



# Action Research Center for Health Equity

Department of Medicine

## Bending Health Toward Justice

### A Note from Our Director

Dear friends,

As challenging political developments threaten to undermine our critical work in health equity, we reaffirm our most fundamental commitments. We stand resolute in the face of policies that seek to marginalize and divide, knowing that our research and advocacy are more important now than ever before.

Our center, our colleagues, and the university that unites us, will continue to conduct groundbreaking research that illuminates health disparities, develop evidence-based interventions that support underserved populations, and advocate fiercely for policies that advance health as a fundamental human right.



We are taking this moment and transforming challenges into opportunities for meaningful change, guided by our unwavering principles of justice, inclusion, and compassionate action. The strength of our work lies in our collective commitment. We will not be deterred by political impediments, but instead will redouble our efforts to create systemic change.

Our mission transcends politics. This newsletter marks our dedication to supporting those most at risk and building a more equitable healthcare landscape for all.

In community,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Margot'.

Margot Kushel, MD



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## ARC ACHIEVEMENTS

### **ARC Core Faculty Dr. Alicia Fernández Appointed to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force**



ARC Core Faculty and Executive Committee Member, **Alicia Fernandez, MD**, was appointed to the **U.S. Preventive Services Task Force**. Dr. Fernandez joins UCSF School of Medicine colleague Sei Lee MD, MAS, in developing evidence-based recommendations on preventive care.

As an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in disease prevention and evidence-based medicine, the Task Force works to improve the health of people nationwide by making evidence-based

recommendations about clinical preventive services.

Dr. Fernandez is a Professor of Medicine at UCSF, a general internist at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, and Associate Dean of Population Health and Health Equity for UCSF SOM. She is the founding Director of the UCSF **Latinx Center of Excellence**, a HRSA and UCSF funded initiative to increase academic diversity. Dr. Fernandez directs the Latinx and Immigrant Health Research Program at ARC, which generates actionable research to increase health equity and reduce healthcare disparities.

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**Elaine Khoong Appointed Medical Director of Quality and Patient Safety**

ARC Associated Faculty member and general internist and clinical informaticist at ZSFG, **Elaine Khoong, MD, MS**, is now the Medical Director of Quality and Patient Safety in ZSFG's Department of Medicine.

In this role Dr. Khoong will coordinate and implement quality of care initiatives provided by the Department's clinical services in the inpatient and outpatient settings, continuing to improve the care of patients "to ensure that it is safe, patient centered, effective, efficient, and timely," announced Dr. Neil Powe, Chief of Medicine at ZSFG, Constance B. Wofsy Distinguished Professor, UCSF Vice-Chair of Medicine, and Core ARC Faculty member.



Dr. Khoong's experiences as a primary care clinician caring for diverse patients within a safety-net setting drive her research interests. Interested in leveraging technology and implementation science to improve equity in delivery of primary care, Dr. Khoong's research aims to reduce chronic disease disparities in historically excluded populations. As a Principal Investigator at the **IgNITE Lab**, she guides quality improvement efforts to improve diabetes and hypertension outcomes in primary care, within the San Francisco Health Network's 14 clinics.

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## MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

**Margaret Handley's** intimate portrait of a family heirloom, The Fern Mandolin, was chosen by Science Magazine's visual team as one of their year's favorites. ([Science](#))

**Alicia Fernandez** is part of a team of authors whose recent work was highlighted by UCSF News: Feel Left Behind by Digital Health Tools? You're Not Alone. ([UCSF News](#))

**Margot Kushel** explained the increase deaths from exposure to extreme temperatures is due to the growing number of older individuals within the homeless population ([San Francisco Chronicle](#)). Margot also reflected on the significance of home, touching on elements of loss and stability in the Los Angeles fires. ([KCRW](#))

**Elaine Khoong** presented at Health Informatics Grand Rounds, discussing implementation of digital health interventions for safety net populations. ([IgNITE Lab](#))

**Leslie Suen** considered the low-dose initiation's low rates of success in the outpatient setting among people with opioid use disorder who use fentanyl. ([SF Examiner](#))

**Bimla Schwartz** and **Jinoos Yazdany** spoke with the UCSF Department of Medicine newsletter and shared their appreciation and points of pride in working within the UCSF community. They were joined by multiple staff and faculty colleagues closing out the last year with testament to the value of shared purpose. ([UCSF DOM newsletter](#))

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## ARC OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

# Food Insecurity: From Research to Practice and Policy



Facilitated by ARC Affiliated Faculty member, **Courtney Lyles, PhD**, and Marianne Page, this event features short presentations by guest speakers, including ARC Core Faculty and Executive Committee Member, **Hilary Seligman, MD, MAS**, followed by an interactive Q+A.

February 25, 2025 | 3-4:30 p.m. PST  
Social Sciences and Humanities Building  
Andrews Conference Room, 2203  
250 N. Quad Davis, CA 95616

**Submit this form to attend** in-person or online via Zoom.

Sponsored by the UC Davis Center for Healthcare Policy and Research and the Center for Poverty and Inequality Research.

