Making the Public’s Health a National Priority — and current and emerging public health issues. The abstract submission deadline is March 28, 11:59 PM (PDT). Presenters will be notified via email of abstract status on June 3.
 - APHA’s Disability section invites abstract submissions for socio-behavioral including health education and program intervention research, epidemiological, health systems, health law and policy, and social justice research related to disability and public health that represent people with all types of disabilities (e.g., cognitive, physical, mental, and sensory) across the lifespan. The section encourages abstracts that feature domestic and international perspectives. Case studies and demonstration projects that represent best practices and have been evaluated are also highly encouraged. Abstracts dedicated to any and all aspects of disability and public health will be considered.

- **JOBS**

- a. [Evaluation Coordinator, Special Olympics State Program](#)
 - The Evaluation Coordinator in New Mexico will be embedded with the Special Olympics State Program as their primary work location to interact with State Program staff and local coaches, athletes, families and program administrators. The Evaluation Coordinators will serve

as the project liaison on behalf of the Special Olympics Health Research and Evaluation team and participate in the Community of Practice to develop best practices among the participating Programs. Email questions to ruchic@Specialolympics.org.

- **CALL FOR PAPERS**

- a. **[Frontiers in Reproductive Health](#) Special Issue**

- We are currently welcoming submissions of original research to the "Bridging the Gap: Improving Reproductive Healthcare for Patients with Disabilities" special issue research topic in Frontiers in Reproductive Health, Guest Edited by Lindsay M. Cannon and Monica Woll Rosen. Manuscript submissions are due April 8, 2025. We invite those with interest in submitting a manuscript to submit a summary by December 19, 2024 (not required). [Details on the research topic and submission guidelines can be found here](#). Reach out to Lindsay Cannon (lmcannon@wisc.edu) with questions.

- b. **[BMC Health Services Research](#)**

- Currently welcoming submissions of original research to the "Improving care for people with disabilities" Collection, Guest Edited by Dr Linda Long-Bellil. [Submissions due](#) until the end of 15 March 2025, but if you are unable to submit a manuscript before this date, please let us know as we may be able to be flexible. [Submission guidelines here](#). Authors should express their interest in the Collection in their cover letter.

[Disability Data Equity Research Working Group](#) Featured Article

- Landes, S. D., Hall, J. P., Swenor, B. K., & Vaitsiakhovich, N. (2025). Comparative performance of disability measures. PLoS one, 20(1), e0318745.
 - a. Researchers and federal agencies are currently discussing the best way to measure disability in US federal surveys. One idea being discussed is expanding/supplementing the question sets commonly used to capture disability status in order to better capture a broader segment of the disabled population. We used data from the 2010–2018 National Health Interview Survey to examine the performance of questions commonly used to measure disability in the US—the ACS-6 and Washington Group Short Set questions—in capturing intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health disabilities, and physical health disabilities. We found that neither set of disability questions was sufficient to fully capture these disability statuses. We contend that current disability questions used in US population surveys must be expanded/supplemented in order to increase the inclusiveness of disability measurement, and thereby, improve efforts to reduce disparities experienced by the disabled population.

[Health Affairs](#) Featured Article

- Wolff, J. L., Cornman, J. C., & Freedman, V. A. (2025). [The Number Of Family Caregivers Helping Older US Adults Increased From 18 Million To 24 Million, 2011–22](#). Health Affairs, 44(2), 187-195.
 - a. Between 2011 and 2022, the number of family caregivers providing help to older adults increased by nearly six million. Stability in older adults' care network size and the care experiences of the rising numbers of family caregivers assisting older adults without dementia is reassuring, but the issue warrants continued policy attention. The increasing pressures on family caregivers assisting older adults with dementia are concerning, with ramifications for the feasibility, costs, and urgency of policy intervention.

DHERN Member Submissions

- T. Wilson, "[The Unintended Harm of IoT Devices in Assistive Technology Distribution Programs](#)," 2024 IEEE European Symposium on Security and Privacy Workshops (EuroS&PW), Vienna, Austria, 2024, pp. 658-665, doi: 10.1109/EuroSPW61312.2024.00080.
 - This position paper examines the ethical implications of integrating Internet of Things (IoT) devices into assistive technology (AT) distribution programs for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Its focus is the potential unintended harm that may accompany the deployment of IoT and internet based devices as AT despite their promise to foster independence. Ethical dilemmas surrounding digital privacy, safety, and security are discussed, alongside considerations of the digital divide and challenges inherent in using IoT devices in AT distribution programs. Based on this discussion, the paper outlines the ethical challenges that call for immediate regulatory measures and protections to mitigate risks effectively.

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!