



Spotlight on our PhD Candidates

This newsletter profiles three doctoral students who are members of the research team at the Center for Health Policy and Healthcare Research. They are completing the PhD program in Population Health at Northeastern University.

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Gerri Cramer, RN, BSN, MBA

[Gerri Cramer](#), who has a nursing degree and an MBA, worked in the health technology industry before enrolling in the PhD program in Population Health. Her dissertation focuses on hospitals' engagement with their communities to improve population health. From her dissertation, she [published a paper](#) in the **American Journal of Public Health** examining the progress of hospitals in conducting the types of community health needs assessments required by the ACA.



Another component of her dissertation is examining hospital collaboration with local public health departments and the implications for community health.



Stephen Flaherty, BS, MBA

[Stephen Flaherty](#) has an undergraduate degree in computer science and an MBA. Before enrolling in the PhD program, he worked for a teaching hospital as a healthcare administrator. With financial support from the **National Institute for Health Care Management**, he is completing a study on utilization and cost of diagnostic imaging. He recently [published a paper](#) from his dissertation in the **Journal of the American College of Radiology** that examines trends in the use of different diagnostic imaging

modalities.

Another component of the dissertation provides estimates of the magnitude and cost of inappropriate diagnostic imaging.

Ashwini Ranade, BDS, MPH

Ashwini Ranade, a dentist with a masters degree in public health, is completing a dissertation focusing on the use of emergency departments (ED) for non-traumatic dental services (NTDS). One of the papers from her dissertation demonstrates that many people who use EDs for NTDS have repeat ED visits within 30 days highlighting these visits as an important marker for problems people face in accessing adequate dental care.



Another component of her dissertation examines the impact of dental coverage for Medicaid enrollees on ED visits for NTDS.