UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center: Partnering to Achieve Optimal Health among Worcester Residents

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Our Mission

To establish community, public health, health care and academic capacity to engage in equitable research partnerships for conducting applied public health research targeting physical activity, healthy eating, obesity and associated chronic conditions among Greater Worcester area residents.

Why Focus on Obesity in Greater Worcester?

Obesity is a concern in Central Massachusetts. In Worcester, obesity rates among elementary school children and adults exceed state averages and fall short of the Healthy People 2020 target. The Worcester Division of Public Health (WDPH) prioritizes healthy eating, physical activity, and obesity as concerns, and targets them in the Great Worcester Health Improvement Plan.

Research Areas

Health Equity

Obesity & Mental Health

Worksite Health Promotion

Optimal Health

Child & Adolescent Health

Built Environment & Policy

Community-Clinical Linkages

Research Examples

UMass
Stephenie Lemon, PhD
Milagros C. Rosal, PhD
What helps women lose weight gained during pregnancy?
The Fresh Start Trial

Community
UMass MDPH, WDPH, 3 health centers
What state and local policies influence physical activity?

UMass
Stephenie Lemon, PhD
What helps adolescents lose weight?
School Nurse Intervention and Exercise Program for Overweight Teens

Community
Lori Pbert, PhD
School Health Clinics

Our Team

We are part of the Division of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine, Department of Medicine, UMass Worcester. We build partnerships between university-based researchers & community agencies for health promotion efforts. Our Principles of Community Engaged Research and our community-academic Steering Committee guide our work.

Steering Committee members include:
- Joanne Calista
  Central MA Area Health Education Center
- Derek Brindisi
  Worcester Division of Public Health
- Clara Savage, Common Pathways, CHNA 8
- Antonia McGuire
  Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Ctr.
- Cathy O’Connor
  MA Department of Public Health
- Stephanie Lemon (PI), Milagros Rosal (Co-PI), Suzanne Cashman, Wenjun Li, Judith Ockene, Sherry Pagoto, Lori Pbert, Monica Wang, Amy Borg, Barbara Estabrook, Karen Ronayne
  UMass Medical School
- Monica Lowell, UMass Memorial Health Care

Visit our website: www.umassmedmed.prc

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