

# Public University Partnership Program (PUPP)

Medicaid Community Advisory Committee  
Kathleen Murphy, MPH, LDH PUPP Lead  
November 14, 2022

PUPP was implemented in 2020 after learning about this program through other state Medicaid offices to address the many challenges facing Medicaid programs.

State University Partnerships are a collaboration between Medicaid and Louisiana's public universities to produce research that expands our understanding of how to improve the health and wellbeing of Louisiana Medicaid beneficiaries.

# *Public University Partnership Program*

- Leverages federal funding\* to support Medicaid-focused research and evaluation.
- Open to any Louisiana public university or college.
- Offered through a Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- PUPP estimates \$1.5M in awards for each cycle.
- Researchers submit proposals through a structured application review
  - Researcher determines duration (1 – 2 years) and budget
  - University designates 50% cost match
  - PUPP validates duration and budget
- Research proposal must support evidence-based, high-quality, accessible, and cost-effective care to Louisiana Medicaid members
- Proposal is scored by an independent review panel with subject matter experts, following scoring protocols similar to other national funding entities.

# *Value and Benefits to Medicaid*

State-University Partnerships represent an important and growing innovation in the health services research field that have gone largely unrecognized for the value they bring to health policy development<sup>1</sup>.

- Offers access to policy-relevant research that benefits communities
- Provides expertise that can inform program development and operations and guide decisions about allocation of scarce resources
- Provides access to vast expertise not available in Medicaid
- Offers a lower cost structure than private sector contractors.
- Provides independent assessment of controversial initiatives for objective analysis
- Leverages the federal administrative match, making it cost-neutral for Medicaid

<sup>1</sup>Improving Medicaid Policy through State/University Research Partnerships” Coburn, A.F, et. al, prepared for the California Healthcare Foundation, July 2007

# *Value and Benefits for the University*

Partnerships offer new opportunities to expand research opportunities involving faculty from medicine, public health, public policy, data science, economics, and other disciplines.

- Provides an opportunity to advance their mission of public service
- Provides opportunities to transition research from theoretical practice into real life application
- Provides more research opportunities to foster university-level researcher mentoring to junior researchers and students
- Provides access to Medicaid data as valuable information source
- Doubles their research budget through the cost-match

# Considerations

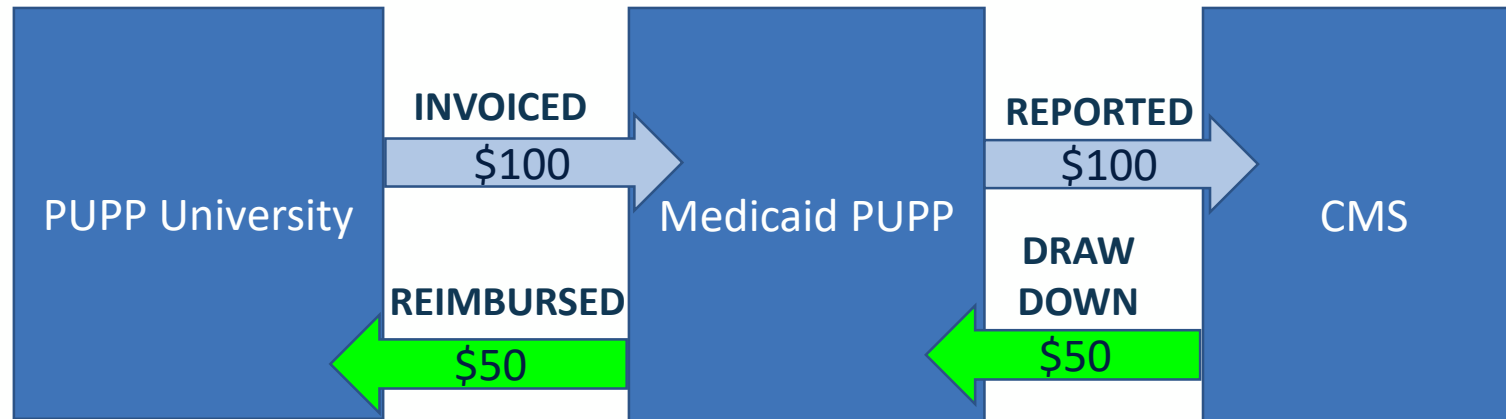
- Research proposal outcomes need to be actionable.
- Cost Match must be allowable funding, and not be part of other Federal Funding\*. Funding typically derives from state general funds and can include private foundations or donations.
- Study population is solely Medicaid. If other populations are included, awarded budget is prorated to the Medicaid portion.
- Success of the partnership relies on attention to objectivity, confidentiality and academic freedom<sup>2</sup>.

