Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

Aletha Y. Akers
MD, MPH, FACOG

Faculty Scholar

Aletha Y. Akers is a faculty scholar and a former faculty member at PolicyLab at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). In June 2020, Dr. Akers began her new position as the vice president for research at Guttmacher Institute. In this role, she leads the Institute's team of scientists as they carry out research to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights both nationally and globally.

During her time at PolicyLab, Dr. Akers' research focused on improving reproductive health outcomes among young women by reducing teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection rates. Her projects included an examination on how sexual risk behaviors varied among adolescents of different weight profiles; a clinical trial of a health coaching intervention to improve contraceptive continuation among adolescent women in the U.S. and in the Dominican Republic; a clinical trial examining the effect of paracervical nerve blocks on pain experienced during insertion of intrauterine contraceptive devices among adolescent and young adult women; an assessment of young women's attitudes towards long-acting reversible contraceptive devices among in Botswana; online strategies for improving parental-child communication about sex; and clinical quality improvement initiatives to increase contraceptive use among adolescents using teratogenic medications. Dr. Akers also served as the faculty lead of PolicyLab's Adolescent Health & Well-being portfolio and for PolicyLab's Diversity Taskforce.

At CHOP, Dr. Akers served as the inaugural medical director of Adolescent Gynecology Consultative Services in the Craig-Dalsimer Division of Adolescent Medicine. She founded and directed a complex family planning clinic at CHOP that provides comprehensive contraceptive services, including the placement and removal of contraceptive devices, for young women, particularly those with chronic medical problems.

Dr. Akers received bachelor's degrees in chemistry and biology, with honors, from Bryn Mawr College, her medical degree from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and her Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill. She completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Michigan. While at UNC-Chapel Hill, Dr. Akers completed the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Program, a health services research fellowship.



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