

2020 Margolis Summer Internship- Reflection

Chloe Mitchell-MPH candidate at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health

Mentor- Charlene Wong

I will always remember the summer of 2020. The summer when the COVID-19 pandemic overwhelmed the globe. The months when new energy to fight racial injustices spread throughout the world. The summer when we all had to accept that life was going to look quite different for a while. I feel very fortunate to have been working as a Margolis Intern during this time, as the Margolis community provided me ample opportunities to stay informed and engaged with the world around me.

The Margolis Internship program went above and beyond the standard summer internship. Nearly every week, the Center hosted a webinar or seminar discussing the latest news and innovations in health policy. As an intern, I was able to learn from the entire Margolis community. Weekly journal clubs and frequent discussions with my peers provided me space to process what was happening in our country in real time. These conversations were not isolated to designated hour-long meetings, but we worked to integrate new perspectives from current events into our project work.

The project I spent the most time on was the North Carolina Integrated Care for Kids (InCK) model. InCK is a child-centered local service delivery and state payment model. InCK aims to improve the quality of care for children covered by Medicaid or CHIP, especially those with or at-risk for developing significant health needs. NC InCK is currently in a two-year planning period. By joining the InCK team in its development phase, I was able to help strategize on how to bring this model to life. Having worked on the evaluation side of an alternative payment model for several years, getting to be a part of the development of NC InCK was invigorating.

While the internship provided me opportunities to develop several hard skills, such as qualitative interviewing, communicating information to a variety of audiences, and developing health programs and policies, the softer skills I developed feel far more meaningful. Each day, I collaborated with so many passionate and talented individuals. It was a joy to be a part of teams that cared deeply about their work. In midst of a difficult time in history, the Margolis community provided me hope and showed me how much a team can accomplish when energy, compassion, and innovation are integral to the culture.