



health care systems  
research network

Health Care Systems Research Network

# NEWSLETTER

2025 Volume 4

2026 HCSRN Annual Conference



**January 5, 2026 is the Deadline for Abstracts  
and Panel Presentation Submissions**

The [Abstract and Panel Presentation Submission](#) sites for the Health Care Systems Research Network (HCSRN) 2026 Conference are open. The

deadline for submitting is **Monday, January 5, 2026 11:59:59 PM ET**. Be sure to visit [www.hcsrn.org](http://www.hcsrn.org) for the latest information and updates.

## Call for Abstract Reviewers

We are looking for individuals who can commit approximately 2 hours per week during the review cycle, which is planned for Friday, January 9, 2026 - Friday, January 23, 2026. It is expected that reviewers will be asked to review no more than 10 abstracts. Reviewers must be HCSRN members and should be familiar with the current trends and needs within data science, relevant methods, and/or health services research, have knowledge of sound research practices and have prior experience reviewing abstracts.

Reviewing will be done via the HCSRN Review Panel website. If you are interested in participating in this important process, please provide the requested information via this [link](#).

## Funding Focused Programming

HCSRN is again planning to offer two presentations that will help you navigate the ever-changing funding landscape. Join us Thursday morning, April 23 in the Austin Ballroom as we bring together experts to discuss [Strategies for Collaboration: Supporting Innovative Research with Foundation Partners](#) followed by [Industry Sponsors and Learning Health Systems: Advancing Research Through Strategic Collaboration](#).

## Registration is Open for HCSRN's Annual Conference in Dallas April 21-23, 2026

### Eduardo Sanchez, MD, MPH, FAHA Kicks Off the Opening Plenary on Tuesday, April 21!

Learn more about Dr. Sanchez's opening plenary [here](#), entitled *Even better: Learning Health Systems' Role to Achieve better health outcomes for everyone, everywhere*.



Dr. Eduardo Sanchez serves as Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for Prevention for the American Heart Association (AHA). He is the Association's clinical lead on Target: BP™ (a joint blood pressure control initiative with the American Medical Association) and the Association's

Cardiovascular-Kidney Metabolic (CKM) Health initiative. From 2021 through 2024, he served as the Principal Investigator (PI) of the National Hypertension Control Initiative (NHCI), a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Prior to joining AHA, he served as Vice President and CMO for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) where he focused on clinical prevention, and chronic disease management, particularly diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, health disparities, and worker and worksite wellness. Dr. Sanchez led the Institute for Health Policy at the University of Texas (UT) School of Public Health as Director from 2006 to 2008. From 2001 to 2006, he served as Texas Commissioner of Health, Texas' state health officer, leading the Texas Department of Health (TDH) from 2001 to 2004 and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) from 2004 to 2006. He served as the local public health officer for Austin-Travis County from 1994 to 1998.

## **The 2026 Annual Conference will take place at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel**

[Click Here to Register](#)



Registration Questions / Assistance

Phone: (518) 694-4420

Email: [admin@hcsrn.org](mailto:admin@hcsrn.org)

## **HCSRN Staff Change**

We would like to let you know of two HCSRN-related retirements:

- Suzanne Simons, who has served as the Executive Director of HCSRN since April 2022, will be retiring at the end of December 2025, and she will remain in an advisory capacity to HCSRN through mid-February 2026.
- Mark Jurkovich, who served as the Director of Data Infrastructure for the VDW Operations Committee since 2019, retired from HealthPartners and HCSRN on December 11, 2025. He and his wife will take advantage of the opportunity to travel.

We are grateful for Suzanne's and Mark's dedication and many contributions to HCSRN's mission throughout their tenures. We hope that you will join us in wishing both Mark and Suzanne well as they embark on their next chapters.

We are pleased to announce that Deb Hamlin will serve as HCSRN's Interim Executive Director starting on January 1, 2026. Deb is an experienced association professional with a strong background in organizational management and strategic operations. We look forward to working with Deb in the new year until a permanent Executive Director is identified.

## HCSRN Governing Board Transition



Sonya Negriff, PhD



Kristi Reynolds, PhD

**Dr. Sonya Negriff** is a developmental psychologist with expertise in the effects of child maltreatment on physical and mental health. The bulk of Dr. Negriff's research has focused on explicating the biological (e.g., stress reactivity, pubertal timing, epigenetics, neuroimaging) and social (e.g., social support, social media use) mechanisms that increase vulnerability to mental health problems for children and adolescents with early trauma experiences. She joined Kaiser Permanente Southern California in 2018 and has worked on projects related to improving child maltreatment identification, the evaluation of the Adverse Childhood Experiences screening in pediatric primary care, and predictive models for adolescent substance use.

The Governing Board gratefully acknowledges the many contributions of **Dr. Kristi Reynolds**, Kaiser Permanente Southern California, who joined the HCSRN Governing Board in 2017. Most recently, Kristi served as a member of the Finance Committee.

