



# POP HEALTH CENTRAL

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## POPULATION HEALTH IN ACTION

### The Rutgers Health Service Corps Joins Forces with Student Health and HOPE to Promote the Distribution of Narcan Kits Across the Rutgers New Brunswick Campus

*Contributing authors: Noa'a Shimoni, Associate Vice President for Student Health and Wellness, Rutgers Health, and John Hemphill, Associate Program Manager, Office of Population Health*

[The Rutgers Health Service Corps](#) (RHSC) provides students with invaluable service experiences that directly impact the health and wellness of community members. The Corps has embarked on its next effort, joining forces with [HOPE](#) (Health Outreach, Promotion, and Education) Dr. Noa'a Shimoni, and Student Health to ensure the continuous availability of Narcan Kits across the New Brunswick Campus Student Centers. Narcan, a life-saving medication, swiftly reverses the effects of an opioid overdose. With the alarming surge in overdose deaths throughout New Jersey, strategically placing these kits in easily accessible locations for students, staff, faculty, and community members offers a vital opportunity to save lives.

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For recommendations on future newsletter topics or to be a contributing author, reach out to us.

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With accidental overdoses as the leading cause of death in NJ, taking proactive measures is essential. It's far better to have a kit and not need it than to need it and not have one. Therefore, these kits are readily available to anyone at no cost, housed in boxes primarily located in or near the restrooms at the Busch, Livingston, Cook, Douglass, and College Ave Student Centers, as well as Hardenbergh Hall. Narcan is also available at Rutgers Newark, Rutgers Camden, and Rutgers Health - across university campuses.

**According to the CDC, Opioids were involved in 80,411 overdose deaths in 2021 (75.4% of all drug overdose deaths)**

To date, thanks to the dedication of our student volunteers in the Corps and HOPE, close to 3000 Narcan kits have been distributed across these locations. Students continue to collaborate to maintain the restocking and distribution of these kits. These ongoing efforts are crucial in safeguarding the health and well-being of our campus community, while also providing students a valuable opportunity to serve.

To read more about this initiative, please view the official Rutgers announcement here:

<https://rutgershealth.org/news/taking-proactive-steps-rutgers-provides-free-narcan-community>

## UPCOMING HEALTH OBSERVANCES

### May

- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Women's Health Awareness Month
- National Nurses Month
- National Stroke Awareness Month

### June

- Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month
- PTSD Awareness Month
- National Cancer Survivor Day - June 2

### July

- Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month
- UV Safety Month
- World Hepatitis Day - July 28



## POPULATION HEALTH NEWS

### Rutgers Health Service Corps Launches with Kickoff Celebration

*Contributing authors: Ethan Halm, MD, MPH, MBA, Vice Chancellor for Population Health, Office of Population Health, and John Hemphill, Associate Program Manager, Office of Population Health*

[The Rutgers Health Service Corps](#) (RHSC) recently celebrated its launch by hosting a kickoff event at the Rutgers Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy on Thursday, April 11, 2024. With over 100 attendees from various units across Rutgers, including students, faculty, staff, leadership, and community partners, the event marked a significant milestone for Rutgers University.

President Holloway delivered opening remarks, highlighting the importance of service in strengthening both the university and broader society, aligning with Rutgers' vision of public service for the common good. Chancellor Brian Strom emphasized the Corps' role in helping to advance Rutgers Health's mission to improve health and health equity, and he expressed gratitude for the collaborative effort seen in the diverse turnout of attendees.





*Dr. Ethan Halm, Vice Chancellor for Population Health, Office of Population Health*

reversal kit distribution, interprofessional community health screening and education for seniors, and developing communications material to promote health literacy. The goal is to select a diverse group to comprise the RHSC inaugural training cohort by Spring's end. The Corps also aims to expand the array of service-learning opportunities available to students. The event concluded with a social session, fostering connections among attendees and laying groundwork for future collaborations to enhance health and wellness in New Jersey.

The organizing team expresses gratitude to all attendees and extends special thanks to Dean Joseph Barone, Donna Feudo, Les Barta, and the entire Rutgers Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy team, along with Allison Marcucci, for their invaluable support in planning and hosting the event. If interested in learning more about the Rutgers Health Service Corps and how to get involved as a member, mentor, or partner, please visit the following website: <https://rutgershealth.org/community-engagement/health-service-corps>

## **The PROUD Gender Center of New Jersey at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Leading the Way in LGBTQ+ Healthcare**

*Contributing Author: David A. Cohen, MD, FACP, FACE, Associate Professor of Medicine and Vice Chair of Education, Department of Medicine Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School*

The [PROUD Gender Center of New Jersey](#) at [Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital](#) (RWJUH) strives to be a leader in providing inclusivity and support for the LGBTQ+ community, offering comprehensive medical care that encompasses both physical and mental health needs. With a commitment to providing gender-affirming hormone therapy and surgical procedures, the center plays a pivotal role in empowering individuals to live authentically.



