

Cynthia Nichols

38 Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06103
cynthia.nichols@uconn.edu

EDUCATION

- PhD** Est. May 2025, University of Connecticut, Hartford, Connecticut
School of Social Work
Concentration: Social Work
Dissertation Title:
Contextual Factors Impacting the Use of Medications for Opioid Disorder in Recovery Residences
Committee: Dr. Margaret Lloyd Sieger (chair), Dr. Kathy Libal, Dr. Amy Mericle
- MSW** May 2014, University of Connecticut, Hartford, CT
Concentration: Social Work, Casework
- BS** May 2012, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
Major: Psychology with Neuroscience concentration
Minor: Human Development and Family Studies

LICENSURES

CT Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	April 2020
CT Licensed School Social Worker	February 2020
MA Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor	February 2020
MA Licensed School Social Worker, Initial	April 2019
MA Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)	October 2016

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Substance Use Disorders, Medications for Opioid Use Disorder, Recovery Residences, Barriers to Substance Use Treatment, Social Work Education, Social Work and Public Policy

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) T32 Behavioral Sciences Training (BST) Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, NYU** May 2023-Present
- Participate in the largest and oldest training program for behavioral scientists funded by NIDA since 1984

- Attend weekly seminars discussing grant writing, research methodologies and academic publishing with BST directors, pre-doctoral, and post-doctoral fellows within various behavioral disciplines (public health, social work, psychology, sociology, nursing).
- Receive annual stipend, professional development, conference/travel, and tuition expenses.
- In process of conducting mixed-methods harm reduction study with two post-doctoral fellows

Graduate Research Assistantship, UConn SSW

September 2022-May 2023

Faculty Supervisor: Margaret Lloyd Sieger, PhD

- Participated in *CT CAPTA Evaluation*, exploring the use and effectiveness of Plans of Safe Care required under the CAPTA legislation
- Conducted data analysis in STATA based on *CT CAPTA Evaluation*
- Contributed towards manuscripts based on *CT CAPTA Evaluation*
- Participated in meetings with PI and DCF staff regarding *CT CAPTA Evaluation*
- Prepared and participated in *CT CAPTA Evaluation* oral presentation for SSWR 2023

Graduate Research Assistantship, UConn SSW

September 2021-May 2022

Faculty Supervisor: Margaret Lloyd Sieger, PhD

- Participated in *CT CAPTA Evaluation* exploring the use and effectiveness of Plans of Safe Care required under the CAPTA legislation
- Contributed towards manuscripts based on *CT CAPTA Evaluation*
- Assisted in editing CAPTA survey through REDCap and Qualtrics evaluating the use of Plans of Safe Care among mothers in CT
- Created and edited website for *CT CAPTA Evaluation*
- Prepared and conducted family treatment court oral presentation for SSWR 2022
- Prepared and edited materials for Institutional Review Board

Graduate Research Assistantship, UConn SSW

September 2020-August 2021

Faculty Supervisor: Margaret Lloyd Sieger, PhD

- Participated in *CT CAPTA Evaluation*, exploring the use and effectiveness of Plans of Safe Care required under the CAPTA legislation
- Assisted in the creation of a REDCap survey evaluating the use of Plans of Safe Care among mothers in CT
- Participated in data collection and analysis for *Oklahoma Multi-Site Family Drug Court Model Standards Study* using REDCap
- Contributed to manuscript preparation based on *Oklahoma Multi-Site Family Drug Court Model Standards Study*
- Participated in meetings with PI and other staff for *Oklahoma Multi-Site Family Drug Court Model Standards Study* and *Oklahoma County Family Drug Court Comprehensive Approaches to Recovery Enhancements (CARE) Project* (“The CARE Project”)
- Created and edited website for *Oklahoma Multi-Site Family Drug Court Model Standards Study*
- Prepared and edited materials for Institutional Review Board

Research Assistant, UConn SSW

August 2013 – June 2014

Faculty Supervisor: Brenda Kurz, MSW Program Director, PhD

- Studied focus groups for the State of Connecticut's Fetal and Infant Mortality Program: Prenatal Care Experiences of Women in Connecticut, Funded by DPH.
- Researched infant mortality rate and barriers to prenatal care for mothers throughout Connecticut.
- Performed literature reviews and data analysis with NVivo, a qualitative data software.

Research Assistant, The Pennsylvania State University

August 2010 – May 2012

Toddlers Into Kindergarteners: Emotions Study (TIKES)

- Participated in family visits, specifically interacted with children in data collection.
- Coded data and entered data through Excel.

