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Directors’ Report

The Institute has continued to develop its programs in outreach education, population health research, program evaluation, and health care policy during the past year. Our official name change in May 2005 to the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute has helped us communicate our role in translating research into policy and practice. In November, the Board of Regents approved a name change for the Medical School to School of Medicine and Public Health. Both these changes signal an institutional transformation and recognition of the importance of population-based approaches to improve the health of the public.

The following summarizes the Institute’s major accomplishments in 2005:

• Established, in partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin, the Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute to provide leadership and continuing education to a “transformed” (i.e., non-traditional) public health workforce.

• Increased the Population Health Fellowship Program from 2 to 5 fellows, placed in Milwaukee, Madison, and La Crosse.

• Released the 2005 Wisconsin County Health Ranking, with improved measures of health care quality.

• Published 7 Issue Briefs, addressing health outcomes, health disparities, and health promotion programs.

• Continued our project, funded under the Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future, to assist the dean in evaluating progress towards Wisconsin’s goal to become the “healthiest state.”

• Conducted or collaborated in forums/symposia on Health Care Data Collection and Reporting; Prioritizing Prevention Investments; Medicaid Costs and Coverage; Producing and Measuring Quality Health Care for At-Risk Kids; and a two day conference on The Transformation of Health Care and the Role of the University.

• Prepared a report and publication on the quality of diabetes care in Wisconsin’s HMOs.

• Began a project funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIH) to study recovery high schools throughout the US.

• Collaborated with the Division of Public Health in developing a website on evidence-based practices in support of the State Health Plan and a midcourse survey related to the transformation goals of the plan.

• Continued to provide collaborative program evaluation services to a number of state and local agencies and programs.

Through these efforts, described in more detail in this report, the Institute continues to grow in its broad emphasis on translating public health and health policy research into policy and practice.

Our progress during 2005 could not have been achieved without the ongoing contributions of the members of our community Advisory Board and Executive Committee, and support from The Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future and the UW School of Medicine and Public Health. We are grateful for their continued commitment and dedication.
Mission Statement

To translate public health and health policy research into practice through frequent issue briefs and reports, applied research and program evaluation, educational programs, periodic conferences and an active external advisory board. We strive to:

- Address a broad range of real world problems of topical importance to government, business, providers and the public.

- Promote partnerships of inquiry between researchers and users of research, breaking down barriers between the academic community and public and private sector policy makers.

- Advance the development of interdisciplinary research, along the spectrum from public health to health care, at the UW-Madison and other academic settings in Wisconsin.

- Provide outreach and continuing education for practitioners and opportunities for applied learning for MPH, medical, graduate, and other health professions students.

- Contribute to public health and health care practice and policy decisions that improve Wisconsin’s population health.

- Maintain the highest level of relevance, rigor, and objectivity.
Advisory Board

Bevan Baker  
Milwaukee Health Commissioner  
City of Milwaukee Health Department

Stephen Braunginn  
Former President/CEO  
Urban League of Greater Madison

Steve Brenton  
President  
Wisconsin Hospital Association

Tim Cullen  
Vice President  
Cobalt

Rep. Curt Gielow  
Representative  
Wisconsin State Assembly

Al Jacobs  
CEO  
Wisconsin Education Association Trust (WEA)

Nancy Kaufman  
Vice President Philanthropy  
Aurora Health Care

MaryAnn Lippert  
Manager, Healthy Lifestyles Program  
Marshfield Clinic

Helene Nelson  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Family Services

Gregory Nycz  
Director of Health Policy  
Marshfield Clinic

Christopher Queram  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
The Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality

David Riemer  
Director  
Wisconsin Health Project

Senator Judy Robson  
Senator  
Wisconsin State Senate

Peggy Rosenzweig  
Regent  
UW Board of Regents

Ayaz Samadani  
Family Physician  
Dean/St Mary Regional Clinic

Tim Size  
Executive Director  
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative

Eric Stanchfield  
Secretary  
Department of Employee Trust Funds

Susan Turney  
Chief Executive Officer  
Wisconsin Medical Society
Programs, Products, Activities

