



# Wisconsin Research & Education Network

<http://www.wren.wisc.edu/>

## **Mission**

The mission of the Wisconsin Research and Education Network (WREN) is to improve health outcomes for the people of Wisconsin through education, and through promoting and conducting primary care research in partnership with primary care clinicians and the communities they serve.

## **Introduction**

WREN is a group of primary care clinicians and researchers throughout Wisconsin who are interested in improving the care of patients through education and by conducting practice-based research and quality improvement projects. WREN staff are located in Madison, Eau Claire and Milwaukee.

## **Size and Scope**

WREN presently consists of more than 40 practices and over 100 clinicians in 24 communities, from 17 different healthcare organizations distributed across Wisconsin in an array very similar to the distribution of Wisconsin's population.

WREN includes three Aurora Health Care clinics:

- Aurora Sinai Family Care Center
- Aurora UW Medical Group Family Practice Center located at St. Luke's
- Aurora Wiselives Center for Wellbeing

## **Funding Source**

WREN has been successful in securing funding through participation in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health's Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR). This has allowed WREN to expand the staff necessary to support translational research projects and dissemination of research results at WREN practices.

## **History**

WREN is one of the oldest and most respected practice-based research networks in the United States. It has an enthusiastic group of practicing clinicians and academic family physicians with the expertise to conduct high quality translational research in "real world" practices across the state of Wisconsin. With recent ICTR infrastructure support from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health and the Wisconsin Academy of Family

Physicians, WREN is poised to become an agent of change in how medicine is practiced in Wisconsin and beyond.

### **Current WREN Projects**

- AZMATICS: Azithromycin/Asthma: Trial in Community Settings\*
- Wisconsin Initiative on Promoting Healthy Lifestyles (WIPHL)\*
- Quality of Life and Depression as Determinants of Treatment Adherence in Hypertensive Patients\*
- Proactive Risk Assessment of Primary Care of the Elderly
- Assessing Risk in Ambulatory Medication Use after Hospital Transitions
- Improving and Expanding Primary Care Treatment of Chronic Kidney Disease
- Establishing Benchmarks for the Medical Office Survey on Patient Safety
- Improving the Health Literacy Environment of Wisconsin Hospitals

### **Meetings**

WREN conducts two annual meetings. A research forum held in conjunction with the WAFP annual meeting and sponsored by the WAFP, and UWDFM provides a venue for Wisconsin medical students, resident physicians, and both new and experienced researchers to present their research findings in a supportive, collegial environment. WREN also conducts an annual convocation of clinicians to update WREN members on current and future projects, present preliminary study results and conduct WREN business.

### **Future Directions**

Dissemination of research results can be blended into quality enhancement projects resulting in improved health care processes and practices. These, in turn, can result in improved patient safety, patient satisfaction and health outcomes.

**WREN is interested in new collaborations with researchers and organizations to develop funded quality improvement and research projects.**

### **Leadership**

Paul Smith, MD, WREN Director  
Mike Grasmick, PhD, WREN Coordinator

#### *Research and Practice Support Specialists (REPSS)*

Cynthia Colombo, MS (Madison, WI)  
Peggy O'Halloran, MPH (Eau Claire, WI)  
Katherine Pronschinske, BS (Milwaukee, WI)

#### *Center for Urban Population Health*

Jennifer Evertsen, MS, Health Services  
Research Program Manager

#### *Aurora UW Medical Group Local Investigators*

Dennis Baumgardner, MD  
Elizabeth Bade, MD

\* Projects in which CUPH is actively involved