A Guide for Partnering with BHN Community Health Centers to Support Research Engagement

Updated: Oct 2024
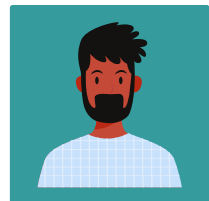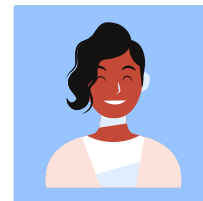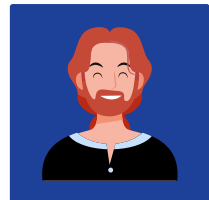
Boston HealthNet is an integrated delivery network of 12 Community Health Centers which are affiliated with Boston Medical Center Health System

Each Health Center is an independent FWA-assured institution and can be added to INSPIR studies with BMC or BU Medical Campus Principal Investigators.
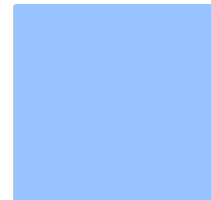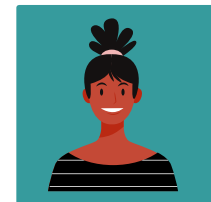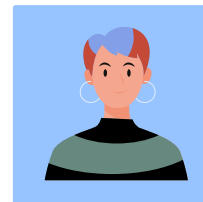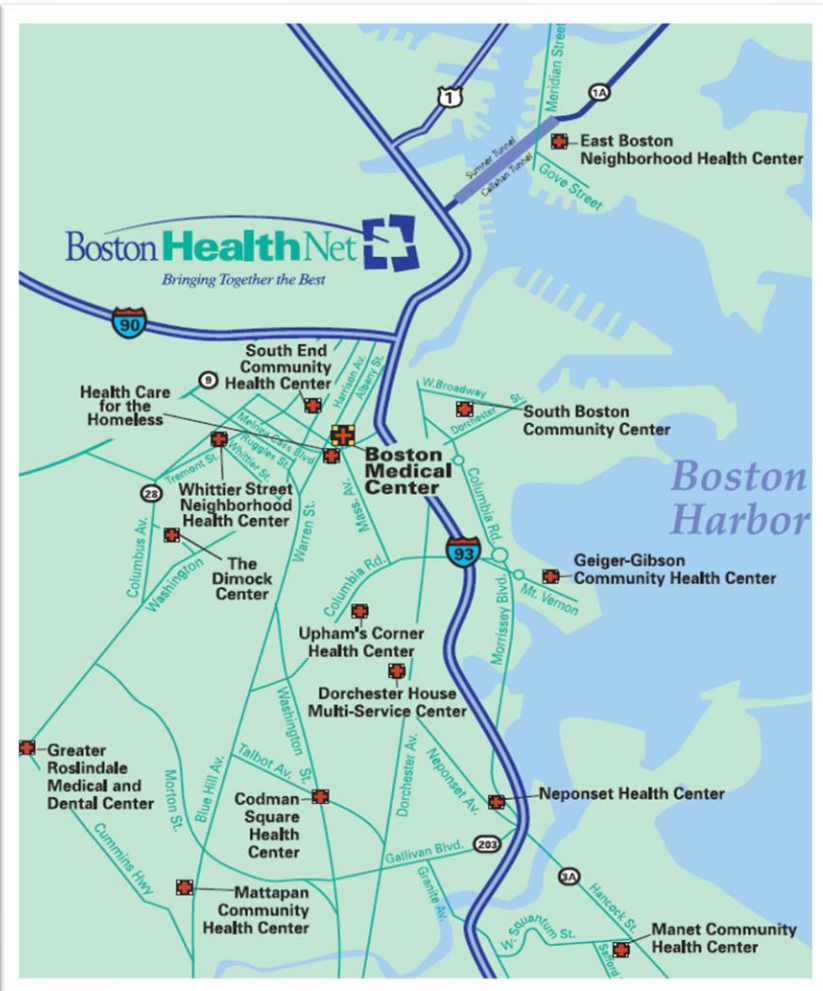

Participants

Boston Health Care for the Homeless

Codman Square Health Center

DotHouse Health

East Boston Neighborhood Health Center

Greater Roslindale Medical & Dental*

Harbor Health Services, Inc.