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## FEATURED PUBLICATIONS

**Khoong EC**, Kuznia M, Rodriguez KMT, Gosdin MM, Juarez Yoc JN, Tieu L, Li B, Perron-Burdick M, Su G, Nijagal M, **Lyles CR**. The Impact of Telehealth Implementation and Visit Modality on No-Show Rate in a High-Risk Obstetrics Clinic in a Safety Net Healthcare System. *Telemed J E Health*. 2024 Dec 11. doi: 10.1089/tmj.2024.0431. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39661952. [PubMed Citation](#).

Nouri S, Pantilat SZ, Ritchie CS, **Lyles CR**, Shi Y, O'Riordan D, Boscardin J, **Sudore RL**. Quality of Virtual vs. In-Person Outpatient Palliative Care: Disparities by Language and Race. *J Pain Symptom Manage*. 2025 Jan 3:S0885-3924(24)01226-0. doi: 10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2024.12.016. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39756664. [PubMed Citation](#).

Doshi B, Luna I, Quesada R, Garcia ME, **Fernandez A**, **Khoong EC**. The Impact of Language Discordance on Acquiring Broad Social History: A Qualitative Study of Patients, Clinicians, and Interpreters. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2024 Dec 13. doi: 10.1007/s11606-024-09234-3. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39672983. [PubMed Citation](#).

Kui K, Hailozian C, Thai M, Chakravarty D, Apollonio DE, Kroon L, **Vijayaraghavan M**.



Tobacco cessation, mental health, and substance use in a community pharmacist-linked cessation program for people experiencing homelessness. *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2025 Feb 1;267:112527. doi: 10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2024.112527. Epub 2024 Dec 18. PMID: 39729805. [PubMed Citation](#).

Hawes MR, Chakravarty D, Xia F, Max W, **Kushel M**, **Vijayaraghavan M**. The Built Environment, PTSD Symptoms, and Tobacco Use among Permanent Supportive Housing Residents. *J Community Health.* 2024 Dec 16. doi: 10.1007/s10900-024-01422-w. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39681791. [PubMed Citation](#).

**Vijayaraghavan M**, Hartman-Filson M, Vyas P, Katyal T, Nguyen T, **Handley MA**. Multi-Level Influences of Smoke-Free Policies in Subsidized Housing: Applying the COM-B Model and Neighborhood Assessments to Inform Smoke-Free Policies. *Health Promot Pract.* 2025 Jan;26(1):142-157. doi: 10.1177/15248399231174925. Epub 2023 May 20. PMID: 37209138; PMCID: PMC11689785. [PubMed Citation](#).

Miller KEM, Shen K, Yang Y, **Williams BA**, Wolff JL. Prevalence of Disability Among Older Adults in Prison. *JAMA Netw Open.* 2024 Dec 2;7(12):e2452334. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.52334. PMID: 39729319; PMCID: PMC11681372. [PubMed Citation](#).

Nguyen NV, Riggan KA, Eber GB, **Williams BA**, DeMartino ES. A Primer on Carceral Health for Clinicians: Care Delivery, Regulatory Oversight, Legal and Ethical Considerations, and Clinician Responsibilities. *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2025 Jan 11:S0025-6196(24)00468-3. doi: 10.1016/j.mayocp.2024.09.009. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39797865. [PubMed Citation](#).

Martin M, Baisey T, Skinner S, Ly L, Slown K, Harter K, **Nguyen OK**, Steiger S, **Suen LW**. Early Results of Implementing Rapid Methadone Titration for Hospitalized Patients: A Case Series. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2025 Jan 13. doi: 10.1007/s11606-024-09341-1. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39804553. [PubMed Citation](#).

Steiner G, **Suen LW**, Martin M, Skinner S, Crouch P, **Nguyen OK**, Slown K, Logan A. Treatment of Inpatient Opioid Withdrawal with Short-Acting Full Agonist Opioids at a Safety-Net Hospital. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2025 Jan 6. doi: 10.1007/s11606-024-09321-5. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39762677. [PubMed Citation](#).

Aivadyan C, El-Bassel N, Chang M, Santelli J, **Philbin M**, Wu E. Associations Between State Laws Regulating Minors' Access to Confidential Sexual Health Services and Lifetime HIV Testing Among U.S. Male High School Students. *AIDS Behav.* 2024 Dec 14. doi: 10.1007/s10461-024-04574-x. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39673585. [PubMed Citation](#).

Connor DM, **Fernandez A**, Alba-Nguyen S, Collins S, Teherani A. Academic Leadership Academy Summer Program: Clerkship Transition Preparation for Underrepresented in Medicine Medical Students. *Teach Learn Med.* 2025 Jan-Mar;37(1):113-126. doi: 10.1080/10401334.2023.2269133. Epub 2023 Oct 27. PMID: 37886897. [PubMed Citation](#).

**Palmer NR**, Carroll PR, Washington SL 3rd. Time is on our side - rethinking the concept of time to treatment for prostate cancer. *Nat Rev Urol.* 2024 Nov 29. doi: 10.1038/s41585-024-00977-6. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 39613985. [PubMed Citation](#).

**See all 52 ARC-authored publications from December 6, 2024, to January 12, 2025**

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