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Summer 2024



Emory Prevention Research Center

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Research in Georgia and Beyond

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GATHER.II Team Travel

GATHER
Georgia & Armenia Teams
for Healthy Environments & Research

GATHER.II



Greetings, ողջიქნ, მისალმება

Greetings from the GATHER Smoke-Free Homes team! We're excited to share our recent travels to Armenia and Georgia, where we spent two enriching weeks engaging with local partners, coalition members, and health coaches.

GATHER II builds upon the community coalitions established in our community randomized trial of coalitions for smoke-free environments, GATHER. GATHER II will leverage these community partnerships to adapt and deliver our evidence-based intervention, *Smoke-Free Homes: Some Things are Better Outside*.

During our visit, we conducted workshops aimed at empowering coalition members and health coaches to recruit and effectively deliver an adapted version of the *Smoke-Free Homes* intervention in their respective countries. We also discussed strategies to promote physical activity opportunities and active living environments. The dedication and enthusiasm we encountered were truly inspiring, reinforcing our commitment to advancing smoke-free initiatives, especially those focused on home environments, with global partners.

Beyond our work, we embraced the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the rich cultural heritage of Georgia and Armenia. From exploring historical landmarks, like the Akhtala Monastery and old town markets, to savoring local cuisine, like khinkali (Georgian Dumplings), every experience deepened our appreciation for these amazing countries.

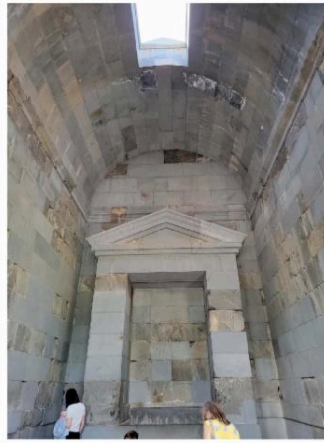
We are grateful for the warm hospitality and meaningful connections made along the way. Thank you to our hosts, partners, and everyone who made this trip memorable. We look forward to continuing our efforts in promoting smoke-free homes and healthier communities in Georgia and Armenia. Both countries will begin recruitment in September 2024.

To learn more about our prior work in Georgia and Armenia, click [HERE](#).

To learn more about *Smoke-Free Homes: Some Things are Better Outside*, and to order your free kit, click [HERE](#).



The GATHER Smoke-Free Homes Team: Łucja Bundy, Carla Berg, Michelle Kegler, Shadé Owolabi in front of the Arch of Charents with a view of Mount Ararat.



The Temple of Garni, the last standing pagan temple located in the village of Garni in central Armenia.



The GATHER team made khinkali.



US Team with Armenian partners and coalition members at the end of a two day workshop.



Craftsman at local shop in Dilijan, Armenia.



Our Georgia partners from the National Center for Disease Control and Public Health at Cave City.



Shadé Owolabi and Armenian partners from American University of Armenia and National Institute of Health.



Uplistsikhe, a cave city near the town of Gori is one of the oldest settlements in Georgia.



Old Town in Tbilisi, Georgia is home of the giant Mother of Georgia statue and the oldest part of Tbilisi.

Study Results

Healthy Homes/Healthy Families Study

Results are Finally Here!

The randomized controlled trial conducted in collaboration with four United Way 2-1-1 agencies across Georgia referred over 1,400 participants to our study. We enrolled a total of 512 participants who completed the baseline data collection requirements of a home environment survey and two 24-hour dietary recall surveys.

Once randomized, participants were assigned to intervention and control groups across the four sites.

The 12-week Healthy Homes/Healthy Families intervention, rooted in Social Cognitive Theory, featured health coaching via phone calls and texts. Coaches helped participants set healthy action goals and provided support tools including magnetic grocery list pads, sample-sized seasonings, and healthy portion plates. Control group participants received mailings on dietary guidelines without the home environment focus.

Findings indicated improvements in diet quality among intervention participants overall, and notably in fruit intake and reduction in added sugars. Intervention participants also significantly improved some elements of their home food environment relative to those in the control group:

- Decreased inventories of unhealthy foods/snacks
- Improved food preparation methods and food serving practices
- Decreased family meals from non-home food sources
- Decreased frequency of family meals and snacks with the TV on

The study calculated intervention costs at \$85 per participant, estimating potential savings from improved diet quality over 10 years. The intervention is cost-effective and cost analysis suggested the potential for significant cost savings, assuming sustained behavioral changes for at least three years.

A BIG THANK YOU to our 2-1-1 partners: United Way of Southwest Georgia, United Way of Greater Atlanta, United Way of Central Georgia, and United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley. Stay tuned for more information on our small grants program and how seven organizations, including two United Ways in Georgia, are adapting and tailoring the delivery of this program to their clients.



HH/HF program participants worked on these 8 Healthy Actions...



