

SONNET

Social Needs Network for Evaluation and Translation

WINTER 2023

KP National Social Health Surveys: How social risks impact our members – and what our health system can do to help

New findings and updates from KP's 2 national surveys shed light on KP members' social risks and point to next steps for our social health practice

In 2020, Kaiser Permanente launched a national social health survey of nearly 44,000 members nationwide. More than 10,000 members responded — providing comprehensive [results](#) to inform KP's Social Health Practice and pointing to strategies to help members who are most in need. SONNET is excited to share new findings that take a deeper dive into data from the 2020 survey, along with updates on the follow-up survey we launched in 2022.

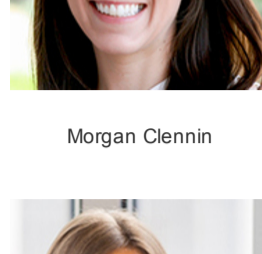
New reports highlight how social risks are linked to health care utilization and racial disparities in care

We're excited to share 2 recent reports from SONNET Evaluation and Research Committee ([ERC](#)) members on projects that further examined data from the 2020 social health survey. These new findings help us understand how social risks impact member health and what health systems can do to intervene:

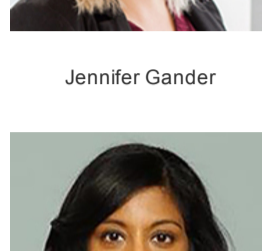
- **Social risks and health care utilization.** [READ REPORT.](#)

High-level findings: Emergency room visits were 33% more likely among members with any social risk and 51% more likely among members with any severe social risk. This relationship did not change during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Project lead: [Morgan Clennin, PhD, MPH](#), scientific research associate at KP Colorado Institute for Health Research



Morgan Clennin

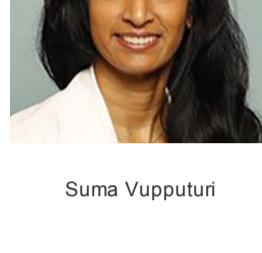


Jennifer Gander

- **Social risks and racial differences in chronic illness outcomes.** [READ REPORT.](#)

High-level findings: Black members had a higher prevalence of type 2 diabetes and hypertension compared to white members — and 11% of the difference in these outcomes can be attributed to the most common social needs we observed: financial strain, food insecurity, and housing instability.

Project leads: [Jennifer Gander, PhD](#), investigator at KP Georgia Center for Research and Evaluation, and [Suma Vupputuri, PhD, MPH](#), research scientist at KP Mid-Atlantic Permanente Research Institute



Suma Vupputuri

Successful follow-up survey in 2022 will provide longitudinal social risk data

In June of 2022, we launched a follow-up survey among the more than 10,000 members who completed the 2020 survey. Data from this second survey will give us a unique understanding of how our members' social risks change over time and whether their social health has improved since the onset of COVID-19. We look forward to sharing results later this summer. Some highlights to date:

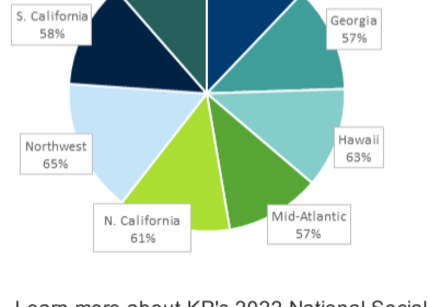
- **High response rate.** 6,255 surveys completed so far in English and Spanish — for a response rate of 60% (well above our target of 50%).
- **Regional representation.** As with our 2020 survey, we have a similar response rate across KP's 8 regional markets.
- **Data sharing guidelines in place.** Given the value of this longitudinal data set, SONNET has worked with KPInsights to develop plans and templates to guide data use. Learn more by contacting us at sonnet@kp.org.

10,119 Surveys sent (in 19 waves)

6,255 Surveys completed to date

60% Response rate (target = 50%)

Similar response across regions



Learn more about KP's 2022 National Social Health Survey in this [short slide deck](#).

People spotlight

Get to know Maile Tauai'i: Mother, farmer, community leader, and social health researcher

[Maile Tauai'i, PhD, MPH](#), is a mom of 6 teens, a hula practitioner, and a farmer who runs a 20-acre food forest farm with her family on the island of Oahu. She is a former professor, a mentor, and a student of traditional medicine with deep ties to her community. She is also a clinical investigator at KP's [Center for Integrated Health Care Research](#) in Hawaii and a valuable member of SONNET's Evaluation and Research Committee ([ERC](#)).



Maile's unique perspective as a social health researcher is helping advance SONNET's work to understand how KP members want to communicate with their care teams about social needs. She is also collaborating with fellow ERC member [Nancy Weinfield, PhD](#), to learn about challenges families face with nutrition security and culturally relevant ways to improve household nutrition.

We talked with Maile about how her work is deeply connected to her commitment to serving her community and what advice she would offer to researchers interested in social health. Here are some of the highlights of our conversation.

What excites you most about your SONNET work?

MT: What excites me most is the immediacy of benefit. Before I worked for KP, I was a professor. I loved teaching, but the impact of the work was a long game. I knew my students were destined for greatness, but it would take some time before their efforts resulted in transformation in the community. Here at KP we have the perfect combination of research, providers, health care, community, and a profound determination to make things better.