PUBLICATIONS

Major Peer-Reviewed Papers

1. Nichols, C., & Lloyd Sieger, M. (2024). Trends in Prenatal Polysubstance Exposure. *Families in Society*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10443894231213795>
2. Sieger, M. L., Nichols, C., Becker, J., & Brook, J. (2023). Cost analysis of a rural family treatment court: Is this enhanced approach “worth it”? *Juvenile & Family Court Journal*, 74(4), 5–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfcj.12247>
3. Lloyd Sieger, M., Nichols, C., Chasnoff, I.J., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Patrick, S.W., & Copenhaver, M. (2023). Family care plans for infants with prenatal substance exposure. *Child Welfare*, 101(2), 169-192.
4. Sieger, M. L., Nichols, C., Chen, S., Sienna, M., & Sanders, M. (2022). Novel implementation of state reporting policy for substance-exposed infants. *Hospital Pediatrics*, 12(10), 841-848. <https://doi.org/10.1542/hpeds.2022-006562>
5. Lloyd Sieger, M., Nichols, C., & Chasnoff, I. J. (2022). Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, family care plans and infants with prenatal substance exposure: Theoretical framework and directions for future research. *Infant & Child Development*, 31(3), e2309, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.2309>

Submitted Manuscripts

1. Nichols, C. (Resubmitted for review January 15, 2023). Ethical Considerations in Civil Commitments for Substance Use Disorders. *The International Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*.

Manuscripts In Preparation

1. Nichols, C., Baslock, D., Lloyd Sieger, M., (In Preparation). Buprenorphine Use Among Non-Hospital Residential Programs.
2. Becker, J., Lloyd Sieger, M., Nichols, C., & Goldsborough, E. J. (In Preparation). Effect of State Policy on Racial Disparities in Infants Reported to CPS at Birth for Prenatal Substance Exposure

MAJOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (Presenter Underlined)

1. Nichols, C. (October 28, 2023). The Ethics of Involuntary Civil Commitments for Substance Use Disorders. Poster at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) 2023 Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA.
2. Nichols, C. (October 18, 2023). The Ethics of Involuntary Civil Commitments for Substance Use Disorders. Poster at The Addictions Health Services Research (AHSR) 2023 Annual Meeting. NY, NY.
3. Lloyd Sieger, M., Nichols, C., Chasnoff, I. J., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Patrick, S J., & Copenhaver, M. (January 15, 2023). Connecticut: Plans of Safe Care for Substance-Exposed Infants. Paper at the 27th meeting of the Society for Social Work & Research (SSWR). Phoenix, AZ.
4. Lloyd Sieger, M. H., Nichols, C., Chen, S., Sienna, M., & Sanders, M. (2022). Novel Implementation of State Reporting Policy for Substance-Exposed Infants. Paper at the 27th meeting of the Society for Social Work & Research (SSWR). Phoenix, AZ.
5. Lloyd Sieger, M. H., Nichols, C., Becker, J. & Brook, J. (January 14, 2022). Cost analysis of a rural family treatment court: Is this enhanced approach “worth it”? Paper at the 26th meeting of the Society for Social Work & Research (SSWR). Washington, D.C.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Spring 2023	HBEL 5300 (MSW-level): Substance Use I: Intro to Alcohol and Other Drugs, University of Connecticut. In-person course with 19 students. The following topics are covered: History of drug laws, pharmacology of substances, substance use screening tools, ASAM criteria, 12-step programs, levels of treatment, confidentiality and ethics, motivational interviewing, evidence-based practices.
Fall 2023	HBEL 5300 (MSW-level): Substance Use I: Intro to Alcohol and Other Drugs, University of Connecticut. In-person course with 16 students. The following topics are covered: History of drug laws, pharmacology of substances, substance use screening tools, ASAM criteria, 12-step programs, levels of treatment, confidentiality and ethics, motivational interviewing, evidence-based practices.

- Spring 2023 BASC 5333 (MSW-level): Research Methods for Social Work Practice, University of Connecticut. In-person course with 15 students. The following topics are covered: developing research topics/questions, measurement, sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, presentation of results, social work and research ethics.
- POPR 5301 (MSW-level): Policy Processes & Finances, University of Connecticut. Guest lecturer for policy research and implementation session, April 2023.
- Fall 2022 RSCH 5341 (MSW-level): Program Evaluation, University of Connecticut. In-person course, 24 students. The following topics were covered: developing program evaluation topics/questions, process vs. outcomes evaluations, qualitative and quantitative data collection, research design, sampling, measurement, data analysis and interpretation, social work and research ethics.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Women's Center for Psychotherapy, West Hartford, CT August 2020-Present
Part-time Outpatient Therapist

- Conduct individual psychotherapy with caseload of 3-5 clients
- Conduct bio-psychosocial assessments, screen for and assess suicide risk, create treatment plans, provide care coordination with outside providers, provide case management.
- Participate in weekly peer consultation meetings with group practice members.

Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital, Boston, MA December 2016-July 2020
Outpatient Addiction Recovery Social Worker, Outpatient Suboxone Program

- BWFH Social Work Continuing Education Committee member since September 2018. Participated in monthly meetings, recruited faculty for presentations, and completed applications for continuing education units.
- One of two social workers within BWFH Suboxone Program (160 patients).
- Provided individual and group counseling to the patients within Outpatient Addiction Recovery Program receiving Suboxone or Vivitrol treatment using supportive therapy, relapse/overdose prevention counseling, Motivational Interviewing, DBT and CBT skills.
- Managed an additional caseload of approximately 40-45 dual diagnosis patients referred by PCPs, ED, BWFH outpatient/inpatient programs, and the community.
- Facilitated Women's Seeking Safety group for patients with co-occurring PTSD and SUD.
- Facilitated Early Parenting/Mother's group which offers peer support for mothers in recovery.
- Monitored recovery of patients, conducted bio-psychosocial assessments, screened for, and assessed suicide risk, created treatment plans, provided care coordination with outside providers and provided case management around transportation and housing needs.