Harvard Street

Manet Community Health Center

Mattapan Community Health Center

South Boston Community Health Center

Upham's Corner Health Center

Whittier Street Health Center

*Component of BMC FWA

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Steps for Partnering with Health Centers in Research

BHN Guiding Principles and Rules of Engagement

Health Center Research Bios (in alpha order)

Steps at a Glance for Partnering with Health Centers in Research Projects

Scan now to view the Project Request Form

Step 1

Identify potential Health Center partner(s)

Review Health Center Bios which include:

- Research Liaison contact
- Clinic Information & Demographics
- Research Priorities & Methodology

Step 2

Complete Project Request Form

- Submit ASAP, at least 1 month prior to grant submission
- Review guiding principles and rules of engagement

Step 3

Engagement with Health Center(s)

Health Center(s) with determine interest (within 2 weeks) and discussions will take place to establish specifics of the partnership.

Step 4

IRB Approval

Health Center(s) will provide the IRB approval letter to be uploaded into the INSPR application.

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I. Utilize the Health Center Bios below to identify potential partner(s)

II. Complete the [BHN Project Request Form](#) to outline your proposed project. This will automatically send an email to the Research Liaison for each Health Center checked in the survey.

- **We ask you complete this form as soon as you have a project in mind**. Ideally 1 month before grant submission.

- Please review Guiding Principles & Rules of Engagement – utilized by CHCs in decision making for research participation

- By including Health Centers in planning, we aim to turn participation into equitable partnership and ensure:

  - Regular and transparent communication

  - Health Center workflow impact and necessary supports are being considered

- Questions populated in the form will depend on which category your project falls under. This question is essential to make sure the appropriate information is collected.

- Categories include:

  - Planning for grant submission and would like to partner with a BHN CHC

  - Funding awarded, but project has not started and would like to partner with a BHN CHC

  - Active research project in which you would like to add an addendum to include a BHN CHC

  - Data only: Request for CHC data use in active research study (to be abstracted from the CDW)

  - Data only: Request for CHC data use in feasibility analysis (to be abstracted from the CDW)

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III. Upon receipt of your submission, the CHC will determine their bandwidth to engage and will be in contact within 2 weeks. Further discussions may take place to establish specifics of the partnership.

- Aggregate count requests, for feasibility analysis, from the Clinical Data Warehouse (CDW) are approved by the BHN Research Data Review Committee and will have a 2 business day turnaround time.

IV. Once the partnership has been established and both parties are in agreement, the CHC will provide a signed Approval Letter for you to submit to the IRB. At that point research activities may begin within the CHC.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Kareem King, CTSI Program Manager of Community Engagement (kking11@bu.edu).

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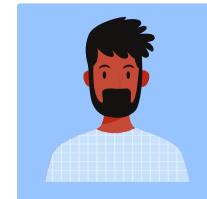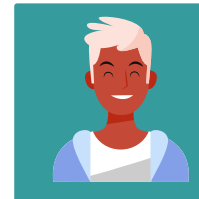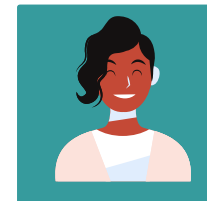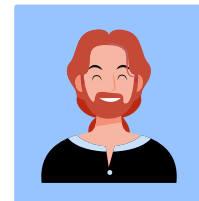
Guiding Principles and Rules of Engagement: *At a Glance*

Outline of the Rules of Engagement

Research Priorities	Regular Communication	Equitable Partners	Potential Benefits
Research is aligned with Health Center priorities	Communication is transparent and regular throughout the research process	Health Centers are adequately supported and treated as equitable partners	Potential benefits to all participants are prioritized and workflow impact is considered
01	02	03	04

