

Practicum Abstracts 2024

Degree: MPH-65

Field of Study: Health Management

Project Title	Project Summary or Abstract
Health Management Associates Summer Intern	Strategic recommendations to state primary care associations for value-based care transitions across federally qualified health centers and to a city for space and programming for older adults.
Helping States Respond to New Medicaid Regulations	<p>As a Summer Analyst at Manatt Health, I crafted innovative strategies to assist state Medicaid programs in adhering to federal regulations set by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Given that over 70% of Medicaid spending is funded with federal tax dollars, state compliance with federal regulation is crucial for maintaining low-income health coverage.</p> <p>To help states understand the new regulations, in collaboration with think tanks and communication professionals, my project team developed educational materials and convened groups of state administrators. To support states in implementing new regulations, I created a detailed roadmap of requirements outlining compliance dates and program impact.</p> <p>I also authored an issue brief on fair compensation for Medicaid beneficiaries. The issue brief addressed a key concern of state Medicaid administrators: the fear that compensating individuals with lived experience could raise their incomes and jeopardize their Medicaid coverage. By researching federal tax policy and examining existing community-based advisory models, I identified viable solutions, such as multi-agency compensation and in-kind reimbursement, that states can implement to navigate this challenge effectively.</p> <p>Through my Applied Practice Experience at Manatt Health, I developed a better understanding of the firm's competitive advantage and main service lines. Manatt engages with federal partners on behalf of its clients and drives state health transformation through policy design and procurement. I learned that issued guidance should always be aligned with current research and practice, work products can and should evolve overtime, and to always consider capacity and reputation when pursuing new business.</p>

<p>Third Party Supplier Strategic Recommendation</p>	<p>The project aimed to identify the most promising virtual care provider categories for the company as it expands its offerings beyond behavioral health. These partnerships not only enhance Health Plan directories by providing alternative care options but also generate new patient leads for these virtual care companies.</p> <p>The project was divided into two phases: the first involved comprehensive research to assess the challenges Health Plans face, such as high patient demand, low provider availability, and escalating costs. It also required mapping the digital health landscape to identify leading companies within the selected categories, understanding their current partnerships with Health Plans, and evaluating their interest in new patient acquisition. The second phase focused on developing a strategic recommendation based on the research findings, addressing potential risks, required investments, and specific companies to target.</p>
<p>Enhancing Saudi Health Metrics for Global Excellence</p>	<p>My internship experience with the International Health Indicators Unit (IHIU) at the Saudi Ministry of Health provided me with valuable opportunities to learn about global health metrics, as well as the governance processes of national health systems.</p> <p>During my internship, I conducted in-depth analyses of health indicator data to identify emerging trends and areas for improvement, effectively communicating my findings to key health sector leaders. I also assisted in the assembly of comprehensive data sets to support the development of health indicator dashboards and other digital tools. Additionally, I contributed to the documentation of published health metrics, ensuring accuracy and consistency with international standards.</p> <p>One of my notable contributions was my involvement in the development of a proposal and initial strategy to incorporate social determinants of health into the governance of international health indicators. This initiative aimed to foster a more holistic approach to health by considering factors beyond traditional medical interventions. Furthermore, I supported the Ministry of Health's Data Bank Project by providing approved international indicators, complete with detailed data points and sources.</p> <p>Through my participation in meetings and site visits with key stakeholders, I gained valuable insights and built relationships within the healthcare sector. This engagement allowed me to contribute to the broader goals of the IHIU and strengthen the Kingdom's healthcare system.</p>

