

**FOREWORD**  
**SPECIAL ISSUE ON PUBLIC HEALTH**

I am very pleased to introduce this first out of two Special Issues on Public Health, Healthcare Policy, and Financing & Economics for *Public Administration & Management, an Interactive Journal*. This Special Issue has articles covering topics in public health from the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon and United States. The issue consists of nine papers that address topics from different perspectives of interest to healthcare policy makers, academic researchers and practitioners. The symposium for this Special Issue was posted and advertised on a national scale. It was promoted at the Academy of Health annual meeting in Orlando, FL , June 2006, International Society of Healthcare Financial Management (RHFM.org). All of the papers for the symposium were subjected to blind, peer review and the authors revised the manuscripts in accordance with the Guest Editor's and reviewers' comments.

The first paper in this issue, authored by Nasar U. Ahmed, J. Fort, A. Malin and M.Hargreaves sets the stage and addresses "Barriers to Mammography Screening in a Managed Care Population" This study identified personal, economic, and health care system barriers to mammography in a managed care population. Participants were Black and White female residents of Middle Tennessee. The authors concluded that among insured low-income women, significant barriers remain to breast cancer screening, particularly low rates of physician recommendation, lack of relevant information, and prevalence of mistrust and fear. Health care system changes can improve cancer prevention screening practice and would result in an increase in breast cancer screening rates among low-income insured and uninsured populations.

The second paper, authored by Michael Belcon, N. Ahmed, M. Younis and M. Bongyu, analyses and develops a model for developing countries. The authors use Trinidad and Tobago as a case study for their research. The paper provides a set of solutions that could be used in developing countries to improve their health care systems.

The third paper, by Ibrahim Al-kattan, is another with international perspective titled “Disaster Recovery Plan Development for the Emergency Department - Case Study.” Dr. Al-Kattan examines the use of simulation technique to measure the performance of the Emergency Department (ED) in the United Arab Emirates. The author uses an ED as a case study to set a procedure to develop several scenarios. The performance of the ED is evaluated under these conditions with the objective to maximize the ED readiness, maximize the patient throughput by minimizing the patient flow time.

The fourth paper, by K.M. Kassak, A. Mohammad Ali and A.M. Abdallah, is “Opting for a caesarean: What determines the decision?” The authors surveyed 600 women from 10 hospitals in Lebanon to determine the impact of maternal, physician, and hospital characteristics on caesarean section rates in Beirut. They found that caesarean delivery was significantly associated with multiple gestation, gestational age, number of previous deliveries, site of prenatal care (private clinic vs. health center), time of delivery (morning vs. evening), day of delivery (weekend vs. weekdays), and history of previous acesarean delivery.

The 5<sup>th</sup> paper, by Xinchun Zhou, Jake Olivier, and D. Olga McDaniel, is “Impact of Socioeconomic Disparities and Education on Trauma –Induced Clinical

Complications.” Their research examined the impact of the social status on the outcome of the clinical complications after traumatic injury. Their study further substantiated the role of ISS in predicting clinical outcomes after traumatic injuries. Patient’s age, ethnicity, education background and unemployment status were all considered as possible confounding risk factors, variably affecting the development of SIRS and sepsis after traumatic injury.

The sixth paper, by Joseph Inungu, V. Mumford, J. Brroking-Fisher Malone Beach and Mustaf Younis, is “HIV Testing Among Women in the United States.” The study analyzed data from the 2005 National Health Interview Survey to determine the proportion of women aged 18 years and older who have been tested for HIV in the United States and assessed the factors associated with seeking the HIV test. The authors found that only 39 percent (n= 6,496) of the 16,838 women interviewed had been tested for HIV. African American and Hispanic women and women who were pregnant were more likely to have been tested for HIV. Considering the rising number of HIV cases among women, more efforts are needed to increase the proportion of women who are aware of their HIV serostatus in order to counsel those who are not infected and link those who are infected to health services.

The seventh paper, by Jara J Montano, J. Acosta-DeprezBeach and T. Sinay, titled "Assessing the Health Care Needs of Filipino Americans in Greater Long Beach.” The study investigates the perceptions of Filipino American population in the greater Long Beach area regarding their current health status and health care needs. The study results showed that that Filipino Americans were in good health and were satisfied with the Long Beach health care system. On the other hand, smoking, mental health issues,

lack of exercise and lack of compliance with mammogram screenings amongst Filipino women were areas of concern.

The eighth article, by Moye Bongyu, Gloria Billingsley, Mustafa Younis, and Emeka Nwagwu is titled “ Genetically Modified Food and Public Health Debate: Designing Programs to Mitigate Risk” The study examined the controversies surrounding the likely effects of Genetically Modified foods/organisms (GMOs) on human health. It establishes that the GMO effects are risky and highly unpredictable especially with the tendency towards globalization. This study focuses on how the GMO risks to public health can be reduced by policymakers through designing effective programs to mitigate the risks. The Precaution Adoption Model (PAM) was selected to tackle this growing health concern. This model was described and evaluation strategies analyzed on the basis of which success can be determined.

In the 9th paper, Jeffrey Harrison and Mary Ann Daly, investigated the use of clinical information systems to improve patient safety within United States healthcare organizations. They address strategic planning for information systems for the reduction of errors, improved clinical decision-making, enhanced quality of care and to foster an environment which maximizes patient safety.

I trust that the reader will find the papers in this Special Issue to be both interesting and provocative, and that they will provoke further research, case studies and demonstrations in the field of Public Health.

I gratefully acknowledge valuable guidance and feedback provided by the Ad-Hoc Editorial Board and Dr. Gwendolyn S. Prater, the Founding Dean, College of Public Service, Jackson State University, for her support to

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