Guiding Principles and Rules of Engagement

I — Research is aligned with Health Center priorities

Researcher Role	To be aware of Health Center priorities identified in the CHC bios below	Health Center Role	Review and update CHC bios annually
	Address local relevance of the research		

II — Communication is transparent and regular throughout the research process

Researcher Role	Invite Health Centers to discuss ideas at least 1 month before a research grant submission	Health Center Role	Review requests for research when approached 1 month in advance of a grant submission
	Discuss budget guidelines and award amount		Provide written response on research participation within 2 weeks of receiving requests
	Develop data use and security plan		Allows prep to research quires by CDW analysts for counts that align with priorities
	Define a cadence and method for reporting study progress to the Health Center		

Guiding Principles and Rules of Engagement

III — Health Centers are adequately supported and treated as equitable partners

Researcher Role	Engage health centers in ongoing dialogue about space, time, and other supports required to participate in the project	Health Center Role	Clearly articulate resources needed to partner and participate in the project
	Share resources to support health center participation in the project including leadership and recognition		Consider participating in joint authorship of the project manuscript(s)

IV — Potential benefits to all participants are prioritized and workflow impact is considered

Researcher Role	Consider study methodology where control groups receive some benefit other than compensation, if possible	Health Center Role	Review and update best practices annually
	Allow patients to opt in to be contacted rather than opt out, if possible		
	Consider the feasibility of integrating the study methodology into health center specific workflows and best practices		

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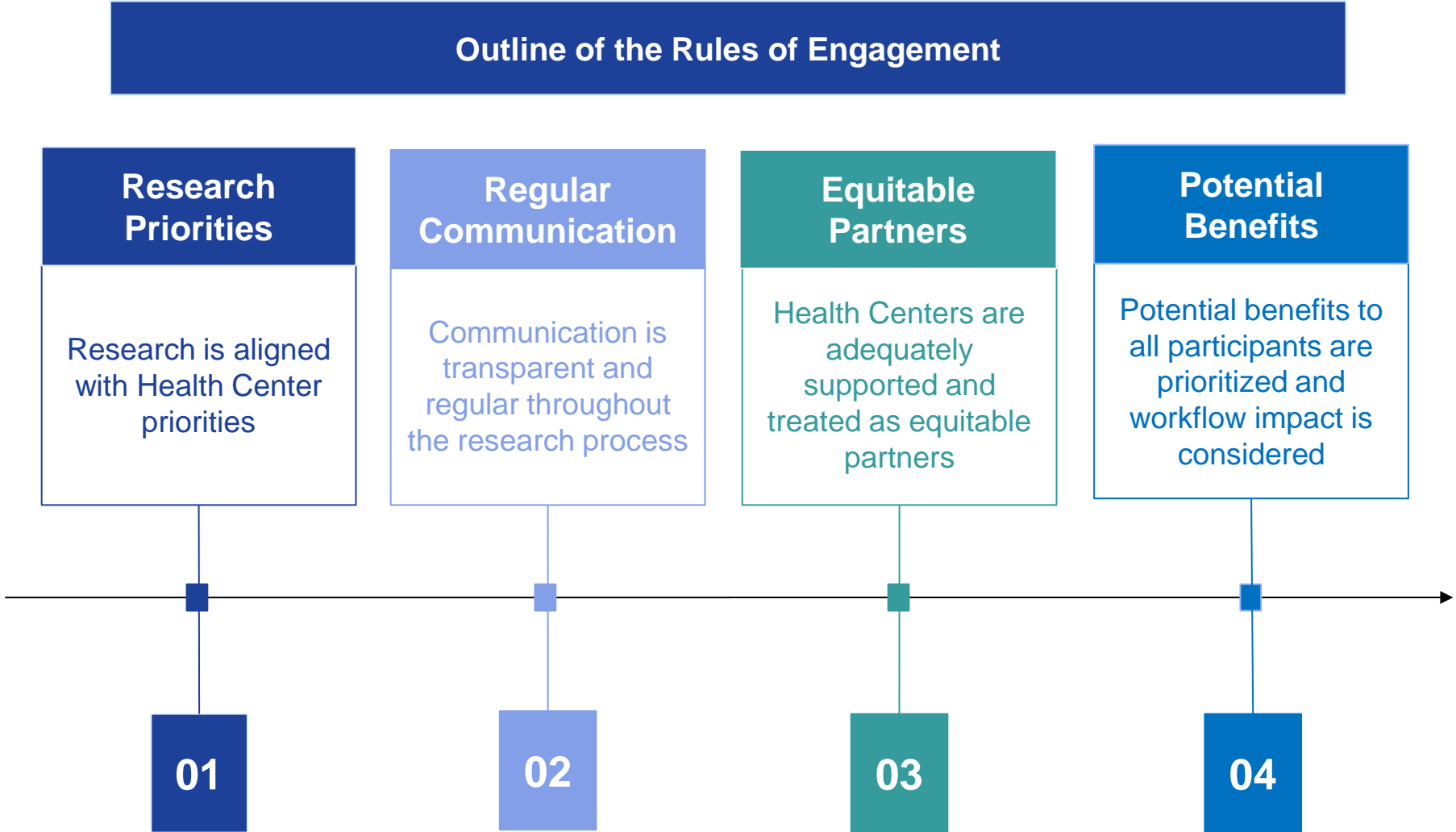Steps for Partnering with Health Centers in Research