A community Advisory Board guides the Population Health Institute, helping us set priorities and direction for our applied research efforts. From these recommendations, the Institute pursues the following initiatives:

- Connect the academic community with public and private policy makers, in order to communicate the evidence base for public health and health care policies and programs.
  - Issue Briefs (See page 12)
  - Monthly E-News
  - Health Policy Forums (See page 13)
  - Technical Reports

- Monitor health outcomes and determinants in Wisconsin communities to inform health policy, program planning and evaluation.
  - County Health Rankings
  - Monitoring progress toward Wisconsin 2010 goals and objectives
  - Epidemiological Surveillance Projects

- Conduct applied research and evaluation in partnership with a broad range of health and human services partners in the public and private sectors. Major partners include the following:
  - State government agencies
  - Tribal entities
  - Private sector organizations
  - Health care providers, purchasers and payers
  - Federal government agencies

- Conduct outreach training and education for practitioners, and provide opportunities for applied learning for MPH, graduate and medical students.
  - Monthly seminars
  - Biannual Conferences
  - Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute
  - Population Health Fellowship Program

“Making Wisconsin the Healthiest State”

With funding from the Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future, our goal for this 4-year project is to identify the most effective investments for Wisconsin to become the nation’s healthiest state with less health disparity.

Along the way, we are developing approaches to measure the population health of Wisconsin and comparing it to that of other states. We are examining the relationships between health determinants (such as individual behaviors, health care, socioeconomic and environmental factors) and outcomes (based on mortality and health-related quality of life) within Wisconsin and across other states. This will help us understand which determinants drive the greatest improvement in health outcomes.

Measuring health and identifying the most effective ways to reduce health disparities is another important component of our project. Here, we are examining disparities across multiple domains such as geography, education, and race and ethnicity.

Using secondary data from multiple sources and systematic reviews of relevant literature, we will compile evidence-based recommendations for policies and interventions that would feasibly and efficiently lead Wisconsin to become “the healthiest state.” Throughout the project, we are connecting with a variety of stakeholders and, in the final stages, will expend significant effort on the dissemination of our findings in forms that will best serve the needs of Wisconsin policy makers and opinion leaders.
Core Research Activities

**Wisconsin County Health Rankings.** Annual review of county level population health indices including determinants and outcomes, with rankings that allow comparison with other counties and progress over time. The third annual report was issued in November 2005 (see sidebar).

**Health Disparities Assessment.** Ongoing examination of geographical and temporal variations in associations among mortality, race and educational attainment using Wisconsin death certificate data. Methods for characterizing disparities in Wisconsin populations are also under study.

**Quality Assessment.** Data collection and analysis for Wisconsin’s HMO Diabetes Quality Initiative. Participation as advisor to the Wisconsin Hospital Association Quality Steering Committee and the Wisconsin Health Information Organization initiatives.
• **The Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute** — This joint venture of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and the Medical College of Wisconsin, is co-directed by UW’s Patrick Remington, MD, MPH and MCW’s Peter Layde, MD, MSc. Its mission is to build skills and leadership capacity within the state’s public health workforce, broadly defined as those working to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin. The Leadership Institute’s first program, the Community Teams program, was launched in January of 2006. All educational offerings are designed to prepare leaders who are ready to engage in innovative community health improvement activities that effectively protect and promote the health of the people of Wisconsin.

• **Population Health Practice Fellowship Program** — This two-year fellowship program provides up to five recent masters level graduates each year with service and training opportunities in community based, non-profit, governmental and health service organizations. The primary goal of the Fellowship Program is to develop the next generation of public health practitioners skilled in planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health programs. Fellows are currently located in public health departments in Milwaukee and La Crosse as well as the American Cancer Society and the Division of Public Health. The Fellowship Program is funded by the Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future.

