

Workplace Health Research Network

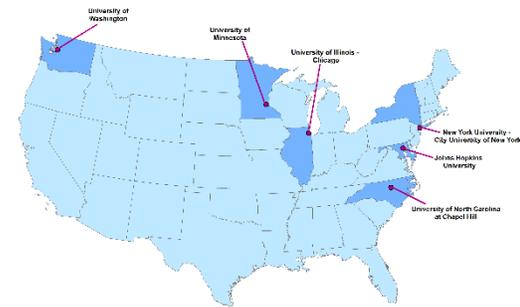
Who We Are

[The Workplace Health Research Network \(WHRN\)](#) seeks to engage employers, employees and communities to advance knowledge, implement and evaluate effective, comprehensive and integrated approaches to promote and protect worker health, safety and well-being. A key focus of our research is integrated, multi-component interventions that address multiple health risks and concerns in various worksite settings, sectors, and sizes. The WHRN includes 6 research centers crossing academic affiliations and geographic boundaries and includes behavioral scientists, occupational safety and health specialists, health educators, nutritionists, epidemiologists, clinicians, and health economists as members. Having a network with broad geographic reach and strong relationships among investigators allows us to achieve more than any individual center could achieve on its own. WHRN is one of 7 thematic research networks, part of the CDC funded [Prevention Research Centers \(PRCs\)](#).

WHRN includes 6 collaborating centers and 1 coordinating center identified below with Principal Investigator (PI) for each:

- [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health](#), (Goetzel, PI)
- [New York University School of Medicine and City University of New York School of Public Health](#), (Baron, PI)
- [University of Illinois at Chicago](#), (Muramatsu/Brosseau, PIs)
- [University of Minnesota](#), (Abraham/Nyman, PIs)
- [University of Washington](#), (Harris, PI)
- [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#), (Linnan, PI)*

*both a collaborating center and the coordinating center.



Research Agenda for Workplace Health and Safety

The WHRN executes an applied workplace health research agenda which:

- Identifies, designs, and tests interventions that promote health at work;
- Helps accelerate the translation of research results into sustainable worksite-based programs in communities throughout the nation; and
- Increases understanding of employee and organizational strategies essential for producing effective workplace health promotion programs.

Research results answer questions that will promote employee health and well-being. The WHRN emphasizes cross-cutting prevention and health promotion workplace approaches, innovative solutions for difficult problems in workplace settings, and the practical application of research findings, technologies, and information generated by the network.

Examples of Our Research

The WHRN accomplishes its research agenda through three work groups:

Capacity and Dissemination – investigates the capacity of employers and other organizations to implement evidence based interventions to promote health in the workplace and to identify best practices for disseminating effective interventions. Research projects:

- **National Survey of State Health Departments** –assesses state health departments’ capacity to help employers implement evidence-based workplace health and safety programs.
- **HealthLinks** - a low-cost model for delivering an evidence-based health promotion program tested in the state of Washington for small, low-wage employers that has the potential to scale up nationwide.

- **Mandatory Paid Sick Leave Policy User Guide** – document that resulted from a case study of the recent New York City mandatory paid sick leave (PSL) law to explore best practices for disseminating information about policy changes to employers and employees in the restaurant industry.
- **Employer/Community User Guide** – a translation of specific recommendations from the CDC Guide to Community Preventive Services into an employer-friendly document that highlights benefits and step-by-step actions employers can take to implement workplace health promotion interventions directed at specific health risks such as physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use.

Employee – investigates issues impacting the health of a diverse set of workers in various work settings and sectors with special emphasis on achieving health equity among workers, emphasizing cross-cutting strategies, and underserved workers. Research projects:

- **Incorporate Health Promotion Into the Job** - tests an innovative health promotion approach which trains home care aides to deliver a physical activity program to their clients as part of their regular home care work.
- **Health Promotion for Low Wage Workers** – a synthesis review of the literature regarding research on workplace health promotion efforts that target underserved workers.
- **Workplace Health Promotion Programs in the U.S.** – an analysis of data from the Transamerica Center for Health Studies Harris Poll to provide a clear and current picture of the state of workplace health promotion programs in the United States.
- **Positive Meaning of Work** - focuses on connecting work-related health issues with non-work life among low-wage immigrant Latino workers in various occupations in New York City.

Tools and Resources – identifies, develops, and investigates research questions focused on the tools and resources available to employers to support decision-making about workplace health promotion adoption, implementation, and evaluation. Research projects:

- **Broker Project** – assesses the role of brokers and agents in helping small and mid-sized employers adopt evidence-based workplace health promotion (WHP) programs.
- **Organizational Assessment Tools** – a review of existing organizational health assessment tools used by employers to plan, evaluate, and benchmark workplace health promotion programs with recommendations for how employers can make informed decisions about these tools.

WHRN Impact to Date

Since its inception in October 2014, the WHRN has already published [10 peer reviewed articles](#) and has an additional 11 manuscripts planned. We have also made [11 presentations](#) at local, national, and international conferences. Investigators have submitted at least 4 large grants from NIH and other funders to enhance support for our research agenda. We have also led 19 research and dissemination activities and published 3 reports. All of this work is documented on the WHRN website (workhealthresearchnetwork.org).

Why Workplace Research Matters

- 146 million Americans spend the majority of their waking hours at work each day; reaching them at work with lifesaving health information, programs and services can help promote health, prevent diseases, and refer people earlier into treatment programs, with less cost and hardship.
- Finding ways to create healthier workplaces, with access to evidence-based programs, policies, benefits and environmental supports can enhance employee health and the bottom line of businesses.