Duke-Margolis Summer Intern Position Descriptions

The mission of Duke University's Robert J. Margolis, MD, Center for Health Policy is to improve health and the value of health care by developing and implementing evidence-based policy solutions locally, nationally, and globally.

Duke-Margolis brings together capabilities that generate and analyze evidence across the spectrum of policy to practice, supporting the triple aim of health care – improving the experience of care, the health of populations and reducing the per capita cost. This requires broad multidisciplinary capabilities that few institutions can bring together, and is fueled by Duke University’s entrepreneurial culture.

For students, the Center focuses on increasing opportunities to gain exposure to the field of health policy through collaborative curricular pathways and expanded mentored research opportunities for students interested in health policy. This summer, Duke-Margolis seeks interns to work with faculty on a variety of health policy-related projects. Project descriptions below.

Applications are due March 9, 2018 by 11 pm.

Compensation: $10.75- $12.00/hour based on education and experience level.

Timeframe: 8 weeks, June 2-July 27, 2018

**Summer 2018 position descriptions:**

**Billing for Transitional Care Management – barriers and facilitators**

*Project mentor: Janet Bettger, ScD, FAHA*

*Location: Durham, NC*

**Background:** Health care reform in 2010 established a clear commitment to transitional care and care coordination. Reimbursement for a targeted set of services became possible in 2014 with the introduction of transitional care management (TCM) billing codes to support specific care strategies for patients discharged home from an inpatient setting. Uptake/use of the TCM CPT codes ranges from 0-58% with national average of 29%. The services who use them report the program funds itself. Yet other health systems have elected not to use them. Use, barriers to use, and the business case have not been studied.

**Project Deliverables:**

1. Students will complete structured interviews with health system leaders on the barriers to use.
2. Students will complete a cost simulation of resources needed for TCM for targeted populations first in urban areas and then considering issues challenging use in medically underserved regions.
3. Students will prepare a report with policy and health system recommendations regarding the TCM. Findings will be also be used in support of a proposal for external funding.

**Applicant Requirements**

1. Completed a course on healthcare systems, healthcare governance, or healthcare financing
2. Demonstrated experience conducting interviews
3. Exceptional written and oral communication skills
Applying Organizational Economics to the Health Sector  
Project mentor: Barak Richman, PhD, JD  
Location: Durham, NC  
Background: The health sector has avoided what the business literature describes as organizational innovation, or, transformations in how firms create and deliver goods and services. This summer, Professor Richman will be working on a book that applies organizational economics to the health sector. Specifically, it will focus on the development and ossification of the current architecture of the health sector, and the economic and policy levers necessary to pursue an alternative architecture. Dr. Richman is looking for an intern to help research a variety of topics, including payment systems, referral networks, patient engagement strategies, virtual technologies and wearables, ACOs and vertical care relationships, physician practices and retail medicine, and insurance analytics.

Project Deliverables:  
1. Students should expect assignments with approximately 1-week turnarounds, including:  
   a. Research on specific topics  
   b. Constructing readable and compelling charts and figures  
   c. Proof reading

Applicant Requirements:  
1. Computer savvy, smart, energetic, and self-motivated

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Leveraging NC Medicaid Data for Children’s Health AND/OR Facilitating Evidence-based Policy Work by Academicians  
Project mentor: Charlene Wong, MD  
Location: Durham, NC  
Background: Through the Children’s Health Discovery Institute, we will be initiating 2-3 projects related to early childhood, pediatric behavioral health and potentially childhood obesity. The summer intern would be able to join one of the teams conducting these research projects. In addition, Dr. Wong will be writing a viewpoint piece with senior policy and academic collaborators about the disincentives for academicians to effectively partner with policymakers to generate evidence-based policy.

Project Deliverables:  
1. NC Medicaid data analysis  
2. Contribution to research, a policy brief and academic research paper.  
3. Viewpoint and/or blog post.

Applicant Requirements:  
1. Some analytic experience preferred, though not required.  
2. Strong writing skills preferred.
Improving Health Care for Serious Illness
Project mentor: Robert Saunders, PhD
Location: Washington, DC
Background: People with serious illnesses, such as those at the end of life or those with complex conditions, that often suffer from impaired daily functioning often do not receive health care that meets their goals or improves their quality of life (such as pain). Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) offer an important strategy for improving care for serious illness populations. ACOs are by far the largest alternative payment model sponsored by Medicare, and the number of commercial ACO contracts is growing rapidly. While ACOs have great potential in improving serious illness care, there remains substantial opportunities for improvement. This project’s goal is to identify promising practices for serious illness care in ACOs through analyzing data about ACOs, case studies of successful organizations, and research into the organizational factors necessary for change.

