

HAWAI'I JOURNAL WATCH

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Highlights of recent research from the University of Hawai'i and the Hawai'i State Department of Health

WHERE AND WHEN RAT LUNGWORM CASES OCCUR

There were 82 reported cases of angiostrongyliasis, also called rat lungworm disease, in Hawai'i from 2007 to 2017, and most (57%) occurred between January and April, a time of cooler temperatures and heavier rainfall, a new review concludes. Researchers including David I. Johnston, of the Hawai'i State Department of Health, reviewed the case evaluation forms and medical records of cases reported to the department. Most (83%) cases occurred on the island of Hawai'i. The researchers suggested that the most effective public health prevention measures are education on how the disease is transmitted and best practices for hygiene and food storage and preparation. The paper, [Review of Cases of Angiostrongyliasis in Hawaii, 2007–2017](#), is published in *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*.

STUDENTS HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH INTERPROFESSIONAL TEAM COLLABORATION SIMULATION EXERCISE

Students of health professions must learn interprofessional communication skills, and to address this need, the Hawaii Interprofessional Team Collaboration Simulation exercise began in 2014. In the exercise, students in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, and social work collaborate to work through scenarios and receive feedback on their skills. Researchers from the Hawai'i Interprofessional Education group (HIPE) examined students' evaluations of their skills before and after this exercise. Students showed a high level of satisfaction with the exercise and increased their ratings of their competency in areas such as placing the patient/family at the center of care delivery and using effective communication techniques to enhance team function. The paper, [An Interprofessional Team Simulation Exercise About a Complex Geriatric Patient](#), is published in *Gerontology & Geriatrics Education*.

HOW ADDICTION TREATMENT PROGRAMS' FUNDING CHANGED AFTER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The Single State Agencies (SSAs) for substance use disorder services license and oversee prevention, treatment, and recovery programs and allocate block grant funding to these programs. In a new study, researchers including Clifford S. Bersamira, PhD, of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, conducted surveys of SSA directors to investigate how state funding practices changed between 2014, when key Affordable Care Act provisions went into effect, and 2017. The percentage of SSAs that provided technical assistance to programs increased in many areas, for example, assistance to collaborate with mental health providers increased by 19.3 points. However, the percentage of block grant funds allocated to prevention versus treatment changed little during the study period, and block grant funds for methadone maintenance increased less than 1 percentage point. The paper, [Changes in State Technical Assistance Priorities and Block Grant Funds for Addiction After ACA Implementation](#), is published in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

THE CHANGING FACE OF MESOTHELIOMA

Increasing percentages of mesotheliomas — especially peritoneal mesotheliomas, which occur in the lining of the abdominal cavity — are being diagnosed in people who have not been occupationally exposed to asbestos. Researchers led by Michele Carbone, MD, PhD, of the UH Cancer Center, reviewed the epidemiology, diagnosis, and treatment of mesotheliomas. Recent research points to inflammation as well as mutations in a protein called BAP1 as having important roles in mesothelioma incidence and survival. The review concluded that misdiagnoses are a problem, and that a pathologist experienced with diagnosing mesothelioma should confirm all diagnoses. Moreover, while surgery remains controversial, greater use of genomic and immune-based biomarkers may help clinicians better ascertain whether surgery is indicated. The paper, [Mesothelioma: Scientific Clues for Prevention, Diagnosis, and Therapy](#), is published in *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*.

PARTICIPATION IN A COMMUNITY-ACADEMIC HUI INCREASES COMMUNITY MEMBERS' TRUST IN RESEARCH

A survey of the community members and researchers who make up the Waimānalo Pono Research Hui shows that involvement in this group promotes learning and builds capacity for community research. Researchers including Jane Chung-Do, DrPh, of UH Public Health, who co-founded this hui with Ilima Ho-Lastimosa, MSW, MoA, surveyed the group. The majority of the members reported their participation in the hui increased their understanding of Native Hawaiian values. Nearly all (95%) said their involvement deepened their trust in researchers, and 85% knew how to ensure research is *pono* (righteous/moral). The researchers concluded that creating spaces for communities and researchers to build relationships can promote culturally-grounded, community-driven research. The paper, [Waimānalo Pono Research Hui: A Community–Academic Partnership to Promote Native Hawaiian Wellness through Culturally Grounded and Community-Driven Research and Programming](#), is published in the *American Journal of Community Psychology*.

PACIFIC PEOPLES IN NEW ZEALAND: WHICH GENERATION HAS THE HEALTHIEST DIET?

Younger generations of Pacific peoples in New Zealand may be more likely to consume an unhealthy diet than older generations. Researchers including Ridvan Tupai-Firestone, PhD, of Massey University and Joseph Keawe'aimoku Kaholokula, PhD, of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, examined diet surveys of young adults, their parents, and their grandparents. The older generations ate a greater diversity of items and were more likely to have a healthy diet, compared with the young adults. Adults characterized as integrated (who reported being highly affiliated with both their Pacific heritage and mainstream culture) were more likely to have a healthy diet than those who were characterized as assimilated (who reported being highly affiliated with only mainstream culture) or marginalized (low affiliation with both cultures). The paper, [Investigating Differences in Dietary Patterns Among a Small Cross-Sectional Study of Young and Old Pacific Peoples in NZ Using Exploratory Factor Analysis: A Feasibility Study](#), is published in *BMJ Open*.