

Maria Teresa Peña

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Ph.D. candidate with a focus on health economics and health services research aspiring to a tenure track academic position leveraging the following areas of expertise and focus:

- Telehealth costs and utilization
- Economic evaluation
- Claims and household survey data analysis
- Applied econometrics
- Texas Medicaid/CHIP policies
- Financial risk due to health payments
- Health financing policy

EDUCATION

University of Texas, School of Public Health

Houston, Texas

PhD Candidate in Health Economics

Expected June 2022

Minors: Biostatistics; Health Services Research Quantitative Methods

Dissertation: Cost, utilization patterns, and cost-utility analysis of tele-mental health among Medicare beneficiaries with major depression (Dissertation chair: Robert O. Morgan, Ph.D)

University College London

London, UK

Master of Science (MSc) in Economics

May 2014

Thesis: Examining the role of remittances on labor supply in Mexico, an instrumental variable approach (Dissertation supervisor: Christian Dustmann, Ph.D)

University of California, Davis

Davis, California

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Economics and Bachelor of Arts (BA) in International Relations

May 2011

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Texas, School of Public Health

Houston, Texas

Research Associate

May 2019-present

Economic evaluation of Telehealth of Programs in Rural Mississippi (HRSA)

October 2021-present

- Drafted two successfully funded HRSA grant proposals on conducting economic evaluation of telehealth programs
- Development of research study designs to conduct economic evaluations of different telehealth programs
- Development of research study designs to address the impact of costs and utilization among telehealth users within UMMCs Center for telehealth programs

Research funding support (Role: Graduate research associate)

- I. *Evaluating the Impact of a Comprehensive D2C Telehealth Program on Maternal Health Outcomes in Rural Mississippi*
Health Resources Service Administration HRSA 21-082
(PI: Tearsanee Carlisle Davis | Site-PI: John M. Swint)
2021-2026
- II. *Economic evaluation of Telehealth of Programs in Rural Mississippi*
Health Resources Service Administration HRSA 21-020
(PI: John M. Swint) 2021-2026

Center for Healthcare Data: Health of Texas Dashboard

May 2021-Dec 2021

- Analysis of utilization, costs, prevalence and estimates of Medicaid, Medicare and Commercial Insurance enrollees diagnosed with Severe Mental Illness (SMI) during the 2015-2019 period in the state of Texas.
- Production of estimates to be published on the Health of Texas dashboard for individuals insured through Medicare, Medicaid, and Commercial insurance in Texas.

Meadows Mental Health Project (Texas Medicaid/CHIP Severe Mental Illness Youth)

May 2019-Dec 2021

- Analysis of 2013-2020 claims evaluating the impact on costs and utilization of transitioning to a managed care model in Texas Medicaid and CHIP
- Identify the association between site of care on costs and utilization among youth enrollees with severe mental illness

Research funding support (Role: Graduate research associate)

- I. *“Serious and Persistent Mental Illness with Medicaid Managed Care: Descriptive Analysis and Policy Options for Texas.”*

Meadows Foundation and Texas Department Health and Human Services (PI: Robert O Morgan)

External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) and Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) Project (Texas Medicaid STAR+PLUS Population with Severe Mental Illness)

Jun 2019- Jan 2020

- Monitored performance of care provided to the SMI population by Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) in Texas from 2017 to 2018 using HEDIS and additional utilization measures such as follow-up rates after mental health related hospitalizations and readmission rates
- Assessed the impact of community mental healthcare centers involvement on spending, service delivery and follow-up among Texas Medicaid adults with severe mental illness
- Identified health policy options for HHSC based on performance, utilization, and cost analyses

Speech pathology reliability for stroke swallowing screening items pilot study

2020- 2021

- Assessed the reliability of Speech Pathologists (SLPs) by swallowing screening items and in recommendations

Benefits of Stroke Treatment Delivered Using a Mobile Stroke Unit Compared to Standard Management by Emergency Medical Services: The BEST-MSU Study

Jan 2020-May 2020

- Structured real-life clinical trial data for economic analytical purposes
- Produced do-files for quality checks, to clean and restructure data to prepare for conducting an economic evaluation

RESEARCH WORKS IN PROGRESS

1. **Pena M**, Li R, Lindsay J, Deshmukh AA, Swint J, Morgan R. Costs and utilization of tele-mental health services among Medicare beneficiaries with depression.
2. **Pena M**, Deshmukh AA, Lindsay J, Li R, Swint J, Morgan R. Cost-utility analysis of tele-mental health care among Medicare beneficiaries with depression
3. Zhang Y, **Pena M**, Fletcher L, Reneker J, Swint M. Cost of remote patient monitoring for cardiovascular disease: a systematic review
4. Morgan R, Chabbria K, **Pena M**, Truong C, Theis R, Rowan P. Impact of Community Mental Healthcare Center Involvement Among Medicaid Adult Enrollees Diagnosed with Serious Mental Illness

