

EPINET Qualitative Research Methods Interest Group

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I am a licensed clinical psychologist in New York and tenured Associate Professor at CCNY in the Department of Psychology who has a postdoctoral research training background in psychiatric epidemiology at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. My work over the past 15 years has centered around the study of race, racism, and psychosis and the stigma of mental health service utilization in Black and Asian populations. I have co-lead projects designed to identify social determinants of psychosis risk in populations of color using quantitative, epidemiologic, and experimental approaches. Currently I am partnering with investigators at Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) using mixed-method approaches to study the collective trauma of the COVID pandemic in some of the hardest hit Black and Latinx communities in NYC. I am also leading a mixed-method study to examine anti-Black racism in Black young people in OnTRACKNY with a first episode of psychosis. I am interested in joining this group to share resources and knowledge about implementing qualitative and mixed method approaches and to build collaborative networks across similar interests.

Leopoldo J. Cabassa, PhD, Associate Professor, Director

NIMH T32 Brown School Training Program in Mental Health Services Research, and Co-Director of the Center for Mental Health Services Research at the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis

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My research examines physical and mental health disparities in historically underserved minority populations with serious mental illness (SMI). My work blends quantitative and qualitative methods, community engagement, intervention research, and implementation science and has been supported by the National Institute of Mental Health, the New York State Office of Mental Health, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. My scholarship is making significant contributions in three areas: improving depression literacy and reducing stigma toward mental illness in the Latinx community; reducing inequities in health and health care in racial/ethnic minorities with SMI; and improving mental health care for people experiencing first-episode psychosis.

Sabrina Ereshefsky, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Scholar

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I am a 2nd year postdoctoral research fellow at UC Davis, working under mentorship of Dr. Tara Niendam. I received my Ph.D. in Human Services/Child Clinical Psychology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County after completing my pre-doctoral clinical internship at University of Arizona's Early Psychosis Intervention Center (EPICenter). Alongside my graduate school mentor, Dr. Jason Schiffman, my past research has focused on functioning in individuals at clinical-high risk for psychosis, with a special interest in ADHD comorbidity and prior stimulant use. My clinical experiences include working within community, inpatient/outpatient pediatric hospital, and school-based clinics providing services (psychotherapy, neuropsychological assessment) to youth, adolescents, young adults, and families. My role on the EPI-CAL Learning Health Care Network includes working on both quantitative and qualitative aspects. I am leading assessment efforts to understand provider and organization level characteristics that may impact implementation and uptake of the Beehive Data Outcomes Platform and use of data in care. I have also led or co-facilitated 20+ focus groups across the 18 participating CA EP clinics: topic include outcomes and measure selection for the EPICAL battery/EPINET CAB, Beehive application and wireframe development, and data sharing/end user license agreement topics with client, family, provider, and county stakeholders. I have been using nVivo for qualitative analysis under the mentorship of Dr. Mark Savill (UCSF). I am planning to apply for a K23 training grant that will be under the EPICAL umbrella, with a qualitative/mixed-methods approach, and will have a translational science focus. I am looking to gain more experience and to learn from other leaders working at the intersection of psychosis and qualitative methods.

Nev Jones, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry

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I am a mixed methods mental health services researcher. I have published extensively on the subjective experience of psychosis (phenomenology), social and structural determinants, and service user experiences of mental health services, including CSC. Bringing personal experience as a young carer and representative payee, recipient of disability- and income-based welfare, subsidized housing and specialized early psychosis services, I have long championed the meaningful involvement of those most directly impacted by public sector mental health services in research, policy and systems design. I am currently the service user involvement lead for the Lancet Commission on Psychosis, and oversees a global initiative sponsored by the International Early Psychosis Association (IEPA) aimed at mapping service user priorities for early intervention research around the globe.

