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NORTH AMERICA
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
February 2026

Good afternoon,

Over the past 13 years, the US Health Care Delivery Initiative (HCDI) has funded randomized evaluations that have enhanced our collective understanding of how to address pressing health policy issues, such as the impact of medical debt or how physician-patient racial concordance can improve Black men's take-up of preventive care. By supporting new and innovative research, HCDI seeks to advance our knowledge of how to make health care delivery in the United States more efficient, effective, and equitable.

In this newsletter, we are featuring work that demonstrates how HCDI's mission is more relevant than ever today. New research by J-PAL affiliated professor Mireille Jacobson (University of Southern California) provides novel insight on how to increase flu vaccine take-up, which comes amid [one of the worst flu seasons](#) in recent years. In addition, a new affiliate spotlight featuring Jacob Wallace (Yale), the Scientific Advisor of the forthcoming Medicaid Learning Lab, highlights how we will support practitioners in embedding test-and-learn approaches into their Medicaid programs.

As HCDI continues to grow, I'm looking forward to seeing how the initiative can continue to play an important role as a funder of new research, a catalyst for researcher-practitioner relationships, and a disseminator of policy insights to amplify important findings in health care delivery in the United States. I encourage you to read more in the newsletter below and [reach out](#) if you are interested in getting involved with our work.

Sincerely,

Amy Finkelstein | J-PAL North America Co-Scientific Director, HCDI Co-Chair

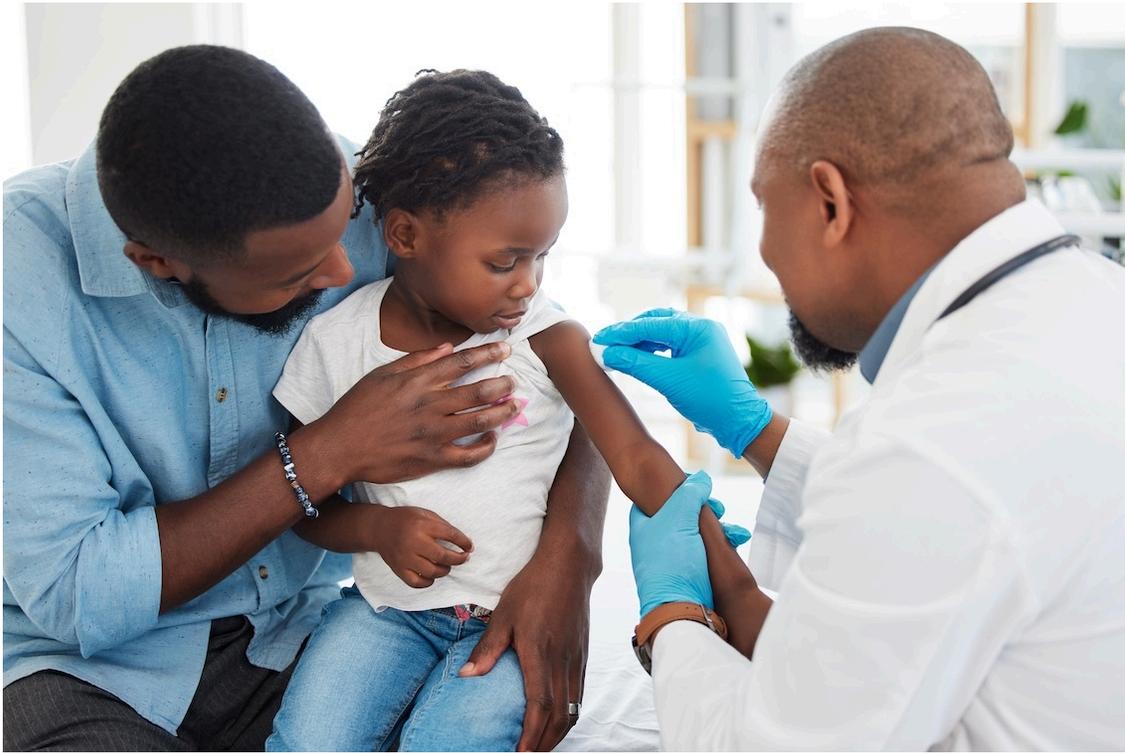


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New research results: The impact of reminder messages, with and without financial incentives, on influenza vaccination

Can reminder messages and financial incentives move the needle on flu vaccinations? A new study from J-PAL affiliated professor Mireille Jacobson (University of Southern California) and coauthors Tom Chang, Manisha Shah, Rajiv Pramanik, and Samir Shah evaluated the impact of different outreach strategies to adult patients to encourage flu vaccination uptake: one strategy included a text message or email reminder, and one strategy paired the reminder with a \$50 incentive. While the reminder text messages and emails alone did not increase flu vaccinations, a message combined with a \$50 incentive did increase vaccination rates. [Read more about the results »](#)



Photo credit: Jacob Wallace

Affiliate spotlight: Jacob Wallace on strengthening Medicaid through evidence use and generation

J-PAL affiliated professor Jacob Wallace (Yale) has focused his career on helping Medicaid agencies conduct evaluations and use evidence to improve Medicaid programs. In a new affiliate spotlight, learn about his past work in government, his research on

Medicaid, and how he envisions researchers and Medicaid agencies can work together to improve programming in the forthcoming Medicaid Learning Lab and beyond. [Read the blog post »](#)

FEATURED WEBINAR



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Impact by design: Launching a research partnership for accessible climate action in Orlando

On March 3, J-PAL North America is hosting a webinar to explore the role and promise of rigorous evaluation in informing effective, accessible climate solutions. This webinar will feature a panel discussion with participants from the inaugural J-PAL North America [Climate Action Learning Lab](#) and their research partners, highlighting an evaluation of electric vehicle subsidies for low and middle income households in Orlando, Florida. Speakers will also share insights from a newly released Climate Action Evidence Review (see below) and answer questions about the Learning Lab opportunity. [Learn more and register »](#)

FEATURED PUBLICATION



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Reviewing the impact and cost-effectiveness of local climate action within the United States

Across the United States, state and local jurisdictions are adopting Climate Action Plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change related hazards. To identify the most effective policy solutions and prevent common pitfalls, rigorous evidence is increasingly essential. A new J-PAL North America Evidence Review synthesizes key policy insights from an academic analysis developed by researchers in the J-PAL network across five sectors: energy, transportation, solid waste, water and

wastewater, and agriculture and conservation. The review also presents key gaps in the evidence base, and outlines important considerations for measuring climate policy impact. [Read the resource »](#)

FEATURED RESEARCH RESOURCE



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Checklist for social scientists publishing in medical journals: before, during, and after running an RCT

Economists and other social scientists who are interested in publishing results from health care evaluations in medical journals may encounter unfamiliar requirements that necessitate advanced planning. “Results from our workplace wellness evaluation were desk-rejected at one medical journal because we had pre-registered our trial in a registry that did not meet the journal's specific requirements. This experience highlighted the importance of our research team being aware of the unique publication requirements of medical journals,” shares J-PAL affiliated researcher David Molitor (University of Illinois). To address these challenges, J-PAL North America published a research resource featuring a checklist for publishing in a medical journal with key steps before, during, and after study implementation. [Read the resource »](#)

This resource is part of our “[Health Care Evaluation Toolkit](#),” supported by the MIT Roybal Center and the National Institute on Aging of the National Institutes of Health.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

[Evidence \(Really\) Matters — Especially Now](#)
[Project Evident](#)

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