

HAWAI'I JOURNAL WATCH

KAREN ROWAN MS

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

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH HELPS SURGEONS TO REPAIR COMPLEX HERNIAS

In patients with complex ventral hernias, the abdominal contents protrude through the abdominal fascia, the connective tissue that encloses the internal organs. In a new paper, researchers including Dean Mikami MD, of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, note that a better understanding of how surgical mesh achieves its effect in hernia repair is needed. The authors report on performing repairs in 56 patients at Macquarie University Hospital in Australia. The authors used measurements from CT scans to calculate the size of the mesh needed to repair the fascia. The mesh was cut by hand with extra fabric along the edges to reduce complications. Seventeen patients developed complications, but all lived, and only one developed a hernia recurrence. The researchers concluded that a variety of techniques can be used in complex ventral hernia repair.

- Rodriguez-Acevedo O, Elstner K, Jacombs A, et al. The Macquarie system for comprehensive management of complex ventral hernia. *Hernia*. 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10029-019-02092-7>

WHY HAWAI'I'S CHOOSE HEALTHY NOW PROGRAM WAS SUCCESSFUL

The Choose Healthy Now (CHN) program, which aimed to increase awareness of healthier food and beverage options at Hawai'i convenience stores through in-store signage and product placement, was successful in part because of leadership buy-in. Toby Beckelman MS, MPH, of the Hawai'i State Department of Health, is the lead author of an article describing program details for health departments and others to model. Results of 139 store exit surveys showed 25.2% of customers purchased at least 1 item that met CHN nutrition guidelines such as bottled water or bananas. Data from Hawai'i Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System showed 34.8% of respondents recalled seeing or hearing a CHN advertisement. Campaign materials that were co-branded with store logos and having the First Lady of Hawai'i as a spokesperson helped the campaign. However, the price of CHN items remains a challenge for many in purchasing.

- Beckelman T, Sinclair-White BM, McGurk MD, et al. Encouraging adults to choose healthy now: A Hawai'i convenience store intervention. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2020;52:330-334. doi:10.1016/j.jneb.2019.11.016.

DISASTER NURSING COMPETENCIES ESTABLISHED GLOBALLY

During disasters or emergency events, nurses will be called to contribute to response efforts. In a new publication, nurse leaders from around the globe, including Kristine Qureshi, PhD, RN, of the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, detail the competencies nurses will need to be ready for such efforts. For example, nurses must be competent in adapting infection-control practices

to the available resources, able to perform rapid physical and mental health assessments based on triage principles, understand the utilitarian principles that guide ethical practice during disaster responses, possess basic crisis communication skills, and contribute their observations and experiences to post-event evaluations. These competencies establish a common approach to preparedness, and can be used by schools to frame educational programs or by individual nurses to self-assess their education priorities.

- Al-Maaitah R, Conlon L, Hutton A, et al. Core competencies in disaster nursing. Geneva: International Council of Nurses. https://www.icn.ch/sites/default/files/inline-files/ICN_Disaster-Comp-Report_WEB.pdf.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN INTERDISCIPLINARY HEALTH PROGRAM IS DECOLONIZING THE ACADEMIC SPACE

The Native Hawaiian Interdisciplinary Health program (NHIH) was created in 2012 to support Native Hawaiians interested in entering professions such as social work and medicine. In a recent paper, Michael C. DeMattos MSW, with the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, writes that the NHIH was designed to include Indigenous teaching methods in pre-professional curricula. The planners focused on culturally-resonant programming and validating the Indigenous worldview. The NHIH gives *haumāna* (students) an overview of Native Hawaiian values, provides lessons in cultural historical trauma, and holds sessions in the community rather than only on campus. Participating in the program may encourage non-Indigenous instructors to recognize their position in the colonial system. DeMattos concludes that the NHIH program is helping to reposition traditional Native Hawaiian values at the center of today's educational spaces.

- DeMattos MC. Native Hawaiian Interdisciplinary Health Program: Decolonizing academic space, curriculum, and instruction. *Intersectionalities: A Global Journal of 2019 Social Work Analysis, Research, Policy, and Practice*. 2019;7(1):51-67.

DIET QUALITY LINKED TO NONALCOHOLIC FATTY LIVER DISEASE IN THE MULTIETHNIC COHORT STUDY

Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is likely caused by a combination of factors, including genetic and environmental factors. To investigate the role of diet quality in NAFLD, researchers led by Song-Yi Park PhD, of the UH Cancer Center, conducted a nested case-control analysis of data from the Multiethnic Cohort study, which includes African-American, Japanese-American, Latino, Native Hawaiian, and white participants. The analysis included 2959 people with NAFLD and 29,292 matched controls; the researchers used 4 diet quality indexes to examine the association. Results showed inverse associations between diet quality and NAFLD risk for 2 of the indexes, which was stronger for NAFLD with cirrhosis than for NAFLD without cirrhosis. The findings suggest having better diet quality may reduce NAFLD risk in this ethnically diverse population.

- Park SY, Nouredin M, Boushey C, Wilkens LR, Setiawan VW. Diet quality association with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease by cirrhosis status: The Multiethnic Cohort. *Current Developments in Nutrition*. 2020;4(3):nzaa024. doi:10.1093/cdn/nzaa024