Health Communication and Informatics Research Branch (HCIRB)

cancercontrol.cancer.gov/brp/hcirb

Mission

The mission of HCIRB is to advance research on the processes and effects of communication and informatics across the cancer control continuum.

HCIRB supports research on patient-centered communication, the impact of technology on health communication, equity in communication, and the acceleration and translation of health communication research into public health and clinical practice. The branch also engages in surveillance research regarding the public's use of cancer-related information in a changing health communication environment.

Scientific Priority Areas

Behavioral Informatics

- Digital technology use by – and data generated from – consumers, patients, caregivers, providers, public health organizations, and health care systems
- Improved care and cancer-related outcomes through use of electronic health records and patient portals, patient-generated data, and telehealth services

Health Disparities and Health Literacy

- Identification of factors that contribute to inequitable access, use, and benefit from health information and the subsequent effects on health disparities
- Interventions to narrow the digital divide, address limited health literacy, and improve health equity

Media Effects

- Effect of media and the health communication ecosystem on individual-level knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and population-level norms and trends
- Communication about and implementation of guidelines and policies related to cancer prevention and control

Social Media and Technology-Mediated Communication

- Analyses of user-generated social media content using innovative approaches (e.g., Natural Language Processing, network analysis) to examine health-related attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors
- Interventions using social media platforms and rapid, iterative approaches
- Research to better understand and mitigate risks of online health and science misinformation

Public Health Communication Environment

- Multilevel communication approaches to address cancer control topics such as vaccination, tobacco use, diet and physical activity, genetic testing, and decision-making about treatment and survivorship care
- Integration of socioeconomic, cultural, environmental, and policy factors into health message design, evaluation, and dissemination

Resources and Initiatives

Health Information National Trends Survey

HINTS is a nationally representative survey designed to monitor changes in the rapidly evolving health communication environment and collect data regarding public need for, access to, and use of health information.

Advancing Health Communication Science and Practice

This NIH Common Fund program will investigate, develop, test, and share new approaches for effective and equitable health communication.
## Selected Funding Opportunities

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory Grants in Cancer Control PAR-21-341 (R21 Clinical Trial Optional)</td>
<td>Tanya Agurs-Collins&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:tanya.agurs-collins@nih.gov">tanya.agurs-collins@nih.gov</a>&lt;br&gt;Mukesh Verma&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:vermam@mail.nih.gov">vermam@mail.nih.gov</a></td>
<td>October 9, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative Approaches to Studying Cancer Communication in the New Information Ecosystem PAR-22-164, PAR-22-165 (R01/R21 Clinical Trial Optional)</td>
<td>Kelly Blake&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:kelly.blake@nih.gov">kelly.blake@nih.gov</a></td>
<td>September 8, 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modular R01s in Cancer Control and Population Sciences PAR-21-190 (R01 Clinical Trial Optional)</td>
<td>Scott Rogers&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:rogerssc@mail.nih.gov">rogerssc@mail.nih.gov</a></td>
<td>March 8, 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leveraging Health Information Technology (Health IT) to Address and Reduce Health Care Disparities PAR-22-145 (R01 Clinical Trial Optional)</td>
<td>Heather D’Angelo&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:heather.dangelo@nih.gov">heather.dangelo@nih.gov</a></td>
<td>May 8, 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient-Clinician Relationship: Improving Health Outcomes in Populations that Experience Health Care Disparities PAR-22-064 (R01 Clinical Trial Optional)</td>
<td>Amanda Acevedo&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:amanda.acevedo@nih.gov">amanda.acevedo@nih.gov</a>&lt;br&gt;Sallie Weaver&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:sallie.weaver@nih.gov">sallie.weaver@nih.gov</a></td>
<td>January 8, 2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telehealth in Cancer Care NOT-CA-21-043</td>
<td>Kelly Blake&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:kelly.blake@nih.gov">kelly.blake@nih.gov</a>&lt;br&gt;Gurvaneet Randhawa&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:gurvaneet.randhawa@nih.gov">gurvaneet.randhawa@nih.gov</a></td>
<td>March 8, 2024</td>
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Find a complete list of BRP funding opportunities at cancercontrol.cancer.gov/brpfunding. View sample grant applications at cancercontrol.cancer.gov/samplegrants. Learn about our HCIRB-funded grantees at cancercontrol.cancer.gov/brpgrantees.

## Recent Priority Publications


## HCIRB Team

**Robin Vanderpool, Dr.P.H.**<br>Branch Chief<br>robin.vanderpool@nih.gov<br>Rural cancer control, HPV vaccination, community outreach and engagement, patient-centered communication, and telehealth

**Kelly Blake, Sc.D.**<br>Program Director<br>kelly.blake@nih.gov<br>Media effects, communication inequality, public health policy, social epidemiology, and rural cancer control

**Nicole Senft Everson, Ph.D.**<br>Program Director<br>nicole.everson@nih.gov<br>Patient-centered communication, online information and patient-provider communication, communicating uncertainty

**Heather D’Angelo, Ph.D., M.H.S.**<br>Program Director<br>heather.dangelo@nih.gov<br>Communication inequality, climate change and cancer, place and health, public health policy

**Barbara S. Pokorny, M.P.H.**<br>Program Director<br>pokornys@nih.gov<br>Behavioral science, community outreach and engagement, public health policy, social epidemiology, and rural health

**Wen-Ying Sylvia Chou, Ph.D., M.P.H.**<br>Program Director<br>wen-ying.chou@nih.gov<br>Public health policy, social change and cancer, communication, and telehealth

**Anna Gaysynsky, M.P.H.**<br>Marketing Communications Analyst, ICF<br>anna.gaysynsky@nih.gov<br>Patient-provider communication, social media, social support, trust in health information, and digital health

**Larae McCarty**<br>Program Specialist<br>larae.mccarty@nih.gov

**Katie Heley, Ph.D., M.P.H., George Kueppers, Ph.D., Abigail Muro, B.S., and Jacob Rohde, Ph.D., M.P.H.** are fellows in the branch. Amanda Acevedo, Ph.D., Wendy Nelson, Ph.D., M.P.H., April Oh, Ph.D., M.P.H., Maria Roditis, Ph.D., M.P.H., and Cynthia Vinson, Ph.D., M.P.A. have secondary appointments in the branch.

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