20.2% chose to identify one unhealthy food or drink and do not allow it in the home.



12.6% chose to cut back on how often your family eats fast food or restaurant food.



14.7% chose to always have a low-calorie beverage available instead of sugar soda and/or sweet tea.



10.0% chose to place a scale in a visible location to weigh in weekly.



13.3% chose to reduce portion sizes and avoid second helpings.



9.7% chose to use healthier methods to cook vegetables, meat, and/or fish.



13.3% chose to create rules that limit eating while watching TV.



6.4% of participants chose to bring home fresh fruits and vegetables at least once a week and make them easy to see and grab.

Thank you FQHC Partners!

SFH 5A Enrollment is Winding Down. Thanks to our FQHC Partners!

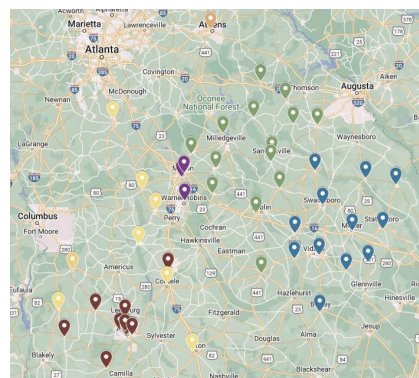
Our Smoke-Free Homes 5A study aims to rigorously test whether our smoke-free homes intervention, expanded to include smoke-free vehicles, could promote smoking cessation when integrated into the 5A's for tobacco cessation within primary care settings.

We are conducting a randomized controlled trial in partnership with six federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) across Georgia to compare the efficacy of the expanded smoke-free homes and vehicles intervention against standard clinical guidelines for tobacco cessation. Participants in the intervention group receive the enhanced Smoke-Free Homes intervention along with a connection to the QuitLine (QL) for free cessation counseling offered to all Georgia residents. The control group receive mailed information about the QL immediately following the baseline interview and can request a connection, as needed. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of our six FQHC partners, we successfully enrolled 915 participants.

In addition to the primary research objectives, the baseline data collection survey included questions related to COVID-19, leading to a forthcoming paper exploring the influence of home smoking environments and stress on smoking behaviors during the pandemic among FQHC patients in rural Georgia. Additionally, two papers derived from qualitative interviews with smokers in southwest Georgia investigate COVID-19 vaccine acceptance and the influence of COVID-19 on smoking behaviors through changing contexts. [Read it here.](#)

Despite the challenges faced during the study due to the pandemic, the collaboration with our FQHC partners and the invaluable data collected will significantly contribute to our understanding of smoking cessation and behavior changes during unprecedented times. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all involved for their unwavering support and participation.

FQHC Partners



The EPRC Smoke-Free Homes 5As study team partnered with six FQHCs that operate 89 clinical sites in Georgia. EPRC team members visited 58 sites to assist with the referral process.

- . Albany Area Primary Health Care
- . Athens Neighborhood Health Center
- . CareConnect Health
- . Community Health Care Systems
- . East Georgia Health Care
- . First Choice Primary Care

Mini-Grant Results

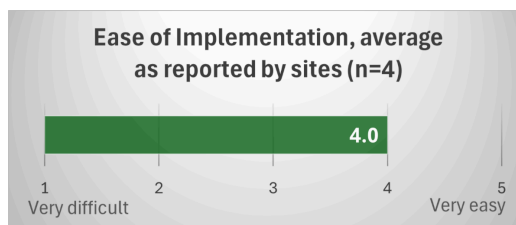
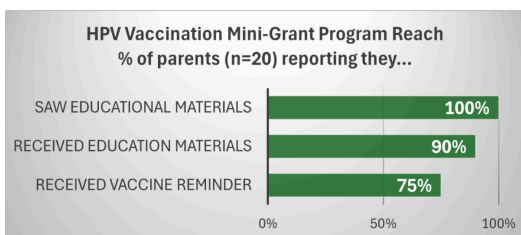


The human papilloma virus (HPV) Vaccine Mini-Grant Program funded four county health departments to implement a multi-level intervention to increase HPV vaccination in southwest Georgia. Emory Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network (CPCRN) led this program from January-December 2023, and provided the health departments up to \$10,000, a toolkit with evidence-based strategies to increase HPV vaccination rates, and technical assistance calls. The sites were required to choose two out of the three levels (patient, provider, and practice) and implement strategies for each level for a year. Common strategies were patient education, patient incentives, provider training, extended clinic hours, and patient reminders for subsequent HPV vaccine doses.