BHN Guiding Principles and Rules of Engagement

Health Center Research Bios (in alpha order)

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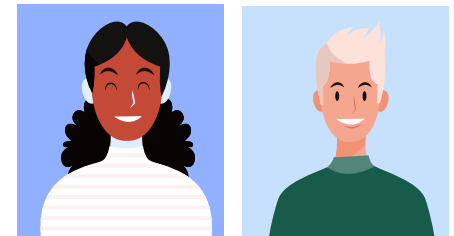|		
Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program	Codman Square Health Center	DotHouse Health
Greater Roslindale Medical & Dental Center	Manet Community Health Center	Mattapan Community Heath Center
NeighborHealth	South Boston Community Health Center	Upham's Corner Health Center

Boston HealthCare for the Homeless Program Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Emily Hall, FNP, MPH (institute@bhchp.org)
CMO	Denise De Las Nueces, MD
Interim CEO	Denise De Las Nueces, MD

Clinic Info

Service Area	Boston & Surrounding Communities	
Number of Sites	40	
Primary Care Patients	10,174	FWA# 00021231
Annual Clinic Visits	97,777	Expiration: 1/14/2026

Research Priority Topics

- Health impacts of homelessness
- SUD including OUD, overdose, polysubstance use, racial and ethnic inequities in SUD care, harm reduction, supervised consumption
- Tobacco use disorder
- HIV including prevention among PWID, med adherence, housing
- HCV
- Public health implications of policies impacting people experiencing homelessness
- Cancer disparities
- Aging and homelessness
- Women, children, and families experiencing homelessness

Patient Demographics

Male	68%	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.1%
Female	32%	Black/African American	39%
Medicaid	66%	White	46.5%
Primary Language not English	13%	Hispanic/Latino	22%
Most Common Languages Spoken	English, Spanish, Haitian Creole		

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://www.bhchp.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

BHCHP has supported and conducted research projects spanning a wide range of methodologies, including retrospective analyses of electronic health record data, cross-sectional surveys, prospective observational studies, clinical trials, and qualitative inquiries.

The proposed methodology should be appropriate to the research question being examined and feasible to execute.

Please note that student-led "scholarly projects" are rarely approved.

