

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

Weekly Newsletter

NOVEMBER 3 - 7, 2025



UMass Chan
MEDICAL SCHOOL

WELCOME

Welcome **Aayush Chetan Sangani** to join the PQHS team! Starting Monday, Nov 3, 2025, he will join the innovative AI for Health (iAI4Health) lab (<http://www.umassmed.edu/ai4health>) as a Clinical Research Assistant in the Health Informatics and Implementation Science (HIS) Division. Aayush obtained his Master's degree in Computer Science (Data Science) from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 2025. He will work with Dr. Feifan Liu in developing machine learning techniques for various biomedical applications, including risk predictive modeling, OMOP common data model analytics, and large language model applications in medicine.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, November 12, 1200-1:30 PM

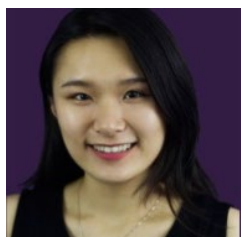
Thanksgiving Pot Luck Lunch Come celebrate the season with great food and even better company. Please sign up to bring a dish or item of your choice—appetizer, main dish, side, bread, dessert, beverage, or paper goods.

👉 [Click here](#) to sign up.



We can't wait to gather together, share a delicious meal, and enjoy some time with colleagues. Hope to see you there!

Wednesday, November 5, 2025, 10:00 – 11:00 AM



Research Methods Meeting

Presenter: Shiwei (Echo) Liang, Ph.D. Candidate in Population Health Sciences, PQHS

Title: Usage and effectiveness of antidepressants among nursing home residents with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias

Abstract: Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRDs)—the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S.—affect over 7 million Americans, with up to 50% experiencing depressive symptoms that can worsen quality of life and increase care burden. In nursing homes, where these symptoms are particularly prevalent, care needs are especially high. Antidepressants are the most frequently used psychotropics among U.S. nursing home residents, with about 50% receiving them, yet their efficacy in treating depression in dementia remains uncertain, as most evidence comes from small, short-term trials. This study used national Medicare-linked nursing home data (2011–2018) to examine antidepressant use patterns and compare the real-world effectiveness of SSRIs and SNRIs for managing depressive symptoms among residents with ADRD.

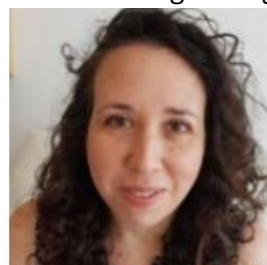
Bio: Shiwei (Echo) Liang is a 4th-year PhD candidate in the Population Health Sciences program, mentored by Dr. Kate Lapane and Dr. Matthew Alcusky. Her research focuses on neuropsychiatric diseases, comparative drug effectiveness studies and nursing home care. She has extensive experience working with large administrative and clinical datasets, including Medicare Parts A, B, and D, the CMS Minimum Data Set 3.0, Medicaid, and commercial insurance claims.

Click [here](#) to join.

Monday, November 10, 2025, 1:00-2:15 PM

Gerontology Speaker Series

Title: Growing old together: Connections and perceptions



Speaker: Dikla Segel-Karpas, PhD, Chair, Department of Gerontology, University of Haifa

Abstract: Aging is not only a biological process but also a deeply social one. Our relationships across the life course shape how we age, affecting physical and mental health as well as the ways we think about and experience aging itself. This presentation will review evidence on the role of social connections in later life, highlighting their impact on cognitive functioning, physical health, emotional well-being, and subjective views of aging. I will then turn to the couple as a central context of aging, examining how older romantic partners influence each other's aging process. Beyond the couple, I will consider intergenerational relationships with

adult children and their significance for both parents and children. The talk will conclude with discussion of ongoing

and future research aimed at advancing theoretical and empirical tools to better understand how our closest relationships, including spousal and intergenerational relationships, shape the process of growing old.

In-person (Gerontology Classroom, Wheatley Hall 3rd Floor, Room 125) and via Zoom: via

Zoom: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/94175483404> Password: Boston

Sponsored by:

University of Massachusetts Boston

Department of Gerontology and Gerontology Institute

Donna M. and Robert J. Manning College of Nursing & Health Sciences &

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Department of Population Health and Quantitative Health Sciences

For more information contact Qian Song: Qian.Song@umb.edu

Interested in learning more about gambling? Mark your calendars and register now for these upcoming trainings hosted in collaboration with the RI Council on Problem Gambling.

Wednesday, November 12, 2025, 1:00-2:30 PM

Register: [The Intersection of Gambling and Domestic Violence: Empowering Survivors](#)

Join consultant Kristen Beall for a critical training on the intersection of gambling disorder and domestic violence. This session examines how economic abuse and coercive control create a dangerous connection. You will learn evidence-based approaches for identifying financial coercion, concrete strategies for supporting survivors' path to safety, and practical intervention techniques you can implement immediately.

Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 12:00-1:30 PM

Register: [Exploring the intersection of HIV and tobacco use for addiction and behavioral health professionals](#)

Join the New England ATTC and Dr. Trish Cioe, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, to learn about the high rates of tobacco use among people living with HIV, its impact on health outcomes. Dr. Cioe will discuss biological, psychological, and social factors contributing to tobacco dependence, as well as barriers to cessation. Dr. Cioe will also discuss evidence-based strategies for tobacco screening, counseling, and pharmacotherapy, emphasizing the importance of integrating cessation support into HIV care and behavioral health settings. By the end of the session, attendees will understand the importance of addressing tobacco use as part of comprehensive, trauma-informed, and responsive HIV care.

Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 1:00-2:30 PM

Register: [Gambling Disorder: Relationship to Suicide and Resources for Help](#)

Kristen Beall is offering a second training on a critical topic: Gambling disorder, which is recognized by the American Psychiatric Association as a behavioral addiction with the highest rate of suicide risk. This session provides crucial information on identifying warning signs using DSM-5 criteria, understanding co-occurring disorders, and initiating life-saving conversations. Leave equipped with essential resources and mitigation strategies to address this public health concern in your community.

Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 1:00-2:30 PM

Register: [Impact of the Games We Play](#)

Ted Hartwell is back to the impact of the games we play. Digital gaming has become one of the most dominant forms of entertainment worldwide—surpassing the movie and music industries combined. But with growing popularity comes growing concern. This training explores the line between healthy and problematic gaming, highlighting features in video games and social media that can quickly lead to harm, especially among younger users. Participants will gain insight into how gaming and gambling behaviors intersect, learn to identify warning signs, and discover practical resources to address gaming-related harms.

Please feel free to share this with anyone who may be interested. We hope to see you there! Keep checking our [website](#) and our [LinkedIn](#) page for updates!

The New England ATTC Team

New England ATTC

Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

UMass Chan Medical School

New England ATTC - Addiction Technology Transfer Center (ATTC) Network

NewEnglandATTC@umassmed.edu



Thursday, November 20th from 3pm – 5pm

Gretchen Weaver, a UMass graduate student, will be competing in the 3 Minute Thesis Competition. Click [here](#) to RSVP. It is open to the UMass Chan community. Gretchen will be giving a 3-minute pitch on my research amongst 10 finalists, and we will be competing for a \$1,000 cash prize. Also, there is a fan favorite award of \$750, so the more people who come and support her, the better chances she has of winning!

FYI



This is the start of our annual employee giving campaign, UMass Chan Cares, a time when our Medical School community comes together to demonstrate care and compassion for our friends and neighbors. Over the years, our students, faculty and staff have contributed millions of dollars to employee giving campaigns to strengthen our communities and make a difference in thousands of lives.

The dollars you have raised help support research and education initiatives on our campus, break down barriers to academic success for K-12 students in Worcester and bolster many charitable organizations close to your hearts. Your donations help to relieve the economic pressures that charitable organizations face.

By visiting UMassChanCares.org, you may donate by payroll deduction, check or credit card, and direct your donation to a variety of worthy organizations and causes. They are:

- **UMass Chan's North Quadrant Support Services** initiative, which is our partnership with the Worcester Public Schools providing support to address socioeconomic barriers to academic success faced by students in our community.
- Several funds administered by the UMass Chan Medical School Foundation:
 - **The Research Fund** supports UMass Chan research that advances treatments and cures for a range of diseases, creating a better future for all of us.
 - **The Student Financial Aid Fund** provides students who are financially disadvantaged with opportunities to pursue education here at UMass Chan—opportunities that otherwise may not be accessible otherwise.
 - **The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund** supports institution-wide efforts to raise awareness among members of our community about the importance of diversity and inclusion and address bias.
 - **The Max Baker Resources Center** is available to students in all three schools facing food insecurity or barriers to accessing food and essential supplies including personal hygiene products.
 - **The UMass Chan Medical School Fund** provides important unrestricted financial support to our world class institution and allows UMass Chan to put the funds to use wherever and whenever the mission-critical need is greatest as situations arise throughout the year.
- **United Way of Central Massachusetts** or more than 1,000 nonprofit organizations through our partnership with the United Way of Central Massachusetts

I continue to be proud and inspired by your incredible generosity and look forward to another successful and impactful campaign. Thank you, in advance, for your participation in this year's UMass Chan Cares Employee Giving Campaign.

Please email our department lead, Carla McDonald, if you have any questions or need assistance.

Working Wisdom: Celebrating Diversity in How We Work

Diversity shows up in many ways — not just in our backgrounds, but also in our **behaviors, communication styles, and energy sources**. Some of us thrive in bustling group settings, others prefer quiet reflection, and many move between both.