<p>Synthetic Control Arms and Digital Twins in Clinical Trials + CGT Long Term Follow Up Meets Patient Portal</p>	<p>For my practice projects, I worked on two key initiatives. The first initiative focused on exploring the use of Digital Twins and Synthetic Control Arms in clinical trials. My research involved evaluating the current state of these technologies and identifying their potential for improving trial efficiency and patient outcomes. By integrating synthetic control arms, we aim to reduce the need for traditional control groups, while digital twins offer a promising approach to simulate individual patient responses, enhancing personalized care and accelerating innovation. The second initiative centered around developing a patient portal for long-term follow-up in CGT. This portal addresses patient retention and engagement by leveraging digital tools. The project included designing a personalized patient journey, identifying key portal features based on patient needs, and ensuring data security. The ultimate goal was to enhance patient experience through more effective digital engagement during LTFU.</p>
<p>Analyzing Harvard University's Student Leave of Absence Policies</p>	<p>Leaves of absence (LOAs) are an important aspect of public health reform in the United States, with policymakers and others pushing for more comprehensive LOA benefits and protections. LOA reform efforts have encompassed student LOA policies at institutions of higher education. The COVID-19 pandemic, increased national focus on improving student mental health, and other factors have contributed to recent extensive reform of student LOA policies at such institutions.</p> <p>Aligning with the current national trend of reforming student LOA policies, this project analyzed Harvard University's student LOA policies with the goal of identifying aspects of those policies that could be improved. The analysis included the student LOA policies at Harvard's graduate schools and undergraduate college. Each of Harvard's schools has some autonomy over its student policies, therefore, their policies differ from each other. For instance, this project's analysis identified disparities between the schools' LOA policy language that have the potential to cause confusion among students, administrators, and others.</p> <p>Since this project succeeded at identifying aspects of Harvard's student LOA policies that could be improved, it also included the beginning process of drafting two proposals that will suggest modifications to those policies. Once finished, the first proposal will focus on suggested changes to the student LOA policies at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The second proposal will</p>

	focus on suggested changes to the default LOA guidelines that are created by Harvard's central administration and that serve as a template for the student LOA policies at all of Harvard's schools.
Developing Recommendations to Advance Patient-Centered Care: An Analysis of the Relationship between Patient-Reported Outcomes and Shared Decision Making Scores amongst Elective Procedures	Informed consent (IC) and shared decision-making (SDM) processes, as conducted in a patient's journey to elective orthopedic surgery, are below a reasonable person standard, despite legal, ethical, and professional obligations. This project, conducted with the Health Decision Sciences Center and Orthopedic Surgery department of Massachusetts General Hospital, sought to assess the landscape of documentation of IC and SDM at four sites within Mass General Brigham, and then develop responsive innovation that improves these processes to advance patient quality & safety. Utilizing quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, this practicum laid the groundwork for a strong evidence base for health system transformation and strategies to improve electronic medical record documentation that does not increase clinician burden.
Improving Health Outcomes through Health Economics	As a Health Economist intern, I worked with pharmaceutical companies to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of their novel drugs for rare diseases. To conduct these analyses, I contributed to my client projects by completing literature reviews of published literature and health technology assessments to understand precedence and extract relevant model inputs. I developed a model specification document and presentation to guide the client on model direction and data gaps. Additionally, I contributed to Excel-based cost-effectiveness models by updating analyses in response to new scenario requests.
Administrative Internship Program	The Mayo Clinic Administrative Internship Program is a 12 week program designed for graduate students interested in healthcare administration. Each intern is placed with a specific department/division and assigned a preceptor that supervises all their projects. I was placed in the Division of Nephrology and Hypertension at the Main Campus in Rochester, MN. I mostly worked on four projects: proposing a new staffing model for the dialysis quality monitoring team; evaluating remote patient monitoring programs; evaluating need for organizational structure change within Nephrology in-patient operations staff; and writing report recommending integration of EHR with third-party software to improve blood pressure monitoring workflow efficiency. Most projects involved some combination of shadowing/observing staff, interviewing stakeholders, collating and analyzing data from various sources and formulating conclusions and recommendations for next steps.