The RHSC aims to include students from all Rutgers schools to support community health service-initiatives. Co-founders Dr. Humaira Chaudhry, Dr. Vince Silenzio, Alex Ruiz and Jack Hemphill discussed the Corps' inception, stressing its role in fostering interprofessional collaboration and amplifying existing service-learning experiences. Associate Dean Donna Feudo also recounted the incredible success of the interdisciplinary Rutgers COVID-19 VAX Corps, which played a crucial role in shaping the origin story of the RHSC.

Following the panel discussion moderated by Dr. Ethan Halm, an overview of the Corps' future endeavors was presented showcasing promising training, service, and innovation opportunities. This included initiatives in promoting cancer screening for vulnerable populations, Narcan opiate overdose

At the heart of the PROUD Gender Center's mission is the recognition of the unique healthcare challenges faced by transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. By delivering high-quality medical care tailored to their specific needs, the center fosters a safe and affirming environment where patients can access the care they deserve.

One of the cornerstone services offered by the center is gender-affirming hormone therapy, which plays a crucial role in aligning individuals' physical characteristics with their gender identity. Through personalized treatment plans, patients receive the support and guidance needed to navigate their transition journey with confidence. The center also provides a range of surgical procedures, which are both physically transformative, but can also significantly improve well-being and self-esteem.

The PROUD Gender Center provides more than just medical support, focusing on building a supportive community through counseling, support groups, and workshops to help individuals navigate challenges they may face. By advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and raising awareness, the center extends its impact beyond its immediate services, contributing to societal change. Through its compassionate approach and comprehensive care, the center empowers individuals to live authentically, embodying acceptance and affirmation.





## Generating Actionable Evidence for School-Based Mental Health Service Delivery: Public-Academic Partnership Based Evaluations

*Contributing Authors: Christina Kang-Yi, PhD, MSW, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Counseling*

Dr. Christina Kang-Yi's public-academic partnership-based research has contributed to addressing the most pressing issues of community partners in real time. Dr. Kang-Yi and her colleagues' paper titled "[Generating Actionable Evidence for School-Based Mental Health Service Delivery: Public-Academic Partnership Based Evaluations](#)," published by Community Mental Health Journal, was cited by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's

[AHRO News Now](#) (March 12, 2024). The paper presents 15 years of public-academic partnership-based program evaluations that Dr. Kang-Yi has led by generating actionable evidence for policymaking, program design and implementation in improving school-based mental health service delivery. The variety of evaluations include: 1) examining acute mental health service use of children receiving school-based mental health care and Medicaid expenditures; 2) examining children's externalizing and internalizing behaviors to measure school mental health providers' performance; and 3) examining effects of different types of school mental health programs on children's behavioral health functioning, school outcomes, and other out-of-school service use. The evaluations focused on Philadelphia's school-based mental health service delivery reimbursed through Medicaid.

In addition to reporting the key findings of the partnership-based evaluations, the paper discusses how programs have been refined based on evaluation results, and shares lessons learned for successful public-academic partnership-based evaluations to promote use of actionable evidence. The key lessons learned include: 1) constantly aligning expectations for desired goals, priorities, outcomes, data collection, timelines, and scope of work; 2) addressing program fidelity in real-time for stakeholders' awareness and immediate process improvements; and 3) effectively disseminating evaluation findings through improving the process for data license agreements.

Reference: Kang-Yi CD, Kuriyan A, Kinkler G, Piscella AE, Williams T, Wolk CB. Generating Actionable Evidence for School-Based Mental Health Service Delivery: Public-Academic Partnership Based Evaluations. Community Ment Health J. 2023;59(8):1588-600. Epub 2023/06/08. doi: 10.1007/s10597-023-01147-5. PubMed PMID: 37289384.

## CONSORTIUM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Featured speakers at Rutgers Population Health Consortium June 2024 meeting

For this newsletter edition, we would like to introduce you to two members of our Rutgers Population Health Consortium who will be presenting at our next meeting.

#### Meet Michael Litterer, MPA, FHELA, CHES, CPS

Michael Litterer, MPA, FHELA, CHES, CPS, Vice President, RWJBarnabas Health Institute for Prevention and Recovery (IFPR), provides executive oversight to all programs and services implemented at IFPR by a team of highly skilled and incredibly passionate staff of professionals. Michael brings over 23 years of experience in the field of public health and social care with a special focus on substance use prevention and recovery to his role. He is a Fellow of the Healthcare Executive Leadership Academy (FHELA), a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES), a Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS), and he holds an Executive Master's degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University and a degree in Public Health.



