

# University of Washington Prevention Research Center



# HEALTHY BRAIN RESEARCH NETWORK

# **What were the goals of the University of Washington HBRN?**

The University of Washington Healthy Brain Research Network (UW-HBRN), as part of the UW Health Promotion Research Center, conducted community-based research to promote the health and well-being of middle-aged and older adults with particular focus on those with lower incomes and in ethnic and cultural populations most at risk for health disparities. UW-HBRN's goals included:

- 1) Establishing a consensus-based research, translation and dissemination agenda for the public health aspects of cognitive health and impairment.
  - 2) Advancing collaborative and applied research in the area of cognitive health and impairment.
  - 3) Supporting fellowship training of UW-HBRN scholars.

## What did the UW-HBRN accomplish?

As part of the national HBRN Memory Messaging Workgroup, the UW-HBRN collaborated on cross-site analyses and dissemination efforts tied to a multicenter proof-of-concept study entitled: "Evaluating the Acceptability of Public Health Messages to Promote Early Detection of Dementia in Diverse Audiences Across the Country". Working with regional, state, and national partners, messages were tested with African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and LGBT communities. Findings show that public health messages that incorporate cultural values are needed to

encourage early dementia detection, and that those messages need to be culturally appropriate. Findings were presented in a poster session at the Gerontological Society of America 70th Annual Scientific Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts, November 2018.

UW-HBRN shared recommendations and resources to better support Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities around dementia through the development and delivery of action guides for service providers and policy makers. One of these products, *Connecting with AAPIs About Dementia: An Action Guide for Service Providers* was awarded the **2018 APEX Grand Award for Publication Excellence**.



This article describes the development of a new model of care for older adults with dementia and cognitive impairment. American and British medical (AM) and nursing (BM) consensus groups alone developed the model. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the model's acceptability to the AM and BM communities.

- **Barriers** to model development, implementation, and support for the AMs
- **Facilitators** from a research perspective to AMs
- **Positive feedback** from a research perspective to AMs
- **Opportunities** for research and clinical practice
- **Challenges** to the implementation of the model in routine clinical practice

*UW-HBRN Connecting with AAPIs About Dementia: An Action Guide for Service Providers* won the APEX Grand Award for Publications Excellence. In 6 months, the action guide was presented to more than 803 area providers representing over 46 organizations and was also distributed nationwide.

UW-HBRN investigators and scholars also conducted systematic and scoping reviews of scientific literature and informed the field by analyzing national data from sources including Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. UW-HBRN work produced 12 publications and 38 scientific presentations.



## What was the HBRN Scholars Program?

HBRN Scholars collaborated with project partners from the CDC, community partners, and other HBRN universities as part of research and dissemination initiatives. The Scholars Program developed, piloted, and shared models for scholarly engagement in cognitive health and impairment, locally and across the network nationally.

The UW-HBRN trained 11 scholars and trainees across multiple disciplines, some of whom have also received merit-based awards, including HBRN Scholar travel funds from the Alzheimer's Association.



UW-HBRN Scholar Boeun Kim, MSN, RN, PhD in Nursing Science Candidate.

Early UW-HBRN Scholars and students continued to collaborate in network initiatives as HBRN Affiliate Center and Member Center faculty and researchers and from across national research centers and institutions. HBRN Scholars are practitioners, state program evaluators, post-doctoral trainees, and students engaged in additional degree-granting programs.

*The Healthy Brain Research Network was a thematic network of CDC's Prevention Research Center Program and was funded by Cooperative Agreement: U48DP005013. The findings are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.*



From left: Gwen Moni, BA, HBRN Program Manager for Network Operations; Lesley Steinman, MPH, MSW, Research Scientist; Brenna Renn, PhD, Clinical Psychologist; Madelyn Mendlen, BS, Research Assistant; Boeun Kim, MSN, RN, HBRN Scholar; Basia Belza, PhD, RN, FAAN, Principal Investigator, HBRN Coordinating and Collaborating Center; Anita Souza, PhD, Co-Investigator, HBRN. Not pictured: Mark Snowden, MD, Co-Investigator, HBRN.

## What is the UW-HBRN legacy?

The UW-HBRN legacy includes a cadre of scholars trained and supported to enter their fields with core competencies in cognitive health and impairment; an expanded, strengthened, and poised network of community organizations and academic centers; scholarly publications and presentations, and culturally relevant, research-based resources that can inform practice and continue to be promoted.

UW researchers, practitioners, and partners continue to build on HBRN efforts to promote cognitive health and to address the health needs of increasing numbers of older Americans living with cognitive impairment and the needs of their caregivers.

### Contact Information

Basia Belza, PhD, RN, FAAN  
University of Washington, The Aljoya Endowed Professor of Aging, School of Nursing Director, de Tornyay Center for Healthy Aging Lead, Coordinating Center, HBRN  
Email: basiab@uw.edu