



Paradigm Project



The Blueprint: Paradigm Project Updates

A Message From Dr. Simpson

Dear Colleagues,

The Paradigm Project is challenging long-established practices in health services research (HSR) in order to focus on improvements to the field.

Since Paradigm's July Convening, our 17 Design Teams have been employing design thinking to help the HSR field evolve. Central to that process are what we call "empathy interviews." These are conversations with people who produce, use, or are intended to benefit from health services research that are providing first-hand accounts of the challenges the field faces.

We held our January in-person meeting this week, and the Design Teams shared with each other what they've learned through their empathy interviews and any potential solutions they've already identified. Design Teams continued to build upon concrete ideas to address their unique challenges – with a focus on ideas that ensure we are responding to the needs, priorities and values of a diverse range of people and communities. At the meeting, most teams started the process of prototyping and initial testing of the most innovative of these ideas.

For a sneak preview of the challenge each Design Team is addressing, check out our new [graphic summary](#) outlining the work of each Design Team.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lisa Simpson
President and CEO, AcademyHealth

Learning Community Updates

The Paradigm Project consists of 17 Design Teams, each of which are focused on responding to a particular challenge of HSR. This month, Learning Community Member [Ziad Obermeyer](#) shares an update on his Design Team's work.

Q: Tell us about the challenge your Design Team is exploring.

A: We are trying to understand how the enormous promise of new technologies— machine learning, robotics, and more

—will affect health services research. The issues we're grappling with are similar for many new technologies and new fields of study: sometimes they don't play well with existing fields.

Q: Your Design Team is gauging how key stakeholders feel about bringing new technologies into the field of health services research. What have you found so far?

A: One thing we've learned from our empathy work is that people who want to be out in front of these trends—as they apply for grants, try to hire new faculty members, etc.—are bumping up against the boundaries of the way fields and institutions look now. They are asking questions like: In what study section will this grant be reviewed? Which department will this new person sit in, given that his or her work is too applied for computer science but too methods-heavy for a traditional school of public health or medical school? These are real challenges.

Q: How are you dealing with these challenges?

A: In short, with pragmatism and hopefulness! I'm optimistic about how ripe many of these technologies feel for the field of health services research, which itself sits at the intersection of medicine, economics, behavioral science, and other fields. So, I think a lot of the same kinds of playbooks will apply: it will be messy and painful, but at the same time really exciting.

Q: What do you like best about serving as a Learning Community member?

A: The human-centered design process has certainly been eye-opening for me, but I think that the real force behind the project is the people. There's no one I'd rather be talking these things over with than the people the Paradigm Project has brought together to reimagine the promise of health services research.

Featured Resource

The Fall 2019 edition of *Issues in Science and Technology* offers a helpful resource to Paradigm Project Learning Community members exploring how to help health services research realize its potential to improve the delivery of health care. In his article, "[Retrofitting Social Science for the Practical & Moral](#)," Kenneth Prewitt, Carnegie Professor of Social Affairs at Columbia University and former director of the U.S. Census Bureau, offers translatable insights into how social sciences research can better address a "daunting agenda of social problems," from immigration to gender inequality.

Reactor Panel Question

Are you a member of the Reactor Panel?

This month, the Paradigm Project Learning Community's question for you is:

The Paradigm Project is focusing on the intersection of emerging technologies and health services research (HSR). With this in mind, what new technology do you think should be prioritized?

[Answer the Poll Question »](#)