• **Service Learning for Students** — The Institute serves as a population health ‘laboratory’ for learning for MPH, graduate, medical students, residents, and medical fellows. The students apply their skills to real-world issues and, in turn, have an opportunity to publish results as Issue Briefs, in the Wisconsin Medical Journal, or in a national publication.
Institute staff members regularly engage with colleagues and partners in programs, applied research, program evaluation, committees, consulting, proposal development and other activities. These partnerships, both funded and unfunded, are with entities in the public and private sector as well as in other departments and centers within the University. Following is a selected list of organizations with which Institute staff collaborated and/or consulted in 2005.

Public/Governmental Agencies

- Wisconsin Department of Health & Family Services
  - Division of Public Health
  - Division of Disability and Elder Services
- Wisconsin Legislative Council
- Wisconsin Department of Corrections
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds
- National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Sawyer County Department of Health and Human Services

Private and Not-for-Profit Agencies

- Alliance Employer Health Care Cooperative and Alliance Foundation
- Aurora Health Care, Inc.
- Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc.
- Medical College of Wisconsin
- Mental Health Association of Milwaukee
- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- United Way of Dane County, WI
- UW Medical Foundation
- Wisconsin Education Association
- Wisconsin Hospital Association
- Wisconsin Medical Society
- Wisconsin Nursing Association
- Intertribal Council of Michigan
- Wisconsin Association of Drug Court Professionals

The “Wisconsin Idea” is to connect the University with the State of Wisconsin.
Other University of Wisconsin Departments and Centers

• Center for Study of Cultural Diversity in Health Care
• Department of Sociology
• School of Human Ecology-- Family Impact Seminars
• Prevention Science Program
• Health Sciences Minimal Risk Institutional Review Board
• La Follette School of Public Affairs
• UW Comprehensive Cancer Center
• UW Center for Teaching and Instruction
• UW Native American Health Work Group
• Wisconsin Longitudinal Survey: Access to Care Project.

Institute staff participated in a number of externally funded applied research projects and program evaluation beyond those listed under “Core Research Activities.” In 2005, these included the following:

• Continued analysis of health services data on diabetes care, in which we collect and analyze HEDIS data from 18 HMOs in the state, as part of the “Wisconsin Diabetes Quality Improvement Project.”

• Planned and implemented a project to assess the impact of the Diabetes Quality Improvement Project in participating community health centers

• Analyzed regional variation in health care costs/expenditures.

• Conducted stakeholder interviews, prepared strategic assessment, and facilitated early development of the payer-purchaser-provider data collaboration known as the Wisconsin Health Information Organization.

• Provided review, analysis, consultation to colleagues and response to media on the federal Government Accounting Office (GAO) report on Federal Employee Benefits Plan (FEBP) premiums and the national rankings of Wisconsin health care prices.

• Completed research and a final report to the Wisconsin Medical Society, and a draft manuscript examining the relationship between state rankings of health care quality and the rate of medical examining board disciplinary actions.

• Began a National Institute on Drug Abuse funded study of alternative “recovery” high schools providing continuing care to students with substance abuse problems.

• In collaboration with the UW Comprehensive Cancer Center, continued to work on evaluation and surveillance studies for the Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Control Program.

• Assisted the Department of Public Instruction ( DPI) in evaluation of several programs funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention and in promotion of physical activity.

• Conducted several projects assessing outcomes of substance abuse treatment in correctional settings, including a prison-based therapeutic community and a county drug court.

• Continued two federally-funded (CDC and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration) projects evaluating efforts to prevent Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

• Completed a collaborative project with Department of Public Health (DPH) researching evidence-based practices in support of the priorities in the State Health Plan and established a website for use by Wisconsin’s public health community. A survey to assess progress in implementation of the plan was also fielded.
American Indian Partnership Programs

Institute staff members have lead responsibility, on behalf of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, for building and maintaining research and service initiatives with Wisconsin’s American Indian communities and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC). The following projects were ongoing or completed in 2005.

• Continued to convene and lead UW Native American Health Work Group and represent the UW School of Medicine and Public Health in the Native American Research Center for Health (NARCH) partnership with the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council.

• Held the second annual UW American Indian Health and Science Symposium, which attracted approximately 100 American Indian students to campus from throughout the state.