I am very fortunate to work under the guidance and support of Dr. Stacey Honda, KP's assistant medical director of research in Hawaii and medical director of our Center for Integrated Health Care Research. Dr. Honda made me aware of SONNET and the opportunity to be part of the ERC. After I learned how my interests and goals were aligned with SONNET's, I was all in. SONNET connects all the things I love: social health, research, evaluation, quality improvement, health care, and people. And the SONNET team is incredible. They remove barriers and expedite the possibility of making a difference — through funding, facilitation, training, coordination, communication, networking, and more.

I tell people that if their health care provider isn't also a top-notch research institution, then move to Kaiser. SONNET is the icing on the cake (if cake were integrated medicine).

What are some of your favorite activities outside of work?

MT: For me, the lines between what's work and what's personal are blurred. My family, our farm, and our community are what drives me and inspires me in my work. A classic example of this overlap was the opening of an art exhibit at our KP West Oahu clinic, Kipukaoha. The art exhibit was being blessed by the Hula Halau that I dance for, the artist was my second-to-youngest daughter, my graduate students were present to provide support, and members of my traditional healing school attended. And the gardens around the clinic are filled with plants from the farm that I live and work on. This is community, and this is what makes all the hard work worth it.



Hula blessing at Kipukaoha, KP's West Oahu Clinic

What advice would you give to researchers who want to focus on social health? MT: I would say to make it your life's work. I think people who are drawn to social health research are those who can directly relate to what it feels like to have unmet social needs or the impact of social health inequities. As an Indigenous researcher, I can personally relate to the impact of poverty, abuse, homelessness, and racism. But the work is healing, and I feel so fortunate to collaborate with people at KP like my SONNET team members — because they all love this work and they get the "why" behind it. We are taught in graduate school to diminish the biases that come from our personal experiences. But our lived experience help us better understand the world we live in. So I say, embrace it — and don't be afraid to let your personal experience inspire you to make things better.

Learn more about Maile and her work to serve her community and KP members in Hawaii:

- [Ha'ehuola — Hawaii Community Health](#). Video from Hawaii Permanente Medical Group featuring a culturally focused nutrition program that Maile and her farm contribute to.
- [Native Hawaiians in Washington — An Interview with Maile Tauai'i](#). Podcast in the Healthcare for Humans series, which is led by community organizer and KP Washington physician Dr. Raj Sundar.

Events and opportunities

SONNET presentations at HCSRN 2023 conference

If you're headed to the Health Care Systems Research Network (HCSRN) [annual conference](#) in Denver next week, we hope to see you at these SONNET presentations ([see full agenda](#)):



Tues, Feb 21

- 3:45 p.m. – Oral abstract: "Understanding Preferences to Share Social Needs" Maile Tauai'i, PhD, MPH

Weds, Feb 22

- 10:30 a.m. – Panel presentation: "Building Capacity for Social Health; Co-Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of Integration Online Training Module for Primary Care Providers" Meagan Brown, PhD, MPH; Beth Bojkov, RN, BSN; and Dea Papajorgi-Taylor, MPH, MA
- 11:45 a.m. – Oral abstract: "Association of Social Risk Factors with Emergency Department and Inpatient Hospitalization Encounters Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic" Morgan Clennin, PhD, MPH
- 1:30 p.m. – Oral abstract: "Reach and Effectiveness of an Initiative in the Healthcare Setting to Screen and Refer Patients for Social Needs" Rachel Zucker, MPH, PMP

Opportunities from our partners at the Social Interventions and the Evaluation Network (SIREN)

If you missed SIREN's virtual annual meeting on Racial Health Equity in Social Care last fall, you can view video recordings and presenter decks from the entire event on [their website](#).



Next up, the SIREN is a webinar on March 1 at 9 a.m. Pacific (noon Eastern) with the [Trenton Health Team](#). The webinar will share lessons learned from a 2-year study exploring Trenton social service organizations' perspectives on using a community resource referral platform and testing strategies to increase engagement. [Register here](#).

Recent SONNET publications

[Social Risks and Social Needs in a Health Insurance Exchange Sample: A Longitudinal Evaluation of Utilization](#). *BMC Health Services Research*, 22, 1430 (2022). Cara C. Lewis, Salene M. W. Jones, Robert Wellman, Adam L. Sharp, Laura M. Gottlieb, Matthew P. Banegas, Emilia De Marchis, and John F. Steiner.

[Association between Changes in Loneliness Identified through Screening and Changes in Depression or Anxiety in Older Adults](#). *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 70;12 (2022). John F. Steiner, Colleen Ross, Matthew Stiefel, David Mosen, Matthew P. Banegas, Alena E. Wall, Cally Martin, Tammy S. Kelly, Andrea R. Paolino, and Chan Zeng.

Stay in touch

We'd love to hear what you're working on! Email our team: sonnet@kp.org.

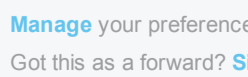
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Our SONNET Coordinating Center would like to acknowledge that our Seattle offices are on the ancestral lands and traditional territories of the Puget Sound Coast Salish People.

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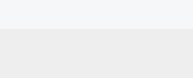
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