Vanessa Vorhies Klodnick, PhD, LCSW

Thresholds Youth & Young Adult Services; Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health, Steve Hicks School of Social Worker, The University of Texas at Austin; Co-Investigator for EPINET-TX

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I am a social worker turned implementation scientist who works at the intersection of research, practice and policy. I hold an interesting joint academic-real world appointment as the Director of Research & Innovation in Thresholds Youth & Young Adult Services in Chicago and as faculty affiliate/co-I with UT-Austin Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health. I use mixed community-based participatory action research methods to better understand and design effective mental health services for marginalized and vulnerable young people as they transition to adulthood. I lead/have led several funded research, evaluation, training and technical assistance projects with state and provider partners to develop, implement, evaluate and refine clinical, peer and vocational supports to boost service engagement and outcomes among young people, including those diagnosed with psychosis. I am most excited to join this group to learn more about how different EPINET sites are conceptualizing and measuring engagement – and how EPINET research hubs and sites are truly engaging in meaningful continuous quality improvement processes *together*.

Alicia Lucksted, PhD, Associate Professor

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I am a clinical-community psychologist focusing on applied research improving public mental health services regarding early psychosis, psychosocial rehabilitation topics, peer-led & self-help services, and anticipated and internalized stigma and their impacts and amelioration. I work with both quantitative and qualitative research methods in intervention design and testing, and clients' & family members' experiences of interventions and programs/systems. I frequently serve as a qualitative design and methods Co-I and resource person for colleagues and trainees, and provide qualitative interviewing and focus group data collection training for both UM and VA. In the Connection-LHS EPINET site (Maryland & Pennsylvania) I am a qualitative co-investigator leading data collection and analysis for our designated research project (addressing cannabis use in CSCs) and future LHS projects. I am looking forward to meeting colleagues and collaborators in EPINET to develop and execute qual and mixed methods and projects to develop a truly learning healthcare system regarding early psychosis.

Neely Myers, PhD Associate Professor, Anthropology

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I am a medical anthropologist and tenured professor who has been engaged in research around the experience, understanding and treatment of psychosis in the U.S. since 2002 and in Tanzania since 2013. My research has focused on people who have been diagnosed with a psychotic disorder, ranging from the everyday experience of long-term psychosocial disability, to being a peer provider, to being a young person being hospitalized for a psychotic disorder for the first time. I have also studied a range of mental health services, including clubhouses, peer-run services, peer-led services, mental health clinics, and jail diversion programs. Currently, I am serving EPINET-TX as a qualitative co-investigator leading data collection on young people enrolled in EPINET clinics who have engaged in substance use and abuse. I am also working with a team from UCLA on innovative approaches to supporting people with psychotic disorder who are also experiencing chronic homelessness. I joined this group to find collaborators excited about building future studies and qualitative/mixed methods training opportunities around the EPINET platform.

Kathleen Nye, Staff Research Associate

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I am a staff research associate in the UC Davis Department of Psychiatry. I have previously coordinated research studies evaluating use of mobile health applications in northern California early psychosis programs. I also have experience working with clients and families as a clinic coordinator in the UC Davis SacEDAPT clinic. As part of the EPI-CAL project, I am supporting the design, development, and deployment of the data collection and data visualization application. Since the EPI-CAL team has prioritized gathering and incorporating stakeholder feedback throughout the entirety of the project, our application development has involved conducting focus groups to gather qualitative feedback on various aspects of the application (wireframes, End User License Agreement). I joined this group to learn from and contribute to the conversation of further incorporating qualitative methods across EPINET.

Oladunni Oluwoye, PhD Bio, Assistant Professor

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I am a trained mental health counselor and health education specialist. I am also the Co-Director of Washington State Center of Excellence in Early Psychosis, which is a joint collaboration between Washington State University, University of Washington, and the Washington Health Care Authority. My research is focused on reducing racial and ethnic inequities in mental health service utilization and family engagement in early intervention programs for psychosis. I joined this group to hear about the great qualitative and mixed methods work others are doing and finding a way to collaborate with others doing similar work.

Shannon Pagdon, Peer Specialist Research Assistant for EPINET-New York

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I am an early career researcher, peer specialist and youth advocate currently living and working in New York City. My current research focus is on the intersections of trauma and psychosis, and aspects of the subjective experience of psychosis that have been historically neglected. I have had a diagnosis of psychosis since eighteen, and now seek to change disparities within the system by sharing my lived experience, and through research. Though I have been an advocate for a few years, more recently I've shifted my focus back to academics and my research project with Dr. Nev Jones. I am currently a member of the Amplify OnTrack team, and am contributing to the EPINET team here. I joined to see what other EPINET teams are engaging in and look forward to collaborating.

