



Health Care Organizations Research

Health care access, delivery, and organization critically influence public health and health care quality, outcomes, and cost. RTI International’s health services researchers evaluate health care organizations, focusing on internal interactions and the nature of internal/external relationships.



RTI examines workforce and resource allocations for the delivery of health services, the characteristics of the persons served, and the interplay of these factors. We explore access of special populations to health services and the reduction in health disparities by race/ethnicity, disability or health status, and socioeconomic factors.

Health services research at RTI is an interdisciplinary enterprise—combining expertise in sociology, economics, health care policy and administration, epidemiology, public health, social psychology, statistics, and survey methods. Our research methods include

- large-scale surveys
- quantitative analyses of health data
- case studies
- qualitative analyses,
- meta-analysis

We have developed teaming arrangements with health care providers and integrated delivery systems, enabling field-based research on timely issues of concern to clinicians. Our main clients include the Agency for Health Care Quality (AHRQ), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Organizational Aspects of Health Disparities

We explore organizational and systems-level factors that may contribute to racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic disparities in health care access, utilization, and outcomes.

- Assessing the impact that the Division of Community Based Programs and the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) have on people of color’s access to care and identifying models that effectively recruit and retain HIV-infected persons of color in care
- Investigating whether the comprehensiveness of program services at opioid treatment programs differs by the race/ethnicity composition of the patient population and, if so, whether this results in disparities in patient outcomes
- Developing an AHRQ-funded evidence report, in collaboration with the University of North Carolina, concerning the relationship between low health literacy and health outcomes and use of health care services
- Evaluating a new Web-based technology—IDweb—to support Indian Health Service (IHS) administrators’ and clinicians’ provision of quality services for persons with STDs, HIV/AIDS, and hepatitis B

(continued)



Health Care Organizations Research *(continued)*

- Conducting a survey of low income persons and minorities to understand why they go to medical doctors, hospital clinics, and emergency departments for treatment of dental problems

Program Evaluation

Our approach to program evaluation takes the organizational context into account, providing a multi-dimensional understanding of processes and impacts.

- Conducting case studies and economic analyses for CDC to examine the factors influencing efficiency and effectiveness of state immunization programs
- Examining the factors associated with effective and efficient operation of CDC's state Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System programs
- Investigating organizational arrangements for monitoring, reviewing, and reacting to research integrity issues and showing how these arrangements shape responses
- Surveying dentists to explore alternative methods for encouraging guideline adoption

Measurement and Tools

Contributions to measurement, reporting, and decision support tools help to facilitate performance measurement and maximize organizational effectiveness.

- Developing and validating an imputation algorithm for the CMS enrollment database (EDB) using surname and other information to improve identification of Medicare beneficiaries who are Hispanic or Asian/Pacific Islander
- Developing and validating for a measure of socioeconomic status based on the CMS EDB's successful geocoding of Medicare beneficiary addresses and the linkage to Census data for beneficiary neighborhoods
- Performing an assessment of the feasibility of the AIDS Drug Assistance Program's (ADAP's) ability to report client-level rather than program-level data to the HRSA
- Developing a decision support tool to facilitate organizational adoption of health care innovations

Public Health Systems Research

We explore the interorganizational aspects of public health financing, services, and preparedness, linking structures to delivery and population health.

- Conducting case studies of six Medical Reserve Corp Units to assess the organizational factors that impacted their ability to recruit, train, and retain medical volunteers to serve their communities and the nation during disasters and emergencies
- Conducting a mixed-method evaluation involving two case studies of two public health systems, a cost-benefit analysis, and a data quality audit to assess the contribution of real-time biosurveillance systems to enhancing the nation's capacity to detect and respond to large-scale public health threats
- Developing resource reviews and evaluation indicators to support CDC-funded programs that focus on systems-level efforts to address secondary prevention of heart disease and stroke
- Conducting cross-site evaluations of public-private partnerships that address latent TB infection screening and prevention for vulnerable populations
- Producing a series of issue briefs related to the dynamics of influenza vaccine supply and demand that include the economics, manufacturing, demand, purchase, and distribution of influenza vaccines

For additional information on health care organizations research at RTI International, visit www.rti.org or contact

Amy Roussel, Ph.D.
Senior Research Sociologist
Telephone: 919-990-8324
E-mail: roussel@rti.org

RTI International
P.O. Box 12194
3040 Cornwallis Road
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194 USA