Additionally, Michael is a proud member of the multidisciplinary RWJBarnabas Health Corporate Tackling Addiction Task Force, aimed at holistically addressing the chronic disease of addiction throughout RWJBarnabas Health, reducing the stigma associated with substance use disorder and transforming the way we prevent, diagnose, and treat the disease throughout our system and communities.

### Meet Elliot Liebling, MPH

Elliott Liebling, MPH, Director, RWJBarnabas Health Institute for Prevention and Recovery, oversees the Institute's operations, substance use prevention programs, and a team of mixed methods researchers tasked with the design and management of IT, data, and analytics systems. His research on peer recovery support services, substance use, pain, and access to treatment has been published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at national and international conferences. Elliott is a member of the RWJBarnabas Health Corporate Tackling Addiction Task Force, the RWJBarnabas Health Pain Collaborative, and the New Jersey State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup. He received his bachelor's degree and Master of Public Health degree from Brown University and is currently pursuing a Juris Doctor degree at Seton Hall University.

Michael and Elliot will be presenting together at the next Consortium meeting on June 3rd. The title of their presentation is "Tackling Addiction Together: RWJBH and Rutgers Collaborative efforts to address SUD."



## RUTGERS HEALTH AND WELLNESS CORNER

### Introducing Togetherall: Peer support through a 24/7 digital platform for Rutgers students

*Contributing authors: Noa'a Shimoni, Associate Vice President for Student Health and Wellness and Donna Meeker-O'Rourke, Population Health Fellow, Office of Population Health*

In a proactive stride to bolster mental health support on campus, Rutgers University in partnership with the [New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education](#) entered a collaboration with [Togetherall](#). Togetherall is a 24/7 online peer support platform for university students. The platform is free for students and focuses on fostering a sense of community and connection. Students log in to find affinity groups for peer support, courses to learn techniques to manage their mental health, and tools/self-assessments to track their progress. One goal is to engage harder to reach students and those who studies show may not typically use counseling services. These include black, indigenous, and other people of color and gender non-conforming students.

Togetherall can work preventively, by helping students find a community to work through everyday challenges. The platform also augments support for students who are already in treatment. By promoting Togetherall alongside existing therapeutic interventions, the platform helps students receive support in their daily lives and complements our counseling services. The platform is moderated by clinicians (called wall guides), which promotes a safe and secure space for students and can escalate concerning messages or interactions to local authorities. Rutgers University's collaboration with Togetherall represents our commitment to strengthen community, belonging, and mental health care for all students.



# togetherall

## Mindfulness Moment

Building a gratitude list boosts well-being by focusing on what you are thankful for. Try adding 3 to 5 things to your list each day, integrating it into your daily routine. You can write your gratitude list first thing in the morning to get your day off to a great start or list a few things for which you are grateful before winding down for bed.



## Funding Opportunities



### **AIDS Research Center on Mental Health and HIV/AIDS (P30 Clinical Trial Optional)**

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Division of AIDS Research (DAR) encourages applications for Center Core Grants (P30) to support HIV/AIDS Research Centers (ARCs). These Research Centers are intended to provide infrastructural support that facilitates the development of high impact science in HIV/AIDS relevant to the NIMH mission. The NIMH ARCs support innovative, interdisciplinary research in several areas, including basic, neuro-HIV, behavioral and social, biostatistics and data science, and integrated biobehavioral, clinical, translational, and implementation science. The deadline to apply is August 25, 2024. For additional information, please click [here](#).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2024 Black Alumni Collective National Conference

*Thursday, May 30, 2024, 9:00am to Sunday, June 2, 2024, 5:00pm*

A Beloved Black Community: Honoring the Past, Treasuring the Present and Shaping the Future

Black alumni, friends, students, and supporters from all colleges and universities are invited to attend. The event will be held on the campuses of Rutgers University. Hear from Black alumni experts and thought leaders, build community among Black alumni worldwide, and expand your network of Black professionals.

For more information, please click [here](#).



### New Jersey Integrated Mental Health Conference

*Thursday, June 20, 2024, 8:00am to 4:30pm*

NJIMHC is a first-of-its-kind conference that brings together practitioners and leaders in mental health, behavioral health, and holistic wellness for a full day of continued education, professional development, networking and an opportunity to earn up to 6 CEUs.

Click [here](#) to register.



### 2024 Northeast Epidemiology Conference

Save the Date: This year's conference will be held at The Hard Rock Hotel in Atlantic City on *Thursday, November 7th and Friday, November 8th (half day)*. Details on registration, abstract submission and the link for hotel bookings will be shared in the coming months....stay tuned!

