CENTER FOR POPULATION HEALTH AND AGING

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Texas A&M Center for Population Health and Aging (CPHA) was formally recognized as a Texas A&M Board of Regents Center on November 9, 2016, building upon more than a decade of aging-related research, education, and practice projects under the predecessor Program on Healthy Aging.

CPHA addresses complex issues facing our aging nation with measurable, replicable, and cost-effective solutions achieved through a multi-sectorial public health and aging approach. Our collaborative strategy includes attention to campus, community, clinical, and corporate (C4) perspectives. This C4 collaborative approach breaks down typically 'siloed' sectors to promote meaningful, ongoing partnerships that reach and engage the public with needed programs, services, and resources.

With a goal of making healthy aging the 'new normal,' CPHA provides a centralized hub to address the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly aging world. We strive to change stereotypes about aging and encourage a paradigm shift so that healthcare institutions view aging as more than inevitable sickness and healthy aging as commonplace. Building upon evidence-based practices, CPHA activities have focused on social, behavioral, economic, policy, environmental, and technological innovations that positively affect aging individuals, their families, healthcare professionals, and communities.

FOCAL AREAS

Data

Education & Training

Evidence-based Health Welnness Programs

Health Care

Technologial Innovations

Economics & Policy

VISION

To continue as a recognized Center of Excellence for promoting population health and successful aging throughout the life-course that will improve the lives of Texans and others throughout the nation and world.

MISSION

To promote population health and successful aging through innovations in research, education, and practice, that examine clinical social, behavioral, economic, environmental, and technological solutions linking academic and real-world health care and community settings.

DIRECTION

With over $28 million of funding attributed to CPHA since 2016, we have engaged in over 35 projects since 2016 and 70 projects since 2001. Leadership is continuously seeking new funding and partnership opportunities. Given the majority of health happens outside of clinical settings, CPHA recognizes the need to incorporate and leverage community-based efforts and initiatives with existing medical practice. By establishing referral patterns and multi-faceted communities of care, we can provide the public with multiple 'touch points' to empower them to appropriately avoid risk, self-manage their health, make positive lifestyle choices, and advocate for healthier communities. We are rethinking health.

TEXAS A&M HEALTH
Center for Population Health and Aging

CURRENT SELECT CENTER INITIATIVES

The Rural Moonshot Program

As part of a multi-project Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Moonshot Initiative, we are leading a diabetes intervention project to address the staggering burden of diabetes in Texas, building upon infrastructure already assembled through Healthy South Texas. Specific aims include: determining the effectiveness of different diabetes self-management approaches on self-care behaviors and clinical outcomes; assessing the impact of the different approaches on health care utilization and associated costs; conducting a process evaluation of the feasibility, usability, and adherence to each intervention protocol; and recommending best practices that can be both scaled and sustained over time.

Opioid Taskforce and Project E.C.H.O.

The U.S. is facing an opioid epidemic, with more than 130 Americans dying each day from opioid overdose. Such a dire issue requires a multifaceted, collaborative strategy between the medical community, first responders, treatment providers and community organizations. That's the premise of our Opioid Task Force, an interprofessional group of scholars and practitioners, who are intent on combating this growing public health emergency through research, education and community outreach. EMPOWER (Enhancing Mental Health Practice, Organization and Workforce through Education and Readiness) enables providers from all disciplines and locations to build their expertise and increase their workforce capacity to implement high-quality, evidence-based care around opioid use disorder prevention, screening, treatment and recovery.

Education and Training

In 2020, CPHA launched an online training site, Enlighten Together (cphatraining.com), to host distance education courses and curricula. This site complements CPHA's research and programmatic efforts by providing high-quality and interactive trainings about a variety of health topics. In the spirit of our collaborative C4 (community, clinical, corporate, campus) strategy, these trainings can be used across sectors to enhance knowledge and skills among the population health and aging workforce. The growing set of offerings on the site can help organizations and individuals: (1) obtain continuing education units (CEUs); (2) be trained and certified to lead initiatives; (3) get on-boarded for specific projects and initiatives; and (4) train to better serve communities and clients.

Texas Research, Analytics and Innovations Lab (TRAIL)

(Funded 2020–2025)

The Texas Research, Analytics, and Innovations Lab (TRAIL), housed within CPHA, serves as a centralized data repository to advance research, practice, and policy related to population health and aging. Data sources include those from government, health care, and industry. This large and valuable data resource will allow us to strategically engage our ~90 CPHA Faculty Affiliates (and those within the School of Public Health) to access the data to fuel grant submissions, publications, and conference presentations. In addition to the indirect costs generated from extramural funding, the TRAIL value add is enticing for partnership development, sponsorship, and donors. TRAIL provides a necessary infrastructure to obtain, manage, and coordinate access to datasets as well as orchestrate research and programmatic activities. The value proposition for TRAIL is vast and expansive, which will support faculty, post-doctoral fellows, and students. The TRAIL infrastructure is made possible by a non-endowed donation of approximately $1.6M by STATinMED Research.

GOALS

- Identify and solve research problems and associated factors affecting the lives of older Americans

- Test and disseminate best practices on innovative programs and healthy environments for older adults

- Build coalitions with community, state, and national partners who can help address the needs of older adults

- Develop interdisciplinary programs of gerontological education and practice

CPHA TEAM

Marcia G. Ory, *Founding Director*
Matthew Lee Smith, *Co-Director*
Ashley Wilson, *Assistant Director*
Tiffany Bond, *Operations Manager*

Brittany Badillo, *Program Coordinator*
Keri Carpenter, *Project Manager*
Daunte Cauley, *Program Coordinator*
Wendy Creighton, *Registered Nurse*
Tara Foster, *Project Manager*
Analisa Garza, *Program Assistant*
Sagar Jani, *Research Associate*
Lauren Jenkins, *Mktg. & Comm. Manager*
Sayah Lee, *Research Assistant*
Chinelo Nsobundu, *Postdoc. Research Assoc.*
Ninfa Peña-Purcell, *Research Scientist*
Tiffany Sodolak, *Senior Admin. Coordinator*