This new *Education Corner* in the **Diversity Digest** will offer **short, engaging insights** into how personality and behavior shape our workplace experience. Each installment will highlight a different angle — from introversion and extroversion to communication, decision-making, and well-being — with quick takeaways and fun polls to spark reflection.

Together, we'll explore the **full spectrum of diversity in how we work** — and celebrate the strengths each style brings to our community.




Week 2

Energy at Work — What Fuels You?




Last week we explored where we fall on the introvert–extrovert spectrum. This week, we're zooming in on **energy** — what drains us, what recharges us, and how that plays out in the workplace.

Some of us walk out of a brainstorming session buzzing with ideas, while others need to step back and recharge quietly. Neither style is “better” — they're simply different ways of refueling.

The Science Behind It

- **Extroverts**  often feel energized by **dopamine hits** that come with social interaction.
- **Introverts**  are more responsive to **acetylcholine**, which rewards calm, internal focus.
- **Ambiverts**  benefit from both — and adapt based on the situation.

At a Glance

	 Extrovert	 Introvert	 Ambivert
Definition	Thrive on interaction, energized by people	Thrive on solitude, energized by time alone	Draw from both, depending on context
Energy Source	Social settings, team activities, conversations	Quiet reflection, solo tasks, downtime	Can “flip the switch” between social and solo modes
Style in Action	Leaves group work feeling recharged	Leaves group work feeling drained, needs recovery time	Comfortable in groups but also values time alone


Your Turn

Which setting gives *you* the most energy at work?

- Brainstorming in a group
- One-on-one conversation
- Quiet time to reflect and plan

Take this quick, two-question poll and see where our department lands

 <https://arcsapps.umassmed.edu/redcap/surveys/?s=HXP44NKJ38NC9MTT>

 **Practical Tip:** Pay attention to what *restores* you after a busy day. If your energy feels low, recharge in the way that suits you best — not necessarily the way others expect.

 **Next Week:** We'll look at **Communication Styles** — why some people talk to think, while others think before they talk.

Upcoming diversity calendar events:

- Samhain (Ireland & Scotland) **Oct 31-Nov 1**
An ancient Celtic tradition marking the shift into winter, widely known as the historical inspiration for Halloween.
- Día de los Muertos (Mexico) **Nov 2-3**
A vibrant celebration honoring loved ones who have passed, with colorful altars, marigolds, and lively parades that celebrate memory and connection.
- Thanksgiving (United States & Canada) **Nov 27**
A major harvest holiday focused on gratitude, togetherness, and a classic shared meal — including turkey, potatoes, and pumpkin pie.
- La Vendemmia (Italy)
Grape harvest festivals featuring local food, community events, and the first tastes of newly produced wine.

2025 NOVEMBER Monthly observances: * National Family Caregivers Month * National Native American Heritage Month	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	26	27	28	29	30	31	1 All Saints' Day
	2 * All Souls' Day * Día de los Muertos	3 * Cuenca Indep. Day * Culture Day	4	5 Guru Nanak's Birthday	6	7	8
	9	10	11 *Armistice Day *Cartagena Indep. Day *Veterans Day	12	13 Transgender Awareness Week (11/13-19)	14	15 *Nativity Fast (11/15-12/24) *Republic Proclamation Day
	16	17 Revolution Day	18	19 International Men's Day	20 *Black Consciousness Day *Transgender Day of Remembrance	21	22
	23 *Feast of Christ the King *Labor Thanksgiving	24	25	26	27 *Thanksgiving Day *The Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha	28 Native American Heritage Day	29
	30 *Advent (11/30-12/24) *Bonifacio Day *Native American Women's Equal Pay Day *St. Andrew's Day	1	2	3	4	5	6

UMASS CHAN REMINDERS

LAST WEEK, 10 AM – 2 PM

Farmers' Market, CSA, and Food Trucks at UMass Chan



Sponsored by Office of Well-Being and Office of Sustainability

Location: Outdoors, Medical School Building Terrace (Rain location: Old School Lobby or Albert Sherman Cafeteria)

In an effort to enhance campus sustainability, foster **engagement**, and promote well-being, we are proud to provide fresh, locally sourced food and products to our UMass Chan community and support small, local businesses in the region.

A variety of food trucks will be available each week offering food for purchase.

Questions? Email OWB@umassmed.edu.



HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Remaining Holiday Schedule for 2025:

- Veterans Day – Tuesday, November 11th
- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 27th
- Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 28th
- Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24th
- Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25th

PQHS Weekly will be sent to all members of PQHS on Monday mornings. The intent is to provide a snapshot of what is going on that week in PQHS and to share our faculty and staff activities with the department. We depend on you to provide the items we need to share. Please send suggestions of events, faculty invited seminars & talks, honors, student thesis presentations, and news – new babies born! – to Judi (judi.saber@umassmed.edu) & Sarah (sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu) by Friday each week.