Codman Square Health Center Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Angela McLaughlin, MD (angela.mclaughlin@codman.org)
CMO	Renee Crichlow, MD
CEO	Sandra Cotterell, BSN

Clinic Info

Service Area	Dorchester & Surrounding Communities	
Number of Sites	2	
Primary Care Patients	23,616	FWA# 00001457
Annual Clinic Visits	104,080	Exp: 9/19/2029

Research Priority Topics

- Improving systems and delivery of care that promote social and racial health equity

Patient Demographics

Male	41%	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.5%
Female	59%	Black/African American	70.6%
Medicaid	42%	White	6.1%
Primary Language not English	20%	Hispanic/Latino	9.9%
Most Common Languages Spoken	English, Haitian Creole, Spanish		

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://www.codman.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- Engagement with the CHC staff prior to development of the final research methodology whenever possible

- Research that provides health center staff with training, expertise, support or resources that align with our own goals

- Researchers who seek to understand CHC flow in order to develop a process that will enhance flow or outcomes

DotHouse Health Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Angela McLaughlin, MD (angela.mclaughlin@codman.org)
CMO	Monica Vohra, MD
CEO	Michelle Nadow, MPA

Clinic Info

Service Area	Dorchester & Surrounding Communities	
Number of Sites	1	
Primary Care Patients	19,867	FWA# 00008096
Annual Clinic Visits	81,061	Expiration: 9/19/2028

Research Priority Topics

- Coming Soon

Patient Demographics

Male	42%	Asian/Pacific Islander	37.4%
Female	58%	Black/African American	24.5%
Medicaid	43%	White	11.1%
Primary Language not English	48%	Hispanic/Latino	17.8%
Most Common Languages Spoken		Vietnamese, English, Spanish, Cape Verdean Creole	

Link to Full UDS Data Set

http://www.dorchesterhouse.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- Coming Soon

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Greater Roslindale Medical & Dental Center Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Arielle Albert, MHA (Arielle.albert@bmc.org)
CMO	Jennifer Trieu, MD
CEO	Courtney Urick, RN

Clinic Info

Service Area	Roslindale, Hyde Park, West Roxbury	
Number of Sites	1	
Primary Care Patients	7,580	FWA# 00023612
Annual Clinic Visits	32,220	Expiration: 6/4/2025

Research Priority Topics

- **Operations**: treatment cost analysis, wait-time reduction, medical equipment utilization analysis

- **Population Health**: diabetes (A1c), health equity (health access/affordability), needs assessment, cancer prevention, chronic conditions, hypertension, pediatric immunization, COVID-19

- **Behavioral Health**

Patient Demographics

Male	38%	Asian/Pacific Islander	4.24%
Female	36%	Black/African American	39.02%
Medicaid	58%	White	47.47%
Primary Language not English	26%	Hispanic/Latino	16.6%
Most Common Languages Spoken	English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Albanian, Portuguese, Greek		

https://www.roslindale.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- **Study methodologies:** qualitative surveys, focus groups, 1:1 interviews, secondary data analysis (contracted out)

- **Workflow considerations:** integrating SDOH into clinical practice, flowcharts, written-workflows (step-by-step/ if-then statements)

Manet Community Health Center Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Marjanna Barber-Dubois, MPH (mbdubois@manetchc.org)
CMO	Lily Young, MD
CEO	Cynthia Sierra, MA

Clinic Info

Service Area	Quincy, Hull, Taunton, Attleboro	
Number of Sites	6	
Primary Care Patients	20,202	FWA# 00008094
Annual Clinic Visits	75,670	Expiration: 4/22/2021

Research Priority Topics

- Preventative meds
- Cancer screenings
- Vaccine trials
- Chronic disease

Patient Demographics

Male	48%	Asian/Pacific Islander	7.7%
Female	52%	Black/African American	5.6%
Medicaid	35%	White	53.4%
Primary Language not English	47%	Hispanic/Latino	4.9%
Most Common Languages Spoken	Chinese/Mandarin, Portuguese, Arabic, Spanish		

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://www.manetchc.org

Best Practices: Research Methodology

Surveys, action and correctional. Those that involve patients going out to sites, we find patients will do if there is a stipend/incentive.

