

DHERN August 2026 Newsletter

DHERN Announcements

- **Save the date for the annual DHERN conference** on September 29th from 12 to 3 pm EST. This year's topic will be "*At the Intersection of Structural Ableism and Disability Health Equity*". We are excited to announce our keynote presenter for "Defining Structural Ableism," will be [Joel Michael Reynolds, Ph.D., Provost's Distinguished Associate Professor of Philosophy and Disability Studies at Georgetown University](#). See the attached flyer for more details about panels. [Register for our conference now!](#)
- **DHRC September Series:** Join the [Johns Hopkins Disability Health Research Center \(DHRC\)](#) for our September Seminar Series, featuring three events highlighting disability health research. The series is open to the Johns Hopkins community and the broader public. ASL interpretation and real-time captioning will be provided. [Register now for the Seminar Series](#). **Save the dates:**
 - a. **September 15th from 12:00–1:00 PM ET:** Joint meeting with the JHU Center on Aging and Health: Dr. Jennifer Schrack will discuss the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS) and how these data can be used to examine the health of people with disabilities and support disability health research.
 - b. **September 22nd from 12:00–1:00 PM ET:** Kerry Devlin, PhD, LPMT, MT-BC and Kausik Datta, PhD, MA will discuss *Music Therapy in Neurocritical Care: Co-Constructing Music and Meaning*.
 - c. **September 29th from 12:00–3:00 PM ET:** Disability Health Equity Research Network (DHERN) Annual Conference, *At the Intersection of Structural Ableism and Disability Health Equity*.
- If you would like to contribute to our work advancing disability health equity research, connecting researchers and trainees, and fostering the inclusion of disabled people in these efforts, you can [make a donation](#) to help sustain DHERN's mission.

- 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 August.

Study Recruitment

- The DAIRS Lab at North Dakota State University is recruiting participants for an ongoing research study, you and/or your child may be able to participate in! They are looking for young people (age 14-29) with disabilities, chronic illnesses, mental illnesses, or who are neurodivergent to participate in our study about identity development. Young people will earn \$10 for participation in this 20–30-minute survey. If you are interested in learning more and finding out if you are eligible, you can contact using this [link that will open a short survey in a new window](#) to complete the interest form or email at ndsu.airslab@ndsu.edu. This study is approved by the NDSU IRB #0005794.
- Jane Angar, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley, is conducting a study on how instructors across political science and related disciplines—including disability studies, sociology, public policy, law, development studies, international studies, and area studies among others—teach disability-related topics in higher education. The survey takes approximately 10–15 minutes to complete and is intended for instructors who teach disability-related content at the undergraduate and/or graduate level. [The survey link is available here](#). The study has been approved by the UC Berkeley Office for Protection of Human Subjects (OPHS), Protocol No. 2026-06-19802.
- A study conducted through Northwestern University is looking for researchers (e.g., Principal Investigators, Physician/Scientists, etc.) who work with disability populations, especially in remote settings, to share perspectives and experiences on measurement tools. You'll share insights over a Zoom call with the team. Compensation via gift card for participating! [You can find more details and respond to the screener here](#). To express interest and/or request more information, please email help@mobiletoolbox.org.
- A study conducted through Northwestern University is looking for adults (18+) who identify as deaf/hard of hearing/hearing impaired to share your insights during a Zoom call and help shape accessible solutions in research. Compensation via gift card for participating! [You can find more details and respond to the screener here](#). To request more information, please email help@mobiletoolbox.org.

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

- Myers, A. (2026). [Does Who is Counted Matter? Comparing Disability Measures and Self-Rated Health](#). *Social Science & Medicine*.
 - a. People with disabilities experience significant health disparities compared to those without disabilities. However, analysts disagree on which measures should be used

to identify the disabled population. Differences in disability measurement hamper efforts to accurately estimate health risks experienced by people with disabilities. This study investigates how self-rated health differs based on responses to two common population measures of disability. The WG-SS excludes a considerable proportion of the disabled population who experience significantly worse health than non-disabled people. Relying solely on the more restrictive WG-SS may omit millions of individuals, potentially hampering federal efforts to achieve health equity.

Member Submissions

- Mustafa Rfat et al., [Reimagining accessible refugee resettlement: A call for integrating reliable, rights-based disability data](#). *Disability and Health Journal*.
 - a. Refugees with disabilities remain among the most underserved groups in humanitarian and resettlement contexts, facing systemic barriers that are further compounded by the absence of reliable, disaggregated disability data. War, displacement, and climate-related crises have increased the prevalence of physical and mental disabilities among the displaced population. Simultaneously, inconsistent screening practices and diagnostic-only approaches that are not aligned with disability rights frameworks undermine equitable resettlement for refugees with disabilities in the United States and elsewhere. Barriers include limited access to healthcare, assistive technology, and vocational services. As a result, resettlement agencies and disability service providers are ill-prepared to support refugees with disabilities upon arrival. Drawing on lessons learned from community-based research across multiple U.S. states, this commentary calls for a rights-based, standardized approach to disability data collection in refugee resettlement. The authors recommend supplementing the SMC with a comprehensive disability-status question, incorporating questions on accommodation needs and preferences, and strengthening referral pathways to community-based disability organizations upon arrival. Accurate and integrated disability data are essential for immediate support and for ensuring long-term integration, civil rights compliance, and equity in resettlement outcomes.

From,
The DHERN Team

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