SCIENCE FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS CONFERENCE

SKILL LAB

Tuesday, Oct 28, 2025

9:00 AM - 5:30 PM

Knight Center, Room 340, Washington University in St. Louis

Methods and innovations in health system performance measurement

AGENDA

Check-in and breakfast begin at 8:00 a.m.

9:00-9:15 AM — **Welcome and course objectives**

9:15-10:30 AM — **What is a high-quality health system?**

Break

10:45-12:00 PM — **Measuring quality: how to and what do we find**

Lunch and learn

12:00 - 1:00 PM — **Comparing health system performance with the International Health Policy Survey**

1:00-2:00 PM — **Measuring health system goals: Health, confidence, and financial protection**

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2:00-3:30 PM — **Measuring health system processes: User experience, care and system competence, equity**

······· Break ·······

3:30-4:45 PM — **Measurement toolkit: Reliable approaches and new frontiers**

4:45-5:30 PM — **Culmination exercise**

5:30 PM — **Closing**

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Catherine Arsenault

Assistant Professor, The George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health

Dr. Catherine Arsenault is Assistant Professor in the Department of Global Health at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. Dr. Arsenault's research focuses on the measurement of health system quality and health inequalities with particular emphasis on primary health care and maternal and child health services. Prior to joining George Washington, Dr. Arsenault worked as Research Scientist at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in the Department of Global Health and Population and obtained a PhD in Epidemiology from McGill University. During her time at Harvard, she was a member of the Lancet Global Health Commission on High Quality Health Systems in the SDG era and of the Fenot project aimed at strengthening the primary health care system of Ethiopia. Recently, she was principal investigator of a Grand Challenges International COVID-19 Data Alliance initiative driver project that assessed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on health systems in 10 countries (Chile, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Laos, Mexico, Nepal, South Africa, South Korea and Thailand).

Emma Clarke-Deelder

Postdoctoral Scientific Collaborator, Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute

Emma Clarke-Deelder, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Scientific Collaborator in the Household Economics and Health Systems Research unit of the Epidemiology and Public Health department at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. Her research interests include the evaluation of approaches to improving maternal and child health care services in low-income settings, health care quality measurement, and research methods for causal inference from observational data. Emma holds a PhD in Population Health Sciences from Harvard University, an MPhil in Development Studies from the University of Cambridge, and a BA in Government from Cornell University. Prior to beginning her PhD, she worked with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, in Geneva, Switzerland, and Laterite, a research and advisory firm in Kigali, Rwanda.

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Josep Figueras

Director Emeritus, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

In addition to WHO, he has served major multilateral agencies such as the European Commission and the World Bank and has worked as a policy advisor in more than forty countries within the European region and beyond. He is a member of several governing, advisory and editorial boards including the governance board of the European Health Forum Gastein. His research is on health systems and policy focusing on health systems comparisons, performance assessment, public health policy and knowledge brokering.

He is an honorary fellow of the UK Faculty of Public Health; received the Andrija Stampar Medal for excellence in Public Health and a Doctorate Honoris Causa from Semmelweis University. He is currently a visiting professor at the London School of Economics and the NOVA National School of Public Health in Lisbon. He was director of the MSc in Health Services Management and lecturer at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. Dr Figueras obtained his PhD from the University of London LSE / LSHTM in 1993 on health policy and financing. He started his career as a specialist in Family and Community Medicine in Spain.

Patricia Garcia

Former Minister of Health, Peru; Professor, School of Public Health, Cayetano Heredia University

Dr. Patty J. García, is a Professor at the School of Public Health at Cayetano Heredia University (UPCH) in Lima-Peru. She is the former Minister of Health of Peru, Dean of the School of Public Health at UPCH, and former Chief of the Peruvian National Institute of Health (INS). She is recognized as a leader in Global Health. Has been member of the PAHO Foundation Technical Advisory Group (FTAG), board member of the Consortium of Universities in Global Health and President of the Latin American Association Against STDs (ALACITS). She is affiliate Professor of the Department of Global Health, at University of Washington and of the School of Public Health at Tulane University. She is actively involved in research and training in Global health, Reproductive health, STI/HIV, HPV and medical informatics. She has been recently appointed member of the United States National Academy of Medicine, becoming the first Peruvian professional with such a distinction.