TEACHING AND MENTORING EXPERIENCE

University of Texas, School of Public Health

Houston, Texas

Graduate Teaching Associate/Co-Instructor

- US Healthcare Payment Systems and Policy (MPH/PhD) Spring 2022
- Dissertation Proposal Development (PhD) Spring 2022
- US Healthcare Payment Systems and Policy (MPH) Fall 2021
- Health Survey Research Design (PhD) Fall 2021

Graduate Teaching Assistant

- Health Policy in the United States (MPH/PhD) Spring 2021
- Health Service Delivery and Performance (MPH/PhD) Spring 2021
- Health Survey Research Design (PhD) Fall 2020
- Health Policy in the United States (MPH/PhD) Spring 2019
- Economic, Social Determinants of Health (MPH/PhD) Spring 2019
- Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (MPH/PhD) Summer 2019

Peer mentorship program

2021-present

- Peer mentor to a PhD student at UTHealth

GUEST LECTURES AND PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- **Pena M.** Methods of Economic Evaluation in Clinical Research. “Economic issues and use of economic evaluations in LMICs”. MS in Clinical Research. UTH McGovern 2020 Spring
- **Pena M,** Suk R. “Statistical methods in Health Economics”. MPH and PhD students. Health Economics. UTHealth SPH. 2020 Spring
- **Pena M.** (Freelance Consultant). “Feasibility of monitoring financial protection: what household surveys and data are available in the Western Pacific region?” *Workshop on Designing financial protection policies*. 10 September 2019. Manila, Philippines
- **Pena M.** (Consultant, WHO Western Pacific Regional Office). “Transition to Sustainable Domestic Financing”. *Malaria Programme Managers Meeting to Review Progress on Implementation of the Regional Action Framework for Malaria Control and Elimination in the Western Pacific 2016-2020*. 27 June 2018. Manila, Philippines
- Mueller M (OECD) and **Pena M.** (Consultant, WHO Western Pacific Regional Office). “Primary health care Expenditures”. *14th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Health Accounts Experts*. 25 April 2018. Seoul, Republic of Korea.
- **Pena M.** (Consultant, WHO Western Pacific Regional Office). “Health Accounts in the Western Pacific Region”. *13th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Health Accounts Experts*. 16 June 2016. Seoul, Republic of Korea.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

World Health Organization (WHO), Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) Manila, Philippines
Financial Protection Expert (remote) March 2020-Jan 22

- Lead methodological training in conducting out-of-pocket analysis using household survey data and in estimating Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.8.2 and related indicators for Ministry of Health and Statistical office officials in Malaysia and Laos
- Co-lead financial protection monitoring analysis and co-authored policy reports for several countries including Australia, Mongolia, and Korea
- Work with WHO headquarters, regional office, and country office to conduct focal point update, data request and methodological guidance in estimation of SDG.3.8.2. as part of the “WHO Global Monitoring on financial protection on health 2021”
- Drafted methodological report on conducted data checks and validation of submitted data, feedback to countries and reporting to HQ of the SDG.3.8.2
- Conducted financial protection analysis for Mongolia and China, and wrote a comprehensive policy brief linking to health financing policies
- Drafted report on availability of high frequency data in WPRO
- Drafted a data mapping report to assess the availability of data for financial protection analysis

World Health Organization (WHO) Health Systems Governance and Financing Geneva, Switzerland
Economic Analysis and Evaluation Short Term Consultant (remote) Aug 2019-Feb 2020

- Reviewed data availability and gaps to produce the SDG 3.8.2 indicator and poverty measures for 27 countries in the Western Pacific Region
- Identified heterogeneity of survey instruments for financial protection monitoring
- Facilitated a Stata workshop specifically on the SDG 3.8.2 financial protection indicator monitoring

World Health Organization (WHO) Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) Manila, Philippines
Health Policy and Financing Consultant (Remote) Jul 2018- Jul 2019

- Contributed to technical studies on resource allocation and strategic purchasing, sustainable financing, primary health care, financial health protection and health financing policy

Health Policy and Financing Consultant Feb 2016 -July 2018

- Worked collaboratively with Ministry of Health officials, academics and WHO staff from Cambodia, Viet Nam and Lao PDR to assess financial protection gaps
- Analyzed household budget surveys to identify financial protection and poverty gaps in 6 countries in Asia and identified health financing policy options
- Ensured the quality and accuracy of SDG indicators on Universal Health Coverage indicators for 8 countries in the Western Pacific Region
- Provided technical support to countries in the Western Pacific Region on National Health Accounts (NHA) and health expenditure tracking
- Informed policy through literature reviews, policy briefs, technical reports, and presentations in areas of hospital autonomy and reform, social health insurance policy, health financing policy, health service delivery, primary health care and transition financing

Health Policy and Financing Intern May-Sep 2015

- Conducted literature reviews on health financing systems and policies to produce health financing profiles
- Produced health financing factsheets for 27 countries in the Western Pacific Region