## Scientific Data Resources Forum Recap



## Blood Pressure Outcomes after Sodium–Glucose Cotransporter 2 Inhibitors vs. Other Diabetes Medications in Adults with Type 2 Diabetes - November 11, 2025

[View Webinar](#)



**Jaejin An, PhD  
Research Scientist II  
Kaiser Permanente Southern California  
2025 Early Career Investigator of the Year Award  
Winner**

### ***Blood Pressure Outcomes After SGLT2 Inhibitors vs. Other Diabetes Medications***

Dr. Jaejin An, a Research Scientist from Kaiser Permanente Southern California presented findings from a multi-site comparative effectiveness study examining blood pressure (BP) outcomes among adults with type 2 diabetes and treated hypertension. Leveraging harmonized data from six HCSR-

affiliated health systems through the Virtual Data Warehouse, the study emulated two target trials comparing initiation of sodium-glucose cotransporter-2 (SGLT2) inhibitors with glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RA) and sulfonylureas (SU). Using a targeted learning approach, a doubly robust causal inference framework that combines machine learning with statistical estimation, the analysis adjusted for more than 400 time-varying and baseline covariates to ensure rigorous estimation of treatment effects.

Results showed that sustained use of SGLT2 inhibitors significantly improved BP control compared to GLP-1 RA and SU. At one year, SGLT2 initiators achieved BP goals (<130/80 mm Hg) 8-9% more often than GLP-1 RA and SU, with benefits persisting at two years. SGLT2 inhibitor use was associated with modest reductions in systolic and diastolic BP without increasing antihypertensive medication burden. These findings suggest that SGLT2 inhibitors may offer clinically meaningful BP benefits beyond glycemic control, supporting their consideration in hypertension management strategies for patients with type 2 diabetes.

This work highlights the value of real-world evidence and advanced analytic methods to inform treatment guidelines and population health strategies. The study was part of the ON-TARGET DM study, funded by a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Award (DB-2020C2-20318; Study MPs: Neugebauer, R; O'Connor, P).

## Data Quality Framework September 9, 2025

[View Webinar](#)



**Mark Gray, Sr. Data  
Specialist/Programmer**



**Allen Malone, Sr. Data  
Specialist/Programmer**



**Andy Jessen, Data  
Specialist/Programmer**

While several data systems frequently check the quality of the Virtual Data Warehouse (VDW), a more timely and comprehensive approach has been in development at the Kaiser Permanente Colorado region. This effort was led by Andrew Jessen, Allen Malone, and Mark Gray who all are part of the regional VDW team.

Although the VDW is reviewed after changes have been made to ensure participating sites are compliant, the frequency of quality checks for all tables remains inconsistent. While changes may occur to some content areas, they do not happen frequently enough to ensure that potential issues are proactively found and remediated in a timely manner. When issues are discovered by data users confidence can be degraded and the level of effort to fix a data issue before it impacts studies could prevent future complications.

Our approach leaned on existing work done by Observational Medical Outcomes Partnership (OMOP), [Publications](#), and past VDW QAs. The OMOP Dashboard provided functionality and an example of how to display output to users. The publication provided a Harmonization strategy and terminology to apply to the different types of checks. In applying this method, we ensured that VDW tables and columns had guidelines regarding what to include to ensure the data were meeting expected values. The result is a monthly report using Tableau that tabulates measures for our VDW Infrastructure team as well as our users. The monthly reports are also stored and can be tracked over time to evaluate when QA measures are remediated.

## Upcoming SDRF Webinars

| Month       | Topic                                                                                           | Speakers(s)                                                                                                                                                         | Organization(s) |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| January 13  | Elixhauser                                                                                      | <b>Heather Tavel</b><br>Senior Manager of<br>Research Operations at<br>Kaiser Permanente                                                                            | KPCO            |
| February 10 | Visibility Through<br>Data: The Story of<br>Race Collection and Its<br>Impact on<br>Communities | <b>Maile M Tualii, PhD,<br/>MPH</b><br>Collaborative Investigator<br>Center for Integrated<br>Health Care Research                                                  | KP Hawaii       |
| March 10    | Aging, Death &<br>Politics                                                                      | <b>Susan Hickman,<br/>PhD,</b> Director and Senior<br>Investigator, Investigative<br>Science Division, Kaiser<br>Permanente Washington<br>Health Research Institute | KPWA            |
| April       | No program                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                     |                 |
| May 12      | Medical Genetics                                                                                | <b>Rob Hufnagel , MD, PhD,</b><br>Medical Genetics,<br>Genomics Implementation<br>Lead   Senior Investigator<br>at Kaiser Permanente                                | KP Hawaii       |

## HCSRN Job Board



Want a rewarding job in health research? Check out the [HCSRN Job Board](http://www.hcsrn.org/en/JOBS/) to browse career opportunities. We list faculty and staff positions at HCSRN research centers and academic institutions as a service to the research community.

### Spread the Word!

Be sure to forward this email to share the latest from HCSRN with you peers and colleagues!



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