

DHERN June 2026 Newsletter

DHERN Announcements

- **Save the date for the annual DHERN conference** on September 29th from 12 to 4 pm EST. This year's topic will be *"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 30th of June.

Study Recruitment

- A research team led by Scott Landes, a professor of sociology at Syracuse University, is seeking to learn how people with and without disabilities think about the experience of disability. To participate, you can take a brief 10-minute survey consisting of 25 multiple-choice questions. You are eligible to participate in this research study and complete the survey if you are age 18 or over and live in a U.S. State, District, or Territory. People with and without a disability are eligible to take the survey. [You can access the survey here](#). This research study has been approved by the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board (IRB), Protocol #25-355.
- Do you have an observable disability (i.e., a disability that is at least sometimes visible or noticeable to others)? Oregon State University is conducting a survey about if and when you disclose or discuss your disability with other people. They would like to hear your perspective in this 20-minute online survey. The long-term goal is to develop recommendations to help people with disabilities make decisions about disclosing or not disclosing. You may be eligible to participate if you have any kind of disability that is at least sometimes observable to others, are 18 years or older, and communicate in English. The

principal investigator is Kathleen Bogart, PhD is a Professor of Psychology at Oregon State University. She studies psychological experiences of people with disabilities, has an observable disability herself, and is an advocate. [To participate, take this survey here](#). To learn more, contact oregonstatedsil@gmail.com.

- Maddie Kerr, a PhD student at the University of California, Berkeley, is conducting a study about how understandings of disability in public health and science policy have changed over time. Maddie is seeking to interview researchers and/or advocates who have worked to highlight health disparities among disabled people as a population. Participation in this study would involve a 45-90 minute interview via Zoom, phone call, or in person (if location permits). If you are interested, please contact maddie_kerr@berkeley.edu for more details. [You can also learn more on this study webpage](#). This study has been approved by the UC Berkeley Institutional Review Board (protocol #2026-04-19580).

Health Affairs Featured Article

- Breslin, E., and Heaphy, D. (2026). [“An Agenda For CMS: Strengthen Integrated Care Programs For Dually Eligible Adults With Behavioral Health Needs.”](#) Health Affairs
 - a. Full-benefit, dually eligible (FBDE) adults younger than age 65 with behavioral health conditions need person-centered, whole-person care and access to a robust continuum of community-based services and home and-community-based services to support their independent living and recovery goals. State Medicaid leaders must have access to the whole Medicaid and Medicare pie to navigate the needs of the whole person and to manage the budget challenges. This is important for all dually eligible populations and especially for FBDE adults with behavioral health needs.

DHERN Member Submissions

- Park, S., Fields, B., & Bratzke, L. (2026). [Social Determinants of Health and Aging Outcomes in People Aging with Disability: Findings from the Health and Retirement Study 2006–2020](#)”. Disability and Health Journal 102077.
 - a. This study examines how social determinants of health are associated with aging-related outcomes among people aging with disability, using data from the 2006–2020 waves of the Health and Retirement Study. The study focused on two dimensions of aging: phenotypic aging, measured by metabolic dysfunction risk scores, and functional aging, measured by limitations in activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living. Findings showed that race and ethnicity, as well as health insurance status, were significantly associated with both phenotypic and functional aging. Higher educational attainment and greater social participation were protective, whereas food insecurity and experiences of discrimination were associated with poorer aging outcomes. These findings highlight the importance of disability-inclusive aging policies and interventions that address social disadvantage,

promote social integration, and reduce discrimination among people aging with disability.

- Rfat, M., Yang, Y., and An, R. (2026). "[Harnessing AI to Enhance Inclusion for Refugees with Disabilities: Mitigating Bias, Promoting Equity in Humanitarian and Resettlement Efforts.](#)"
Disability and the Global South
 - a. This article examines how artificial intelligence (AI) can both support and hinder inclusion efforts for refugees with disabilities within humanitarian and resettlement systems. The authors highlight the potential for AI-driven tools to improve accessibility, service coordination, and equitable resource allocation, while also warning that biased datasets, inaccessible technologies, and lack of disability-inclusive design can reinforce existing inequities. The paper emphasizes the importance of ethical AI development, participatory approaches involving refugees with disabilities, and stronger accountability measures to ensure AI systems promote equity and inclusion in humanitarian and resettlement contexts.

From,
The DHERN Team

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