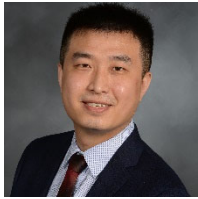




Weekly Newsletter January 21-24, 2025

PQHS NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS



Research Methods Meeting

Wednesday, February 5th, 10:00-11:00 AM

Title: LLM for Clinical Evidence Retrieval and Summarization

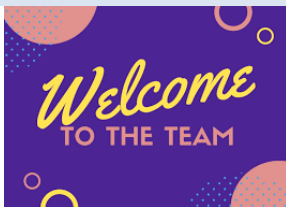
Presenter: Yifan Peng, Ph.D., FACMI, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Population Health Sciences at Weill Cornell Medicine

Description: In medicine, our understanding of diseases, treatments, and preventive measures is perpetually advancing. Despite this, the existing framework of evidence-based medicine (EBM) faces formidable challenges from information overload, as no clinician can catch up with the explosive publication paces and lacks a robust mechanism for the continuous integration of new evidence. The advent of Generative AI, exemplified by large language models (LLMs) signifies a potentially transformative development in the methodologies employed to collect, appraise, disseminate, and interact with clinical evidence. In this talk, I will discuss our research on addressing the "lost-in-the-middle" issue in evidence retrieval and the fine-tuning of LLMs for effective medical evidence summarization.

Bio: Dr. Peng's main research interests include BioNLP and medical image analysis. He has published in major AI and healthcare informatics venues, including ACL, NAACL, CVPR, and MICCAI, as well as medical venues, including Nature Medicine, Nucleic Acids Research, npj Digital Medicine, and JAMIA. His research has been funded by federal agencies, including NIH and NSF and industries such as Amazon and Google. He received the AMIA New Investigator Award in 2023. He was elected as a fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics (ACMI) in 2024.

To join the meeting click [here](#).

WELCOME TO PQHS



Welcome to PQHS! We are excited to announce that **Tanya McCallum, Kathleen Whalen and Jenna Fuld** will be joining PQHS reporting to Rosemarie. We look forward to the contributions and expertise they will bring to the team!

Tonya McCallum (Tavares) has 15+ years of experience in addiction science research. She holds a BA (Psychology) from the University of RI and an MS (Behavioral and Social Sciences) from Brown University. Since 2018, she has worked to address the opioid and stimulant crises with the Opioid Response Network. Her work spans pharmacotherapy treatments for alcohol use and smoking cessation, genetic factors in addiction, and culturally adapted treatments. Her research also focuses on evidence-based practices, reducing the research-to-practice gap, coping and resilience, acculturative stress, and addressing disparities, especially those with criminal legal involvement. She enjoys making memories, big and small, with her husband and their two daughters.

Kathy Whalen has worked in the addictions field as a Technology Transfer Specialist for the Opioid Response Network since 2019. She received her BSN in 1981 from SUNY Downstate Medical Center College of Nursing. Prior to her work with the Opioid Response Network, worked as a pediatric nurse for 15 years. Kathy's primary area interest is adolescent and transitional age substance use and integrated care. Kathy enjoys a good cup of coffee and traveling with her husband and their four daughters.

Jenna Fuld has worked in the addictions and behavioral health field for nearly a decade. She received her BA in Psychology from Roger Williams University in 2014. Prior to her role as a Technology Transfer Specialist for the Opioid Response Network, Jenna's had worked in inpatient care and managed an addiction medicine fellowship. Jenna's primary areas of interest include novel treatment approaches for opioid use disorder and dismantling addiction related stigma. Jenna enjoys traveling and experiencing new cuisine.

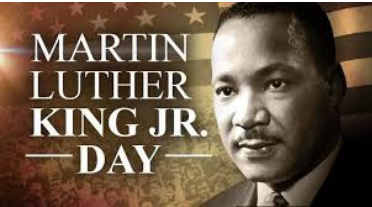
PQHS SHOUTOUT



Prevention Research Center awarded new five-year grant to promote public health projects - The Prevention Research Center at UMass Chan Medical School, led by [Stephenie C. Lemon](#) and [Milagros C. Rosal](#), received a five-year CDC grant to promote health. Projects include the Neighborhood Connect initiative in Worcester to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, and the Advancing Research in Immunization Services Center for Rural Vaccination, led by [Grace W. Ryan](#), focusing on vaccine uptake through peer messaging. The center also co-leads national initiatives on physical activity and public health policy, partnering with institutions like the University of Illinois Chicago and West Virginia University.


Click [here](#) for full story.


PQHS HAPPENINGS




Join Us for a Day of Service in Honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.!

The PQHS Diversity Action Committee (DAC) invites all department members to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy of service by volunteering together at the [Yes We Care Food Pantry](#).

 **Date:** Friday, January 31st

 **Time:** 11:30 AM – 3:30 PM

 **Location:** Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church, 55 Illinois Street, Worcester, MA

As part of the UMass Chan Volunteer Initiative, your service hours will be counted as **Paid Time Off (PTO)**. To participate, please:

1 **Register** using this form [here](#).

2 **On the volunteer date, open the email and confirm that you volunteered or did not volunteer.** The email will come from Microsoft Power Automate on behalf of the UMass Chan Government Relations.

2 **Record your time** as "VSL" in PeopleSoft after the event. OR, if you report your time with PQHS, let the administrative staff know that you used 4 hours of PTO on that date.

If you have any questions, please contact [Amy Borg](#) for assistance. Let's come together to make a difference in our community and embody Dr. King's spirit of service.

We look forward to serving with you!

— **The PQHS Diversity Action Committee (DAC)**

UMASS CHAN REMINDER

Holiday Calendar for UMass Chan Medical School

Remaining Holiday Schedule for 2025:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Monday, January 20th
- Presidents Day – Monday, February 17th
- Patriots' Day – Monday, April 21st
- Memorial Day – Monday, May 26th
- Juneteenth National Independence Day – Thursday, June 19th
- Independence Day – Friday, July 4th
- Labor Day – Monday, September 1st
- Indigenous Peoples' Day – Monday, October 13th
- Veterans Day – Tuesday, November 11th
- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 27th
- Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 28th
- Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24th
- Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25th



PQHS Weekly will be sent to all members of PQHS on Monday mornings. The intent is to provide a snapshot of what is going on that week in PQHS and to share our faculty and staff activities with the department. We depend on you to provide the items we need to share. Please send suggestions of events, faculty invited seminars & talks, honors, student thesis presentations, and news – new babies born! – to Kellie (kellie.armstrong@umassmed.edu) & Sarah (sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu) by Friday each week.