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Mattapan Community Health Center Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Howard Lanney, MD (lanneyh@matchc.org)
CMO	Aimee Williams, MD
CEO	Guale Valdez, MBA

Clinic Info

Service Area	Mattapan & Surrounding Communities	
Number of Sites	1	
Primary Care Patients	8,510	FWA# 00028888
Annual Clinic Visits	35,701	Expiration: 10/24/2024

Research Priority Topics

- Promoting health equity by increasing our patients' representation in research.
- Improving health outcomes for Black Americans and individuals of Caribbean descent.

Patient Demographics

Male	41%	Asian/Pacific Islander	0.7%
Female	59%	Black/African American	77.8%
Medicaid	45%	White	2.3%
Primary Language not English	11%	Hispanic/Latino	6.3%
Most Common Languages Spoken	Haitian Creole, English, Spanish		

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://www.mattapanchc.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- Data sharing
- Projects with minimal to no extra labor for health center staff

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NeighborHealth Research Bio

NeighborHealth

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Celia Bora, DNP (research@ebnhc.org)
CMO	Julio Mazul, MD
CEO	Greg Wilmot, MBA

Clinic Info

Service Area	East Boston & Surrounding Communities	
Number of Sites	7	
Primary Care Patients	81,886	FWA# 00021553
Annual Clinic Visits		Expiration: 8/20/2029

Research Priority Topics

- Research that seeks to improve system level changes, or develops strategies to improve health equity in disenfranchised communities
- Research addressing implementation of evidence-based practices or clinical practice guidelines

Patient Demographics

Male	44%	Asian/Pacific Islander	1.2%
Female	56%	Black/African American	9.4%
Medicaid	38%	White	18.7%
Primary Language not English	62%	Hispanic/Latino	73.5%
Most Common Languages Spoken		Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Italian, English	

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://neighborhealth.com/en/ & **https://sechc.org/se/**

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- Engagement with EBNHC staff prior to and during the research process to tailor research questions and methodology to meet our patients needs and ensure feasibility
- Research that provides staff with education, resources or supports that align with EBNHC's mission
- Emphasis on community engaged research

South Boston Community Health Center Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	Elizabeth Wolff (elwolff@sbchc.org)
CMO	Nisha Thakrar, MD
CEO	William Halpin

Clinic Info

Service Area	South Boston	
Number of Sites	2	
Primary Care Patients	14,335	FWA# 00029703
Annual Clinic Visits	58,364	Expiration: 6/26/2025

Research Priority Topics

- COVID-19 long term syndromes
- Complex care management
- Population health
- SDOH
- SUD, Alcohol & Tobacco use
- 30 Min Primary Care Visits
- COVID risk reduction

Patient Demographics

Male	44%	Asian/Pacific Islander	2.1%
Female	56%	Black/African American	4.8%
Medicaid	27%	White	54.9%
Primary Language not English	17%	Hispanic/Latino	12.4%
Most Common Languages Spoken	English, Albanian, Spanish		

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://www.sbchc.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- Model for Improvement
- PDSA Cycles
- Observational Study
- Planned Experimentation
- Factorial Analysis

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Upham's Corner Health Center Research Bio

Contact Info

Research Liaison	n/a
CMO	Marjorie Janvier , MD
CEO	Jagdeep (Jay) Trivedi, MHA

Clinic Info

Service Area	North Dorchester & Adjacent Neighborhoods	
Number of Sites	5	
Primary Care Patients	9,959	FWA# 00001844
Annual Clinic Visits	53,480	Expiration: 7/25/2023

Research Priority Topics

- Not accepting new projects at this time

Patient Demographics

Male	39%	Asian/Pacific Islander	2.8%
Female	61%	Black/African American	54.6%
Medicaid	47%	White	5.0%
Primary Language not English	48%	Hispanic/Latino	32.1%
Most Common Languages Spoken	Provided by CHCs		

Link to Full UDS Data Set

https://uphamscornerhealthcenter.org/

Best Practices: Research Methodology

- Not accepting new projects at this time

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