Dr. Xiaomei Cong was awarded $50,000 per year for five years for her application to the Affinity Research Collaboratives through the UConn Health Center’s Institute for Systems Genomics. Her research project, Early Life Physiological and Psychosocial Stress Imprints Gut Microbiome in Preterm Infants, has the central hypothesis that premature infants subjected to stressful early life experiences develop an altered gut microbiome, increasing risk for neurodevelopmental morbidity and gastrointestinal dysfunction relative to the development of necrotizing enterocolitis. Using state-of-the-art analytic and computational methods, this study will be the first to investigate the linkage of early life stress with the brain-gut-microbiota mechanism in human preterm newborns.

Dr. Colleen Delaney, was awarded a $1,000 research grant from the Sigma Theta Tau Mu Chapter for her proposal entitled The Use of Simulation to Instruct Nursing Students in Stress Management: Pilot Testing of the NURSE Intervention. The aim of this experimental pilot study is to evaluate a simulation-based educational program that assists nursing students to develop stress management plans. The intervention, termed NURSE (Nurture nurse, Use resources, Resilience, Stress and Environment management) is used to describe components of a comprehensive stress management education program.

Ms. Joan Esper Kuhnly, Clinical Assistant Professor, was awarded a $1,000 research grant from the Sigma Theta Tau Mu Chapter for her proposal entitled Exploration of Factors Related to the Prevalence of Sustained Breastfeeding in Late Preterm Infants. The purpose of this study is to determine the prevalence of sustained breastfeeding in late preterm infants at one and two months of age. In addition, she will examine which factors may predict sustained breastfeeding. By determining the prevalence of, and identifying factors related to, sustained breastfeeding in late preterm infants, there will be evidence to support practice guidelines in this population.

Dr. Thomas Van Hoof was awarded a $7,500 grant from the Society for Academic Continuing Medical Education for Standardizing the Use of Academic Detailing to Improve Quality through a Systematic Review of the Literature and an Expert Consensus Process. Dr. Van Hoof will work with Dr. Mike Fischer, Director of the National Resource Center for Academic Detailing at Brigham and Women’s Hospital/Harvard Medical School, to better define a common educational intervention, academic detailing, that is used for research and quality improvement purposes to change clinician behavior and to improve patient outcomes. The grant will support a UConn honors student and staff from the National Resource Center for Academic Detailing to facilitate this effort.

Dr. Thomas Van Hoof was awarded a $199,991 grant from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services through his work with Qualidigm. The project, Medical Home Transformation, is a mixed methods study that will help Medicare determine if National Committee for Quality Assurance recognition of primary care private practices in the patient-centered medical home leads to transformation of these practices in support of better health and health care for their patient populations. Dr. Van Hoof will lead the project with Dr. Thomas Meehan, Qualidigm’s Chief Medical Officer, and a longstanding team of quality improvement experts in primary care. Dr. Van Hoof will be working with Qualidigm to conduct this one-year study. Qualidigm, Connecticut’s federally-designated Quality Improvement Organization, is a longstanding research partner of the School of Nursing, serving as a site of projects for students and contributing to our doctoral curriculum through guest lectures in health policy.
Recent Grant Applications

Dr. William Barta submitted RE-ENTRY EXPERIENCES AND RECIDIVISM to the U.S. Department of Justice’s National Institute of Justice. The goal of the project is to examine the assumption that reentry represents a psychosocial transition marked by high stress and concomitant decline in self-control. It is theorized that developing measures to detect problematic transition experiences will enhance the individual prediction of recidivism. The request is for $778,290.

Dr. Michelle Judge submitted DOSE-EFFECT OF MATERNAL DHA SUPPLEMENTATION IN PREGESTATIONAL TYPE 2 DIABETICS TO ENHANCE MATERNAL-FETAL TRANSFER to the American Diabetic Association. The purpose of this investigation is to examine if different DHA doses supplied to women with pregnancies complicated with pregestational type 2 diabetes (PGT2D) enhance the amount of DHA transferred to the developing fetus and affect length of pregnancy in this high-risk group. The reduced amount of DHA supplied to the developing infant is specific to pregnancies complicated with PGT2D, placing these infants at an elevated risk for negative outcomes. This investigation evaluates the usefulness of a low-cost/low-risk intervention to prevent potential impairments that can impact a lifetime. Dr. Judge has requested $444,000 for this project.

Dr. Thomas Van Hoof and Dr. Deborah McDonald have submitted EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF ECHO ON PATIENT OUTCOMES THAT MATTER, a UConn subaward on an Improving Healthcare Systems Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute application submitted by Community Health Centers, Inc. Using Project ECHO, a novel telehealth intervention that links primary care providers (PCPs) with specialists to improve PCPs’ ability to manage complex conditions, the objective of the project is to improve the outcomes and experiences of medically underserved patients with pain. The study team will work closely with patients with chronic pain to get their advice on how best to teach providers what they need to know to care for pain. During ECHO sessions, PCPs present cases to expert specialists who then teach the PCPs how best to manage their cases. This study will assess whether this intervention improves patients’ ability to take an active role in their own care, share in medical decisions with their providers, and have improvements in pain levels and ability to function. In addition, patients and providers will be surveyed and interviewed to learn about their experience in this intervention. Total UConn subaward request is for $80,157.

Dr. Deborah Shelton has submitted FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO APPALACHIAN ADOLESCENT PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE, a subaward application on a West Virginia University Prescription Drug Abuse (R21) proposal to National Institute on Drug Abuse. This with the Monongalia Court system seeks to examine the factors that contributed to adolescent prescription drug abuse. Designed in two phases, a descriptive analysis of statewide secondary data will be followed by interviews with local diversion program staff, youth participants and their families to better understand the problem. Total UConn subaward request is for $282,386.

Recent Publications


### Presentations

**LoGiudice, J.** (2013, May). *A qualitative meta-synthesis of survivors of sexual abuse and their childbearing experience.* Paper presented at the Science of Caring for Self and Others in the Context of Relationship Based Care, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, Hartford, CT.


**McKelvey, M.** (2013, May). *The other mother: A narrative analysis of the postpartum experiences of nonbirth lesbian mothers.* Paper presented at the Science of Caring for Self and Others in the Context of Relationship Based Care, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, Hartford, CT.


**Schjavland, E.** (2013, May). *A systematic literature review of kin relationships in dementia caregiving.* Paper presented at the Science of Caring for Self and Others in the Context of Relationship Based Care, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, Hartford, CT.

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For questions or comments contact Elise Bennett at 860-486-8321