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Elvin Geng

Director, Center for Dissemination & Implementation and Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine

Elvin H. Geng, MD, MPH, from Washington University in St. Louis. He earned MD and MPH degrees from Columbia University and post-doctoral training through the Aaron Diamond AIDS Institute at Rockefeller University (posted to Kunming, China where he worked on HIV testing, treatment and prevention among people who inject drugs). He also completed fellowship in infectious diseases at the University of California in San Francisco.

Using the lens of implementation science, Dr. Geng conducts research to advance the use of evidence-based interventions in the public health response to HIV and COVID-19 as well as increasingly for non-communicable diseases as well.   He has worked closely with service-delivery organizations in Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, as well as in the US. Dr. Geng has been a member of the World Health Organization's Guideline Development Group for HIV, and a Commission for Human Resources for Health in Rwanda convened by the National Academies of Science. Dr. Geng is an academic editor at PLOS Medicine, an editorial board member of JAIDS and Journal of the International AIDS Society and as the editor for implementation science at Current HIV/AIDS Reports.

Munira Gunja

Senior Researcher, Promoting International Learning and Exchange, The Commonwealth Fund

Munira Z. Gunja, MPH, is senior researcher in the Commonwealth Fund's Promoting International Learning and Exchange program. She joined the Fund in 2015 as senior research associate in the Health Care Coverage and Access & Tracking Health System Performance program. Previously, Gunja worked with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), Division of Health Care Access and Coverage. Gunja had been a key data analyst on ASPE's tracking and analysis of the effects of the Affordable Care Act, including marketplace enrollment data, marketplace premiums, and understanding the remaining uninsured population. Her findings and analyses have been published in top journals, including the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of the American Medical Association. She received the Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service for two consecutive years for tracking enrollment in the marketplaces and reporting on the findings through monthly enrollment reports, charts, and graphics. Gunja graduated from Tulane University with a B.S. in public health and international development and an M.P.H. in epidemiology.

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Margaret Kruk

Distinguished Professor of Health Systems and Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis; Director of the QuEST Network

Dr. Kruk studies how health systems can improve health and generate trust across countries. Working with colleagues in Africa, India, South America, and Europe, she develops novel measures of health system quality and the studies the effects of quality on population confidence in health care and health outcomes. Dr. Kruk and her team use implementation science and econometric methods to design and evaluate large-scale health system reforms.

Dr. Kruk is Director of the QuEST Centers and Network, a multi-country research consortium working to produce a global evidence base for improving health systems. The QuEST Network is guided by the findings of the Lancet Global Health Commission on High Quality Health Systems (HQSS Commission), a global initiative chaired by Dr. Kruk. QuEST develops new instruments to assess health system quality, tests structural solutions to health system deficits, and supports expansion of high-impact health systems research in partner countries.

Hannah Leslie

Assistant Professor of Medicine, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

Dr. Leslie is an epidemiologist focused on strengthening health systems to better meet users' needs and preferences. She holds a BA in Human Biology from Stanford University, an MPH and PhD in Epidemiology from the University of California, Berkeley, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Health Systems at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Her research centers on three areas: understanding user preferences for primary care, improving program implementation, and measuring patient-reported experiences and outcomes. She has led studies in India, South Africa, Peru, Mexico, and across Latin America, and has collaborated with the World Bank and World Health Organization on health system quality and effective coverage measurement. Dr. Leslie brings deep expertise in study design, quantitative analysis, and implementation science, and is expanding her work to include trials of innovative health service delivery models.

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Todd Lewis

Assistant Professor, Washington University in St. Louis; People's Voice Survey Lead at the QuEST Network

Todd P. Lewis is an Assistant Professor in the Division of General Medicine and Geriatrics at the Washington University School of Medicine. He is a lead researcher with the QuEST Network, a global research consortium building the evidence base for improving health system performance. Dr. Lewis's research uses mixed methods approaches, borrowing from econometrics, implementation science, and other disciplines to understand how well health systems are working for people. Dr. Lewis leads the People's Voice Survey, a multi-country survey that assesses health system performance from the perspective of populations, which has been implemented in over 20 countries. Prior to joining Washington University, Dr. Lewis was a Research Associate at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health where he completed his doctoral studies in Population Health Sciences with a specialization in Health Systems.