Sapana Patel, PhD, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology (In Psychiatry),

Columbia Psychiatry and the New York State Psychiatric Institute, Co-Investigator and Co-leader of Amplify OnTrackNY and Adapting Coordinated Specialty Care in the Post-COVID-19 Era.

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I am a bilingual (Spanish-speaking) Indian American psychologist and researcher whose work focuses on the improvement of behavioral health care delivery for underserved individuals with serious mental illness. My research focuses on the development and testing of person-centered interventions to empower and individuals to participate in their own care, training community-based behavioral health providers, and implementation of evidence-based practices to improve behavioral health care delivery. In my role at the Center for Practice Innovations at Columbia Psychiatry, I oversee programs to improve care for obsessive-compulsive disorder and behavioral healthcare redesign. This work requires diverse stakeholder engagement including participants, families, providers and payors to develop person-centered tools and resources and developing training and implementation support for the state behavioral health workforce. Currently, I am co-Leader of Amplify OnTrackNY, the stakeholder engagement arm of the OnTrackNY learning healthcare system with Drs. Iruma Bello, Nev Jones and Leopoldo Cabassa. I joined this group because I am interested in finding forums where we might discuss experiences with engaging diverse stakeholder perspectives (as they relate to the quality improvement, racism and social injustice, impact of COVID-19) in a learning healthcare system and building future qualitative studies around the EPINET platform.

Mark Savill, PhD, Assistant Researcher, Psychiatry

UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences, Co-Investigator and Qualitative lead for EPI-CAL

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I am a mental health services researcher who originally trained in London, England before moving to the US in 2015. My research has primarily focused on improving pathways to care and treatment outcomes for individuals experiencing psychosis-spectrum disorders. More recently, this has been extended to include the evaluation of crisis programs, substance use disorder programs embedded within primary care, and adaptations to Housing First approaches to support homeless individuals with comorbid substance use disorder and severe mental illness. On EPI-CAL, our qualitative work is focusing on guiding the implementation of a learning healthcare network across our clinical sites. This includes exploring stakeholder preferences for data collection and presentation, examining the barriers and facilitators to successful project implementation, and exploring experiences of receiving or delivering data-driven early psychosis care. For this meeting I am hoping to better understand how qualitative approaches are being utilized across the EPINET system to help refine our own approach in EPI-CAL, and to explore opportunities for collaboration across teams.

Tamara C. Daley, PhD Principal Research Associate

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I have been involved in qualitative research since the mid 1990's, when I spent a year in India conducting interviews and observations related to the diagnosis of autism and experience of families. I received my PhD in Clinical Psychology from UCLA, with a minor in Medical Anthropology. Over the years, I have applied my skills across a variety of areas, including a 17-year longitudinal mixed-method study of children with developmental disabilities, creating an observational tool for classroom quality in rural Kenya, examining mental health issues in second-generation Cambodian youth, understanding youth experiencing homelessness in New York City, participating in an analysis of 15 countries demonstrating success in anti-tobacco policies, and evaluating organizations working to address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in 14 sites around the U.S., among others. Related to early psychosis, I led the process evaluation component of the Mental Health Block Grant 10% Set Aside Study and was the project director for a recent study on transitions out of CSC programs that involved 9 case study sites. I currently serve as the coordinator for the harmonization aspect of EPINET. I also work on the ethnographic component of a randomized trial of supported employment for individuals with a mental health condition. I am looking forward to helping this group think of ways to integrate qualitative approaches into EPINET data collection processes.

Preethy George, PhD, Senior Study Director

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I am a senior study director at Westat with a PhD in clinical psychology and more than 15 years of experience in prevention science, early intervention, and the evaluation of programs designed to address mental health outcomes in young people. My research interests include the exploration of risk and protective factors predicting mental health and academic outcomes for youth and young adults, particularly those living in underserved communities and the translation of research evidence to inform mental health policy. In the area of early psychosis, I have served as the project manager for the SAMHSA/NIMH Mental Health Block Grant 10% Set Aside National Evaluation, which was focused on evaluating Coordinated Specialty Care services nationwide and am currently serving as the Project Manager for the EPINET National Data Coordinating Center. I joined this group to learn more about how we can expand our understanding of early psychosis care and complement what we learn from the Core Assessment Battery with qualitative data and mixed methods analyses.