- Completed mandated assessments and filed reports as needed.
- Participated in weekly interdisciplinary Addiction Recovery Program rounds and BWFH Outpatient meeting.
- Provided overdose prevention/harm reduction training for psychology interns, April 2019
- Participated in BWFH Schwartz Rounds.

Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital, Boston, MA May 2015-December 2016
Addiction Recovery Social Worker, Inpatient Detoxification Unit

- Completed bio-psychosocial assessments for patients who were admitted for detox treatment.
- Facilitated 1-2 group meetings per day dedicated to educating patients on coping and relapse prevention skills utilizing DBT, CBT, and motivational interviewing.
- Facilitated substance use and mental health aftercare planning for outpatient treatment, residential treatment, and self-help meetings in the community.
- Attended daily interdisciplinary rounds to further facilitate patient care, aftercare planning, and progress of treatment plan.
- Provided mandated assessment and filed reports as needed.
- Facilitated family meetings providing aftercare planning and addiction recovery education.
- Assisted patient in completing Health Care Proxy documentation when needed.
- Co-presented information about the Addiction Recovery Program to hospital nursing staff.

Habit OPCO/CRC Health Group, Boston, MA Sept. 2014 – April 2015
Substance Use Clinician, Methadone Treatment

- Provided individual and group substance use counseling; facilitated 1-2 groups per day and several individual counseling sessions utilizing DBT, Motivational Interviewing, and CBT.
- Managed a caseload of approximately 75 patients; provided referrals for medical examinations, transportation aid, housing, and drug screenings.
- Monitored recovery of patients, conducted bio-psychosocial assessments, created treatment plans, updated files regarding regular appointments, missed appointments, and progress.
- Collaborated with clinic physician, nurses, intake coordinator, and counselors; coordinated care with outside PCPs, psychiatrists, probation officers, DCF workers, and attorneys.
- Completed weekly supervision with clinical director and attended weekly clinical/staff meetings; participated in CRC health online and Webinar trainings.

University of Connecticut Health Center, Farmington, CT Sept. 2013 – April 2014
Oncology Social Work Intern (Field Work)

- Completed 560 internship hours.

- Provided individual and family counseling using evidence-based practices for inpatient and outpatient oncology floors, including radiation, chemotherapy, sickle cell, and surgical patients.
- Collaborated with physicians, nurses, case managers, the American cancer society, and palliative care teams to provide optimal care for patients.
- Managed a caseload of approximately 20-30 patients per month; aided patients with questions regarding health insurance, Advance Directive counseling, and transportation.
- Co-facilitated the cardiac support group with the head cardiac social worker.
- Attended weekly Breast Cancer Tumor Boards.
- Shadowed Inpatient Psychiatric and PHP/IOP floors.

Parkville Community Elementary School, Hartford, CT

Sept. 2012 – April 2013

School Social Work Intern (Field Work)

- Completed 560 hours of internship.
- Provided individual weekly sessions to address the psychosocial needs of 7 students, with collaboration from teachers and families.
- Oversaw plans for academic success, including Behavior Intervention Plans and Individualized Education Plans.
- Co-facilitated weekly group sessions using Second Step Curriculum: social skills training.
- Created comprehensive ODD Guide for school employees.

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Sterling Research Facilitation Fund Recipient, UConn School of Social Work, June 2023
\$2,000

Predoctoral Fellowship Recipient, UConn School of Social Work, June 2023
\$750

Konover Pre-dissertation Travel Scholarship, UCONN School of Social Work, January 2023
\$750

Konover Pre-dissertation Travel Scholarship, UCONN School of Social Work, January 2022
\$750

Ruth Ann Lobo Award Recipient, UCONN School of Social Work, May 2014
\$2,000

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Campaign School for Social Workers, Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, UConn SSW, February 2023

University of Connecticut School of Social Work: Travel Study Program to Puerto Rico, May 2013

COMPUTER SKILLS

Applications: Microsoft Office, Mac & Windows Proficient
Platforms: SPSS, STATA, NVIVO

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Council on Social Work Education
National Associations of Social Workers
Society for Social Work Research

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Reviewer, Council on Social Work Education Conference 2024. February 2024-March 2024

Doctoral Student Organization, University of Connecticut School of Social Work. January 2023-January 2024

Student Reviewer: Reviewed Summer Statistics Camp Initial Modules, University of Connecticut, 2023

Invited Speaker: Transition to the PhD Program, New Student Orientation University of Connecticut, 2022

Invited Speaker: Transition to the PhD Program, New Student Orientation University of Connecticut, 2021

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

State College Area School District Family Outreach Volunteer, September 2011
Nurturing Families Network Volunteer, June 2011
Big Brothers, Big Sisters Volunteer, Spring 2010