Sunny Lin

Assistant Professor, Washington University in St. Louis

Sunny C. Lin, PhD, MS, is an Assistant Professor in the Washington University in St Louis School of Medicine whose research aims to improve healthcare for marginalized populations including older adults with dementia, racialized individuals, and immigrants. Her research explores the impact of policy reform and health information technology, on the patient experience, healthcare utilization, cost and quality of care. Dr. Lin received her PhD from the University of Michigan, her MS from Carnegie Mellon University, and her BS from Northwestern University.

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MEET THE SPEAKERS

Emelda Okiro

Senior Research Fellow, KEMRI-Wellcome Trust

Emelda has over 13 years of experience in epidemiology and public health. She previously worked at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Seattle as a Program Officer–Gates Fellow, helping establish the Malaria Modeling Consortium. She also served as a Wellcome Trust Research Fellow and Head of the Epidemiological Impact and Surveillance Unit at the KEMRI–Wellcome Trust Programme in Kenya, focusing on malaria and health transitions in Africa.

Her PhD examined respiratory syncytial virus transmission in rural Kenya. She has led studies on malaria burden and control across Africa, supported Ministries of Health in Uganda, Malawi, and Kenya, and worked at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation on evaluating cost-effective HIV programs. Emelda holds a BSc in Chemistry and Biochemistry from Egerton University and a PhD in Epidemiology from the Open University (with Warwick University). She later served as Senior Health Scientist at Philips Research Africa before rejoining KEMRI–Wellcome Trust in 2016 to study spatial patterns in child survival.

Katherine Wright

QuEST Research Lead

Dr. Wright is a public health strategist with deep experience in health systems strengthening, systems redesign, and quality improvement. After two decades in global health, leading initiatives across research, policy, and implementation, Dr. Wright focused on applying those insights to domestic challenges, particularly in healthcare delivery, accountability, and equity.

Dr. Wright earned her Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) from Harvard University, specializing in translating complex data into actionable strategies that drive measurable system improvement. She has collaborated with ministries of health, multilateral organizations, and frontline providers to enhance system performance and promote people-centered care.

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MEET THE COURSE TEACHING FELLOWS

Sayeda Islam

Data Analyst at Center for Biostatistics and Data Science, Washington University in St. Louis

Sayeda Islam is a statistical data analyst in the Center for Biostatistics and Data Science at Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Medical Sciences from Florida State University and an MPH in Biostatistics and Epidemiology from the Brown School at WashU. Her research interests include chronic disease burden, cancer epidemiology, health equity, and implementation science. Previously, she worked at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital supporting research on the sustainability of pediatric warning systems across pediatric oncology hospitals in Latin America.

Shalom Sabwa

QuEST Research Assistant at the Quest Network

Shalom Sabwa is currently a research assistant at the Quest Network. She holds a master's degree in public health with a concentration in Epidemiology from NYU's School of Global Health. She is pursuing her PhD in Epidemiology at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health.
Her research interests focus on chronic disease epidemiology, particularly aimed at addressing health disparities among underserved populations. Previously, she worked at the Weill Cornell Center for Global Health as a Research Associate on the Haiti CVD Cohort Study, which sought to estimate the burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in Haiti and to understand the determinants of the CVD epidemic.

Liwei Xiang

QuEST Statistical Data Analyst, Washington University in St. Louis

Liwei Xiang is a statistical data analyst at QuEST center at Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine. She holds a Bachelor of Medicine in Preventive Medicine from Southern Medical University and an MPH in Epidemiology and Biostatistics from the Brown School at WashU.
Her research interests include chronic disease epidemiology, health data science, machine learning applications in public health. Previously, she worked as data analyst in the Washington University in St. Louis department of Surgery involving disease prevention, health equity, and the use of large-scale clinical data to inform evidence-based healthcare.

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