From November 2023-March 2024 Emory CPCRN conducted an implementation evaluation. Patients, including young adults and parents of vaccinated children, completed a survey about their experience receiving the HPV vaccine at the funded health department sites. Health department staff also completed a survey asking about the patient reach and the effectiveness of the levels and strategies each site chose to implement. In addition to the staff survey, interviews were conducted to explore the facilitators and barriers of implementing the multi-level intervention at their site. Results included:

- Total HPV vaccination rate increased 21% from 2022 to 2023 across the health departments
- Of the 20 parents who completed a survey, all reported that they saw educational materials (100%)
- Parents also reported receiving educational materials (90%)
- and a vaccine reminder (75%)
- Sites reported high ease of implementation (M=4.0) on a scale of 1 (very difficult) to 5 (very easy)

The facilitators to program delivery were relative priority of the topic, leadership involvement, technology infrastructure, communications about the vaccine and program, available resources (e.g., funds, materials), and staff training and support from other agencies. Barriers included limited resources, communication, and structural characteristics (e.g. technology/Electronic Health Record) and local attitudes and conditions. Later this month, the health department sites will receive evaluation site-specific reports with the results from the patient and staff surveys, and staff interviews.



Infographics



We create infographics to make it easy to learn about our research.

[Find them on our website](#)

Evaluation Findings

The Two Georgias Initiative Cross-Site Evaluation Report and Data Now Available

From 2017-2023, the EPRC served as the initiative-level evaluator for [The Two Georgias Initiative](#), a multiyear investment in rural Georgia community coalitions that worked to achieve health equity through the elimination of health disparities in Georgia's rural communities. This work was funded by Healthcare Georgia Foundation (now Georgia Health Initiative).

The final 5-year cross-site evaluation report is now available on our website.

[Click Here to View Report](#)

A key data source for the evaluation was a population-based survey of randomly selected households in 11 rural Georgia counties in 2018-19 (n=2,788) and 2022-23 (n=1,421).

[Click here](#) to request copies of our data collection instruments, brief data reports and datasets.



[Visit our Website](#)

Partnerships

Darrell Sabbs, EPRC Community Advisory Board Member Attends SPR 32nd Annual Meeting

SPR 32nd Annual Meeting

Advancing Partnerships and Collaborative Approaches in Prevention Science

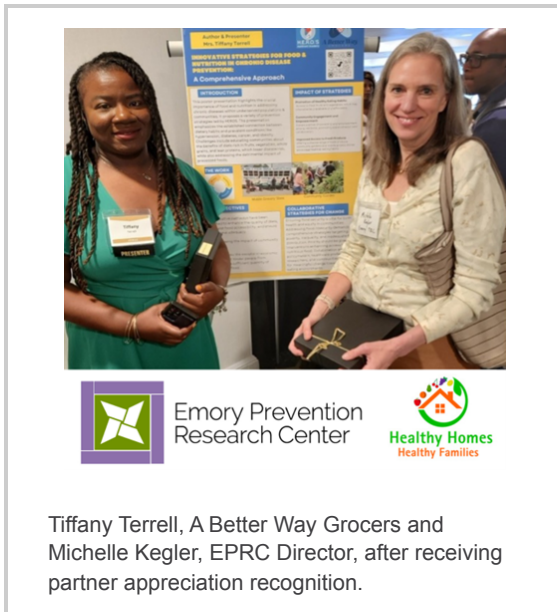
May 28-31, 2024 Washington, DC



During the meeting, Darrell shared how community-based participatory research is working in the field. He joined CDC and other PRC community partners and staff for the panel “Centering Community Voices: Challenges and Facilitators to Building and Maintaining Trust in Long-Standing Community - Academic Partnerships.” **Their abstract received an SPR Award of Distinction.**



Recognition



Tiffany Terrell, A Better Way Grocers and Michelle Kegler, EPRC Director, after receiving partner appreciation recognition.

The EPRC was honored to receive partner appreciation recognition at the **Georgia Department of Public Health's Chronic Disease Symposium!** We are grateful for the acknowledgment of our collaborative spirit and innovative approaches in chronic disease prevention with GA DPH.

EPRC Community Advisory Board member **Dr. James Hotz** was honored by Winship Cancer Institute at the Cancer Summit earlier in the year.

Register for Free Training Now!

Free Training Webinar:
Social Determinants of Health
Part 3

You will be able to:

-  Describe categories of Social Determinants of Health
-  Discuss indicators of Social Determinants of Health
-  Locate Social Determinants of Health data for your community

Friday, August 9th, 10-11:30am (EST)
Register now using this link or the QR code:
<https://tinyurl.com/4kj5wj82>
Register now - space is limited!

Sponsored by the Emory Prevention Research Center



Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age. They affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Learn more about the SDOH and how to address them on the EPRC's free training webinar on Friday, August 9th, 10:00am -11:30am. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/4kj5wj82>



Training Webinar
September 6th, 2024
10:00 – 11:30 am

Collaboration for Public Health: Community Partnerships

**EPRC Training Materials
and Resources
Can be Found on the EPRC Website**

We encourage you to review these and share with partners in your communities.

Go to EPRC Training Webpage

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