\*Claiming Medicaid match (i.e., federal financial participation-FFP) is specified in 42 CFR, Part 433, Subpart B  
<sup>2</sup>quoted in “Improving Medicaid Policy through State University Partnership”, Coburn, A.F., et. al

## *Identifying Projects*

- Alignment with Medicaid Priorities
  - Childhood Health and Development
  - Infant and Maternal Mortality
  - Mental Health and Substance Abuse
  - Health Outcomes for Mortality/Morbidity
  - Decreasing low value care/increase of evidence based care
  - Reducing health disparities

# Program Funding



Universities invoice at the 100% total research budget.

Medicaid submits to CMS as the total obligation

CMS reimburses 50% for federal financial participation

Award dollars are a pass through between CMS and the university

Funding is the Medicaid administrative match through Federal Financial Participation [State Match for Federal funds under 42 CFR 433.15(7).]

Alignment with LDH Secretary's designation "Proper and Efficient Administration" of the State Plan 1909(a)(7) of the Social Security Act

Requirements for the public college or university's share are specified in federal regulations (42 CFR, Part 433, Subpart B).

In-kind designation of the faculty-researcher salary, fringe, tuition remission, publication fees, research participant incentives, etc. are eligible sources of expenditures, provided they are not funded through other Federal grants.



# *PUPP Milestones*

- Initial Year – 2021
  - (COVID impact on application)
  - Four awards, two universities
  - Awarded: \$673,211
  - Start Date – 3/1/22
  
- Second Year – 2022
  - (Universities transitioned from remote classes)
  - Six awards, 3 universities
  - Awarded: \$988,104
  - Start Date – 1/1/23

## PUPP Research Collaborative

- August 25, 2023
  - 10 researchers presented
  - project status
- 
- Third Year - 2023
    - Four awards, 3 universities
    - Awarded: \$922,097
    - Start Date – 1/1/24

# University Research



- Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
  - **Peggy Honore, DHA, (PI)** “Health Policy Honors Program Contributions to Promoting Evidence-Based Care to Louisiana Medicaid Members”
  - **Benjamin Springgate MD, MPH, (PI)** “Promoting Resilience Among Medicaid Members with Opioid Use Disorder (PROUD)”



- Pennington Biomedical Research Center
  - **Ronald Horswell, PhD, (PI)** “Evaluating the Effects of Continuous Glucose Monitoring Device Use on Intermediate Clinical Outcomes in the Louisiana Medicaid Population.”
  - **Gang Hu, MD, (PI)** “Trends in the incidence of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) and hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (HDP) and their associations with adverse pregnancy outcomes among the Louisiana Medicaid population.”



- Louisiana Tech University
  - **Prerna Dua, PhD, (PI)** “A Predictive Mining Approach to Analyze the Impact of COVID-19 on Smoking”



- Louisiana State University and A&M College
  - **Julia Buckner, PhD, (PI)** “The Impact of Motivation-Based Interventions for Substance Misuse for Medicaid Recipients in Inpatient Hospital Units”
  - **Senlin Chen, PhD, (PI)** “Mapping Behavioral and Social Determinants of Health to Inform Louisiana Medicaid Delivery”
  - **Austin Matthews, LCSW, (PI)** “Assessing Alternative Payment Models for Medicaid Health Providers
  - **Janna Oetting, PhD, (PI)** “Testing the Efficiency and Predictive Value of an Alternative Screener for Head Start Medicaid Recipients”



- McNeese State University
  - **Joanna Thompson, PhD, (PI)** “Meeting Technology Needs to Improve Access to High-Value Behavioral Healthcare”