• Provided evaluation services for the NARCH Student Development Program and the new Middle School Component (part of the Tribal Academic Partnership for American Indian Health, funded by the Wisconsin Partnership Fund). Developed evaluation plans and student survey instruments, summarized student feedback forms, and presented evaluation workshops.

• Provided consultation to the Great Lakes EpiCenter for their evaluation plan and customer satisfaction survey.

• Continued to evaluate Honoring Our Children, a project at GLITC designed to reduce infant mortality and improve maternal and child health in eight American Indian tribal communities. Presented annual data reports on performance measures, provided staff training on data quality, and assisted with grant applications.

• Continued to provide evaluation services for the Native American HIV/AIDS Prevention Program at GLITC, including instrument development, summaries of training feedback forms, a survey to obtain elders’ input on youth prevention, and a needs assessment.

• Provided consultation on the process evaluation of Healthy Children Strong Families, an obesity prevention program for 3 to 5 year old children in 3 tribal communities, funded by the Wisconsin Partnership Fund to GLITC and the Department of Family Medicine.

• Attained funding for the Red Cliff Juvenile Justice project from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
American Indian Health: The Institute’s Role

The UW School of Medicine and Public Health, within its planning documents for the Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future, articulates a partnership with Wisconsin’s American Indian tribal communities.

We have joined with the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council and Wisconsin’s tribal and urban Indian clinics through the NIH- and Indian Health Service-supported Great Lakes Native American Research Center for Health (GLNARCH). A joint Memorandum of Understanding governs this relationship, based on collaboration, tribal self-determination, and respect for tribal sovereignty.

This partnership includes several research projects, ranging from preventing childhood obesity to cancer surveillance, and a student development component aimed toward bringing American Indian youth into the sciences and health professions. Beyond the GLNARCH, the Institute provides technical assistance, training, and evaluation services for programs that address maternal and child health, substance abuse, and the delivery of health care services.

Our annual American Indian Health and Science Symposium offers a statewide gathering to advance and raise the visibility of many excellent research, education, and service projects involving the UW and Wisconsin’s American Indian communities.
Products and Publications

**Issue Briefs**

These topical publications are a major core product of the Institute. 2005 Briefs include:

Byrd, DR*, Friedsam, D, Remington, PL “Healthiest Wisconsin 2010 and Health Disparities: How do the state’s goals relate to Wisconsin’s minority populations?” August 2005 (Vol. 6 No 4)


Kempf, AM*, Kindig, DA, Peppard, PE, Remington, PL. “How Do Wisconsin’s Health Outcomes Compare to those of Other Midwest States?” June 2005 (Vol. 6 No 2)

Landis, M*, Ahrens, D, Remington, P. “Improving Student Nutrition through School Vending Machine Policies” March 2005 (Vol. 6 No 1)


**State Health Policy Forums Papers**


**Journal Publications**


**Reports, Presentations and Other Publications**


Friedsam, DA. Ranking of the Rate of State Medical Examining Board Disciplinary Actions: Does it relate to measures of medical quality? April 15, 2005. Submitted to the Wisconsin Medical Society in completion of a research contract.


* = student or trainee
2005 Monthly Seminars

March 7:
Senator Judy Robson, RN, MS, Democratic Leader, Wisconsin State Senate, “Health Policy in Wisconsin 2005-06: Prospects and Pitfalls.”

April 4:
Louise Trubek, JD, Clinical Professor of Law and Director, Health Law Project, University of Wisconsin Law School, “New Governance and Healthcare: Perspectives on Wisconsin Policy Choices.” along with David Riemer, Director of the Wisconsin Health Project.

April 18:
Sharon Dunwoody, PhD, Evjue Bascom Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication and Associate Dean for Social Studies in the UW Graduate School, “Counter-Intuition: The Mass Media and Communicating Health Risks.”

October 3:
Bevan Baker, Director, City of Milwaukee Health Department. “Reducing Infant Mortality in Milwaukee.”