CO-AUTHORED INTERNALLY PEER-REVIEWED REPORTS

1. WHO Western Pacific Regional Office. Mongolia trends in health service utilization, out-of-pocket spending, catastrophic spending and impoverishment due to health payments 2009-2018 (*Under review*)
2. WHO Western Pacific Regional Office. Australia trends in out-of-pocket spending, catastrophic spending and impoverishment due to health payments 2009-2015 (*In progress*)
3. WHO Western Pacific Regional Office. Republic of Korea trends in out-of-pocket spending, catastrophic spending and impoverishment due to health payments 2011-2020 (2021) (*In progress*)
4. UHealth School of Public Health (2020). "Quarterly Topic Report 1: Spending, Service Delivery, and Follow-up for STAR+PLUS Members with Severe Mental Illness"
5. WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (2019). "Financial health protection in Cambodia 2009-2016: analysis of data from the Cambodia Socioeconomic Survey"
6. WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (2018). "Health financing regional profile 2018: transitioning to integrated financing and service delivery of priority public health services"
7. OECD/WHO. Chapter 6 (2018). "Health at a glance: Asia/Pacific 2018: Measuring progress towards Universal Health Coverage".
8. Regional framework for action on transitioning to integrated financing of priority public health services in the Western Pacific (2018). Manila. World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.
9. World Health Organization. Regional Office for the Western Pacific. (2017). Technical Workshop on Indicators, Data and Methods for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals and Universal Health Coverage in the Western Pacific Region, Manila, Philippines 24-26 May 2017: meeting report. WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific.

TECHNICAL INPUTS TO REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- Cambodia national health accounts, 2012-2016: health expenditure report (2018). Manila, Philippines. World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific.
- Lao PDR National health accounts report FY 2012-2016 (2017). Think Well.
- Wagstaff A, Flores G et al. Progress on Catastrophic health spending in 133 countries: a retrospective observational study (2017). Lancet Global Health.
- New Perspectives on Global Health Spending for Universal Health Coverage (2017). Geneva: World Health Organization

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND TRAININGS

Led virtual trainings on UHC/ SDG indicator methodology:

- Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB). October 2021.
- National Health Financing Planning Division, Malaysia Ministry of Health. June 2021.

Presented, led panel discussion, and facilitated training on Stata.

- Workshop on Designing financial protection policies. 10-12 September 2019. Manila, Philippines.

Presented, organized, and facilitated in the technical and logistics aspects of:

- 14th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Health Accounts Experts. 24-26 April 2018. Seoul, Korea.
- 13th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Health Accounts Experts. 29-31 March 2017. Bangkok, Thailand.

- 12th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Health Accounts Experts. 15-17 June 2016. Seoul, Korea.

Formed part of the secretariat and facilitated in the technical and logistics aspects of:

- Second Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Universal Health Coverage for the Western Pacific Region. 13-15 November 2017. Manila, Philippines.
- Technical Workshop on Indicators, Data and Methods for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals and Universal Health Coverage in the Western Pacific Region. 24-26 May 2017. Manila, Philippines.
- First Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Universal Health Coverage for the Western Pacific Region. 12-14 December 2016. Manila, Philippines
- WHO Bi-regional workshop on the System of Health Accounts 2011. 29 February 4 March 2016. Beijing, China.
- WHO Bi-regional workshop on Health financing policy for Universal Health Coverage in Asia (cosponsored by the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank). 11-15 July 2016. Manila, Philippines

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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| Member, International Health Economic Association | 2020-present |
| Treasurer, Academy Health | 2019-2021 |
| Member, American Public Health Association | 2019-present |

HONORS AND AWARDS

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| • Awarded Aurelia Murphy Killian Endowment in Public Health scholarship | 2021-2022 |
| • Doctoral Scholarship. Awarded outstanding new student scholarship | 2018-2019 |
| • Doctoral Scholarship. Awarded MPACH Department Scholarship | 2020-2021 |
| • Dean’s List. | 2010-2011 |
| • President’s Honor Roll. | 2007-2008 |

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming: Stata, SAS, Microsoft Excel (Advanced); TreeAge (Proficient); Matlab (Basic)

Language: English and Spanish (Native/Professional); French (Elementary)

VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

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| • Organized a fundraiser during the COVID-19 lockdown in El Salvador in April 2020: raised over \$10,000 to distribute basic food packages to over 800 families | 2020 |
| • Volunteered to teach English classes to students in San Juan Opico, El Salvador with Glasswings, El Salvador | 2013 |

REFERENCES

Robert O Morgan, Professor of Management, Policy and Community Health, University of Texas School of Public Health, Houston, Texas

Contact: Robert.O.Morgan@uth.tmc.edu

John M. Swint, Professor of Health Economics, University of Texas School of Public Health, Houston, Texas

Contact: John.M.Swint@uth.tmc.edu

Gabriela Flores, Senior Health Economist, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

Contact: floressg@who.int