Project Deliverables:
1. The project is to produce six case studies, and a student could be involved with a team producing one of those case studies by the end of the summer.

Applicant Requirements:
1. Graduate student or advanced undergraduate student.

Accountable Care & Global Health Innovations
Project mentor: Andrea Thoumi, MPP, MSc
Location: Washington, DC or Durham, NC
Background: The Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy and the Global Health Innovation Center are collaborating on a project with the aim of accelerating the uptake of successful accountable care and frugal innovations from abroad that can improve the care of high-need, high-cost populations, or people with two or more chronic conditions and complex needs, in the United States (US). Building on past successful projects and our existing network of international and domestic innovators, providers and payers involved in ongoing collaborations, we are problem sourcing and identifying solutions that address delivery and financing challenges to design an integrated solution that implementation partners could pilot. The intern will support the Margolis/GHIC research team in implementing the project and the intern will learn about accountable care, care delivery innovations and payment reform. More information here.

Project Deliverables:
1. Develop a model that we could use to measure the impact of a potential pilot;
2. Work with the research team on 1 or 2 “innovation spotlights”;
3. Assist with organizing the Commonwealth Fund roundtable, which will take place in September or October 2018;
4. Assist with organization the World Innovation Summit for Health side meeting on value based care for universal health coverage (will take place in November 2018) or other meetings related to the topic as they arise.

Applicant Requirements: MPP, MBA or MA with strong quant background and 1-2 year work experience
Community Health, Disease Management and Patient-Centered Care
Project mentor: Bradi Granger, PhD, MSN, RN, FAAN
Location: Durham, NC
Background: The intern will assist Dr. Granger on a number of current projects based on the student’s interests and experience. Dr. Granger’s work currently includes projects on community health and care coordination, with an emphasis on patient-centered health and chronic diseases.

Potential Project Deliverables:
1. Contributing to projects studying the following topics: diabetes, cardio-metabolic illness, myocardial infarction, patient education, electronic health records, care coordination, mobile health
2. Developing abstracts, presentations
3. Contributing to papers, with an opportunity to publish
4. Engagement in data collection, entry, and analysis

Applicant Requirements:
1. No specific requirements in addition to application materials.

Exploring Value-Based Care from Various Perspectives
Project mentor: Gillian Sanders Schmidler, PhD
Location: Durham, NC
Background: The student would be involved as a member of the team on a project we are performing for the PhRMA Foundation looking at the effect of changing analytic perspectives in decision analytic models on conclusions about the relative value of different strategies across several therapeutic areas. For this project, we will re-analyze three previously published cost-effectiveness analyses from four different perspectives: (a) society, (b) overall healthcare sector, (c) individual payer, and (d) patient. Differences between these perspectives include the inclusion or exclusion of out-of-pocket and nonmedical costs, the analytic horizon, and the choice of aggregate outcomes such as quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) or discrete benefits (such as cancer deaths prevented) and harms (such as specific treatment complications or side effects). The three clinical areas are use of prophylactic implantable cardioverter-defibrillators (ICD), preoperative testing for malignancy in patients with adnexal masses, and influenza vaccination during pregnancy. This project will illustrate the impact of changing perspective on value estimation, in terms of both traditional economic measures such as cost/QALY, and in clinical metrics such as the ratio of discrete harms to benefits. In doing so, this project will provide insight into the utility of incorporating additional perspectives, beyond those of society and the healthcare sector into economic analyses, particularly those being done to support value-based care approaches.

Project Deliverables:
1. The grant is ongoing through the end of this calendar year — but with the students involvement on the project they would be able to be included as a co-author on resulting publication(s).
2. The student will be involved in the needed decision modeling, literature review, and, if interested, writing of the resulting publications.

Applicant Requirements:
1. The student should have strong quantitative skills.
Using a mobile app to reduce cancer-treatment related financial burden in patients

**Project mentor:** Yousuf Zafar, MD, MHS

**Location:** Durham, NC

**Background:** Patients with cancer are at risk for experiencing tremendous out-of-pocket costs from treatment. Dr. Zafar is currently enrolling patients in a randomized trial of a mobile app designed to link patients to financial resources. The student will help enroll patients on the clinical trial, and will call patients to complete follow-up surveys. The student will need to spend time in the Cancer Center at least twice a week.

**Project Deliverables:**
1. Student will work on manuscript writing for this study, and for a prior study.
2. Student will present results to our research team and at the Margolis Center.
3. Student will write a blog post and/or opinion article.

**Applicant Requirements:**
1. Self-motivated
2. Exceptional communication skills
3. Interest in interacting with patients