November 7:
Robert J. McDermott, PhD, Professor and Co-Director, Florida Prevention Research Center, University of South Florida, “Community-Based Participatory Research to Identify Influences on Youth Alcohol Use: The Sarasota County Demonstration”

December 5:
Stephen Hargarten, MD, MPH, Director of the Injury Research Center, Medical College of Wisconsin, “To Be or Not to Be: Case Studies in Injury Research and Advocacy.”

Conferences


Transforming Health Care and the Role of the University. November 10-11, 2005. Monona Terrace, Madison, WI. Over 250 participants. Produced in collaboration with the UW Medical Foundation and the Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future.

Health Policy Forums

Prioritizing Prevention Investments. May 26, 2005. 45 participants. MATC, 211 N Carroll St.


Executive Committee

Left to right: G. Ridley, K. May, P. Remington, R. Cisler, D. Dresang, D. Kindig, D.P. Moberg

Ron Cisler
Director
Center for Urban Population Health

Susan Goelzer
Chair and Professor
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Katharyn May
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Arthur Reynolds
Professor
School of Social Work

Gordon Ridley (Chair)
Senior Associate Dean for Administration and Finance
Institute Staff

Left to right: Front Row - A. Bergum, D. Friedsam, J. Knutson, B. Hill, B. Booske, P. Ore, C. FitzGerald

Institute Staff
David M. Ahrens, M.S., Researcher
David Austin, JD, Director, State Forums Partnership
Alison Bergum, MPA, Assistant Researcher
Bridget Booske, PhD, Senior Scientist
Marion Ceraso, MHS, Senior Health Policy Analyst
Nancy Eberle, MPH, Assistant Researcher
Charlanne FitzGerald, MPH, Researcher
Donna Friedsam, MPH, Assoc. Dir. for Health Policy
Barbara L. Hill, MSSW, Researcher
Amanda Riemer Jovaag, MS, Assistant Researcher
David Kindig, MD, PhD, Senior Advisor
Judy Knutson, Program Assistant
David Lunney, PT, Research Specialist
D. Paul Moberg, PhD, Deputy Director
Robert Stone Newsom, PhD, Senior Scientist
Peggy Ore, MS, RN, Sr. Outreach Specialist
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Paul Peppard, PhD, Senior Epidemiologist
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Casey Schumann
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Melissa Umland
Peter Vila
Daniel Zank

Population Health Practice Fellows
DeAnnah Byrd, MPH
David Garcia, MPH
Benjamen Jones, MPH
Matthew Landis, MS
PaChia Vue, MPH
During 2005, the Institute had management responsibilities for a total budget of approximately $2.25 million. This funding was from a diverse mix of sources, including the Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future, Wisconsin state agencies, federal agencies, core funds from the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, and several foundation and other non-profit sources. The following graph summarizes funding source as percent of total:

**State Agencies**

**Wisconsin Division of Public Health ($311,000)**
- System-Based Diabetes Prevention and Control Program
- Evidence-Based Practices and Monitoring for Healthiest Wisconsin 2010
- WI Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Prevention Initiative

**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction ($83,000)**
- HIV/AIDS/STI Abstinence Programs
- Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Data Improvement Project
- Evaluation of Movin’ Schools Program

**Federal Funding**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ($200,000)**
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Prevention and Surveillance

**National Institute on Drug Abuse, NIH ($100,000)**
- Recovery Schools as Continuing Care for Adolescent Substance Abuse

**Wisconsin Partnership Programs ($960,000)**
- Population Health Fellowship Program
- Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute
- Making Wisconsin the Healthiest State
- Tribal Academic Partnership for American Indian Health
- Healthy Children Strong Families
- Wisconsin Injury Prevention Coalitions (subcontract from MCW’s program)

**Foundations and other Nonprofit Sources**

**Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council ($130,000)**
- Native American Research Centers for Health
- Honoring Our Children—Healthy Start

**The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation ($97,000)**
- Evaluating the Impact of the National Tobacco Quitline Network (via Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention)
- Health Policy Forums

**Sawyer County, WI ($30,000)**
- Evaluation of Sawyer County Drug Court

**United Way of Dane County ($50,000)**
- Healthcare Access Pilot—Evaluation Component