

Media Relations

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Grant to UNH Institute Will Evaluate Public Health Funding in N.H.

The New Hampshire Institute for Health Policy and Practice (NHIHPP), a research institute at the University of New Hampshire, has received a \$150,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to identify New Hampshire's myriad sources of public health funding with an eye toward improving the funding and delivery of public health services in the state.

The project, led by NHIHPP in collaboration with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, the Community Health Institute, and four community-based public health entities (in Manchester, the Monadnock region, the North Country, and the Lakes region), will focus on funding for addressing tobacco use and prevention.

"New Hampshire has a particularly complex public health infrastructure. It's not clear exactly how the services we receive as people are being paid for," says Jo Porter, deputy director of the NHIHPP and principal investigator on the grant. For example, she says, tobacco prevention services may be supported by a range of sources, including state funding, community organizations, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations.

Understanding how public health initiatives are funded can help communities better address public health issues, Porter says. Among the questions the project will probe is whether communities are more or less engaged with public health initiatives when there are many sources of smaller amounts of funding or a single large source, such as the federal or state government.

"When you figure out the contribution of the players, the picture of public health delivery can change," Porter says. "As resources get scarcer, we have to be really thoughtful about funding sources and who they can be."

From this evaluation, NHIHPP seeks to develop a generic tool that can be used throughout the nation to help collect financial and operating data, allowing other states to evaluate their own financial networks and how they relate to and affect public health services.

The New Hampshire Institute for Health Policy and Practice (<http://chhs.unh.edu/nhihpp/index.html>), located within the College of Health and Human Services at UNH, conducts and disseminates high-quality, cutting-edge applied research and policy work that enables our health system partners to implement evidence-based strategies to improve public health.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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