	<p>Besides these main projects, I also had the opportunity to attend various presentations, talks, guest lectures and institutional committee meetings that were hosted and attended by higher-level leadership at Mayo Clinic. Through my preceptor and assigned mentor, I was also able to use my time to develop my healthcare administration network by conducting "coffee chats" with various administrative, physician and nursing leadership throughout the organization.</p>
<p>Primary Care Sub-Capitation Summer Practicum</p>	<p>My project entailed two different workstreams.</p> <p>(1) Performing specialty data analysis on raw claims data from MassHealth's primary care sub-capitation program to update the current program logic to more accurately capture services related to primary care.</p> <p>(2) Conducting research on alternative provider specialty classification methods to capture primary care services versus specialty care services to make policy recommendations.</p>
<p>Patient Experience Communications Intern, Boston Children's Hospital's Innovation and Digital Health Accelerator</p>	<p>I generated and optimized patient and staff-facing education materials and resources for the Innovation and Digital Health Accelerator at Boston Children's Hospital following the Institutions transition to Epic. These materials were designed to be accessible and engaging in order to improve the patient experience as much as possible. They ranged from short, instructional copy for the patient newsletter circulated to over 300,000 patients and families regarding the updated patient portal, to updated in-depth user guides for call center staff regarding Epic's customer relationship manager (CRM). I also worked closely with the patient experience design team to synthesize patient insights and optimize processes such as appointment check-in and portal account sharing. This resulted in several positive changes to these processes, such as updated language regarding guarantor identification and expanded appointment eligibility criteria for self-check-in. Lastly, I conducted several research projects to inform recommendations on the implementation of a virtual access coordinator position, a partnership with a third party patient education materials provider, and updates to the Innovation and Digital Health Accelerator's Website.</p>
<p>Spotlight Brief on Immigrant Mental Health and Wellness in Massachusetts</p>	<p>The spotlight brief is designed to provide insight on the current landscape of immigrant health and wellness in Massachusetts, highlighting a specific topic of interest -- in this case, mental health. This brief presents research findings and incorporates a holistic, cross-sectoral approach to describing immigrant health and wellness. I conducted a literature review and synthesized data to identify actionable insights on immigrant mental wellness and provide policy recommendations, as well as</p>

	highlight the work currently being done in the mental health space at the Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research.
Emerging Priorities & Innovation, Takeda Pharmaceuticals	Scope and implement innovative digital health tools into the clinical trial lifecycle
Summer Innovation Fellow at Boston Children's Hospital's Innovation & Digital Health Accelerator	<p>For this practicum, I spent 12-weeks in the Innovation and Digital Health Accelerator (IDHA) at Boston Children's Hospital (BCH). This department within BCH combines the hospital's rich resources of data, clinical expertise and leading worldwide industry partners to develop technological innovations in health. My team – the Accelerator – identifies and vets high priority health technology innovations and provides the resources, funding and mentorship to accelerate development and commercialization.</p> <p>I worked on multiple projects over the summer, including an automated dosing platform for cancer drugs, an LLM for use by the parents or carers of the hospital's psychiatric patients, a digitalized pediatric cardiac rehabilitation program and multiple investment landscape analyses for AI in healthcare.</p> <p>Expanding on the cardiac rehabilitation program, BCH runs a world leading Cardiac Fitness Program with a proven high efficacy in improving the outcomes of pediatric patients with Congenital Heart Disease. The program requires in person visits which makes it inconvenient for the patient and human-intensive for the provider and means the program can only last 3-months. Me and my team were tasked with developing a digital-based method for continuing the program past the 3-month window, by incorporating telemedicine, remote patient monitoring and mobile application capabilities that would be reimbursable by Medicaid. This involved multiple stakeholder interviews, research on reimbursement models, and working with engineers to plan an MVP for the product.</p>
Product Development Intern, AdaRose	AdaRose is a workplace wellness startup dedicated to supporting remote and hybrid workers in managing stress and social isolation through a combination of digital and physical solutions. As a Product Development intern, I played a key role in the company's transition from a direct-to-consumer (DTC) to a business-to-business (B2B) model. Throughout the summer, my focus was on developing a more scalable and holistic approach to the business. By the end of the internship, I

	<p>helped with the design of an MVP program, which includes a personalized wellness quest delivered via a digital platform (in collaboration with a tech developer), a virtual webinar with a mindfulness expert, and physical wellness kits sent to employees. The idea is to leverage multiple engagement methods to enable remote/hybrid employees to develop personalized wellness habits and find interesting ways to connect with their co-workers in a remote setting.</p>
Innovation Portfolio Intern	<p>About the role: The internship will be responsible for driving workstreams for 1-2 projects within the Innovation portfolio. I will work collaboratively with a cross-functional team to validate the business case, work on design, and align stakeholders on path forward, as well as driving execution. I will work with Innovation Directors on the team on specific projects and will meet regularly with me throughout the summer program.</p>