# *Expected Louisiana Medicaid Impact*

## *Sample of Current Research Projects*

- What needs to be in place to help reduce potential opioid relapses during clinic closures for hurricanes? (LSUHSC-Springgate, PI)
- How do dialects and cultural language differences affect children of color from passing admission into Head Start? (LSU – Oetting, PI)
- How can virtual reality simulation offer real life options to parents of autistic children? (McNeese-Thompson, PI)
- What is the gap between available SDOH services and demand for school aged children? (LSU-Chen, PI)
- How can we increase treatment for mental health issues as an untreated driver of adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes? (LSUHSC-Honore, PI)
- Why aren't more continuous glucose monitors being used by Medicaid beneficiaries with Type 1 diabetes? (PBRC-Horswell, PI)

# Future Considerations

- More reach into universities and colleges throughout Louisiana
- Identifying research potential with the smaller Louisiana colleges/universities
- Attracting HBCU participation
- More competition for the funding
- Adding Letter of Interest to increase the application lead time

# Disseminating Results

- Researchers publish with LDH acknowledged
- Research Collaborative Day
- Research Brief as their final Report
  - The Research Brief outlines the project but as a snapshot, it defines:
    - What is known about the topic
    - What did their project do
    - What could Medicaid do with this information
- Quarterly PUPP Briefing Document
  - To join distribution, email [PUPP@la.gov](mailto:PUPP@la.gov)

**TEAM KENTUCKY** Cabinet for Health and Family Services  
Office of Health Data and Analytics Division of Analytics

State University Partnership Research Brief  
Behavioral Health Tobacco Dependence Treatment for Kentucky Medicaid Recipients

Partner University: University of Kentucky College/School: College of Nursing  
Principal Investigator: Chizimuzo Okoli, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, CTTS

**What is Known on This Topic?**  
Despite broad declines in tobacco use, rates among persons with mental illness remains high. Individuals with mental illness consume a large portion of all tobacco products sold in the US - often leading to premature death in this population. Tobacco treatment interventions and preventions geared at decreasing use and risks for these individuals are critical.

**What Did this Project Do?**  
This study adds to the evidence of tobacco prevention and intervention efforts for Medicaid-enrolled adults with mental illness by piloting a smoking cessation intervention to determine its feasibility. This study also assessed the current practices used in community mental health settings related to treatment for tobacco use.

**What Could Medicaid Do with These Conclusions?**  
Insights on tobacco treatment (specialized training, tailored interventions, policy, billing, and community resources) for adults receiving treatment at community mental health centers are discussed.

murders, and suicides combined.<sup>3</sup> Smoking is implicated in one third (34%) of all cancer cases in the Commonwealth; Kentucky leads the country in lung cancer deaths.<sup>4</sup> Every year in Kentucky, nearly 2 billion dollars are spent on healthcare costs associated with smoking (see Figure 1).<sup>5</sup> Medicaid absorbs a large portion of these costs. Because Medicaid plans provide health coverage for a significant portion of Kentucky adults with psychiatric diagnoses, advances in tobacco treatment and prevention efforts population would constitute a meaningful benefit to the operations of the Department for Medicaid Services.

**Figure 1. The Cost of Tobacco Smoking to Kentucky**

Smoking Rate	Tax Per Pack	The Cost of Smoking
17.1% per pack	\$0.60 per pack	\$1.92 billion Annual Health Care Expenditures
Other cigarette tax = 4.2		74% of Americans who start smoke also start pack

Nationally, estimated smoking-related health care and lost productivity total \$38.56 per pack

**Ill on Citizens' Health**  
A Smart Investment

Current cigarette tax revenues don't cover the high total cost of smoking.  
Projected revenue from a \$1.00 increase equals \$266.2 million a year.

Continued on back page →  
Matthew Walton, PhD, MSSW, and Taylor Johnston, BA

**Partner University: University of Kentucky College/School: College of Nursing**  
**Principal Investigator: Chizimuzo Okoli, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, CTTS**

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# PUPP 2023 Awards



- Joanna Thompson, PhD McNeese State University  
“Meeting Technology Needs to Improve Access to High-Value Behavioral Healthcare”
- Urska Cvek, Louisiana State University-Shreveport (LSUS)  
“IMPACT-IBD: Improving Cost-Control and Treatment for IBD.”
- Linda Collins, PhD Southeastern Louisiana University  
“Population Health and Promoting Positive Health Outcomes with Medicaid: Evaluation Study”
- Stephen Barnes, PhD. University of Louisiana – Lafayette  
“RENEW (Redetermination and Enrollment: Evidence at Work) Trial.”

# Questions?

