Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

New PolicyLab Pilot Grant Project Awardees

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Editor's Note: This blog post has been updated on September 1, 2020 to reflect PolicyLab's newest pilot grant recipient.

Earlier this year, we introduced our new pilot grant program, in collaboration with our sister center Clinical Futures, to support Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) researchers in conducting clinical effectiveness or policy-oriented health services research. We also announced our first three PolicyLab awardees and their innovative one-year projects in January, which you can read more about by visiting the **new pilot grant page** on our website.

Today, we are excited to reveal our two new PolicyLab awarded projects, which will begin this month!

1) LOW-INCOME PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PHILADELPHIA BEVERAGE TAX: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Childhood obesity continues to be a significant public health issue, specifically among children in low socioeconomic status groups. Policy initiatives that target childhood obesity have the potential to improve health outcomes, yet they are only effective if they are viewed as relevant and acceptable to specific target populations. Sugar sweetened beverage (SSB) taxes are a promising public health approach for combatting childhood obesity, but taxes such as the Philadelphia Beverage Tax has been criticized for having a disproportionate effect on families from low-income backgrounds.

To further explore, Dr. Emma Edmondson, a fellow in the Academic General Pediatrics Fellowship administered through Clinical Futures, and a fellow in the division of general pediatrics at CHOP, alongside her mentors PolicyLab researchers Drs. Senbagam Virudachalam and Emily Gregory, aim to understand the perceptions of low-income parents in regards to the fairness and the perceived effectiveness of the tax by conducting one-on-one semi structured interviews with low-income parents of children, ages 2 to 11 years, in Philadelphia. The team hopes that results from this study could help inform Philadelphia City government and other jurisdictions considering similar policies.

2) Toward Understanding the Political Determinants of Health: An Analysis of the Impacts of Sanctuary Immigration Policies on Latinx Birth Outcomes

Immigration policies significantly affect many families in the U.S., yet little is known about the consequences of these policies for child health. Some communities have set up sanctuary cities/areas, which limit local law enforcement collaboration with federal immigration enforcement, but we've yet to fully understand how this policy may provide protective health benefits to residents, particularly those at greatest risk of detention and/or deportation.

In response, PolicyLab researchers Drs. Diana Montoya-Williams and Katherine Yun are collaborating with Dr. Robin Ortiz to map and describe sanctuary areas as they relate to Latinx communities and assess whether they are associated with improved birth outcomes—such as lower rates of preterm births and low birth weight—in Latina women. The researchers hope that findings from this study will inform immigration policy at local and national levels and provide innovative geocoded database tools and an agenda for future research aimed at evaluating the links between immigration policy and population health. These findings, in turn, can contribute to understanding immigration and immigration status as a social, but also political, determinant of health.

A big congratulations to our wonderful researchers—we are very excited to learn what they discover through their pilot grant projects. We will have more details to share in regards to these two new research projects soon on our new pilot grant landing page on the PolicyLab website. Be sure to also visit Clinical Futures' website to read about their newly awarded projects.

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