

# **HEAL Pain Strategic Planning Overview**

## **Health equity and pain across the life course**

*December 6, 2024*

Kathleen Sluka and Rob Gereau


Co-chairs, HEAL Pain Strategic Planning Executive Committee

## NIH Helping End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative


- The NIH HEAL Initiative is an NIH-wide effort that seeks to speed scientific solutions to the overdose epidemic, including opioid and stimulant use disorders, and the **crisis of chronic pain**
- HEAL **launched in [April 2018](#)** and to date has resulted **>1,800** research projects in **all 50 states**, totaling over **\$3 billion**
- Collaboration across **19** NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices
- **HEAL pain mission statement:** HEAL Pain research aims to reduce pain and the risk of opioid use disorder by developing safe and effective pain treatment and prevention strategies to improve quality of life for all people.
- Many of the **initial projects** launched in the first couple of years are wrapping up or at a transition point
- NIH is looking to the broader community to help recommend **pain research priorities** for the HEAL Initiative which will inform the forthcoming HEAL Pain Strategic Plan

# HEAL Pain Research Strategic Planning Subcommittees and Focus Areas

**Co-chairs**




**Robert Gereau, PhD**




**Kathleen Sluka, PT, PhD, FAPTA**


**Lived Experience advisor**




**Michael Falcon, OTD, OTR/L, MHA**



**Health equity & pain across the life course**




**Tamara Baker, PhD**




**Susmita Kashikar-Zuck, PhD**




**Non-addictive therapeutics development**



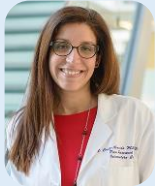
**John Markman, MD**




**Theodore (Ted) Price, PhD**




**Pain biomarkers and predictors**




**Yenisel Cruz-Almeida, MSPH, PhD**




**Vivianne Tawfik, MD, PhD**




**Optimization of interventions to improve pain**




**John T. Farrar, MD, PhD**




**Claudia Campbell, PhD**




**Implementation and health services**




**Lynn DeBar, PhD, MPH**




**Steven George, PT, PhD, FAPTA**




**Intersection of pain and substance use disorder**




**Jessica S. Merlin, MD, PhD, MBA**




**Joanna Starrels, MD, MS**



**Pain research workforce and training**



**Cheryl L. Stucky, PhD**

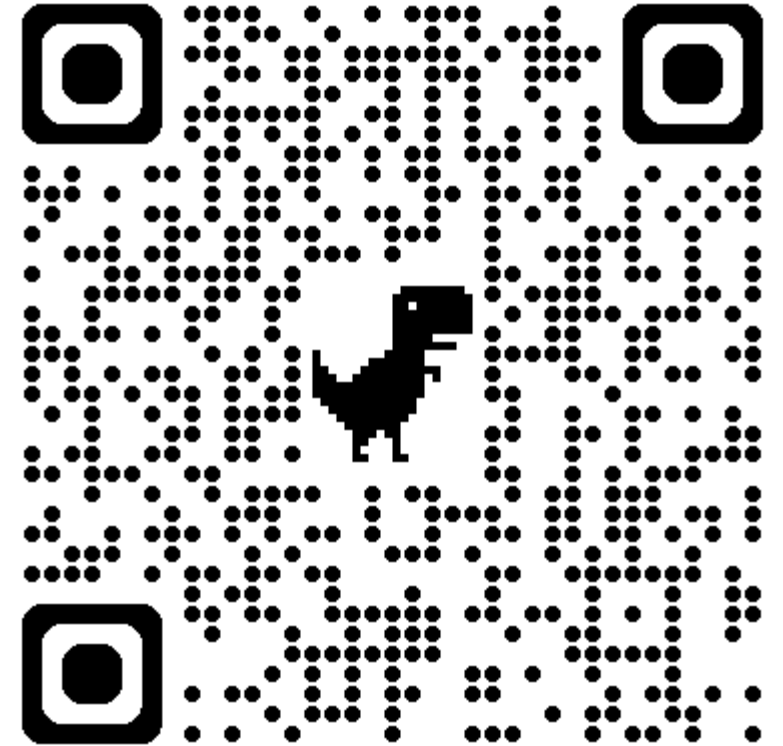


**Jennifer Haythornthwaite, PhD**

# Virtual Workshops: Developing HEAL Pain Strategic Research Priorities

## Workshop Series (all virtual)

- **Biomarkers and Predictors**
  - Wed 11/6 from 1-4pm ET
- **Non-addictive pain therapeutics development**
  - Fri 11/15, 10am-2pm ET
- **Research workforce and training**
  - Mon 11/18 from 1-5pm ET
- **Optimizing interventions to improve pain management**
  - Mon 11/25 11a-3p ET
- **The intersection of pain and substance use**
  - Mon 12/2, 11-3pm ET
- **Implementation and health services**
  - Thu 12/5 from 12-4pm ET
- **Health equity and pain across the life course**
  - Fri 12/6 1:30-4pm



More info and registration:  
<https://go.nih.gov/sxbzl2A>

## What happens after this?

- **Nov-Dec 2024:** Input received from community through [Request for Information](#) and from workshops (and after) is incorporated by subcommittees into proposed priority areas of interest for each focus area
- **Jan 2025:** Areas of interest refined and prioritized across subcommittees
- **Feb 2025:** Draft HEAL Pain research priorities are presented to NINDS Advisory Council and other NIH Advisory Councils for input
- **Mar-Apr 2025:** NIH develops and publishes HEAL Pain Strategic Plan and begins implementation by developing concepts & funding opportunities for FY2027 and beyond

If you have thoughts or suggestions on topics discussed at this workshop – please send to: [HEALquestion@od.nih.gov](mailto:HEALquestion@od.nih.gov) and include “HEAL Pain Strategic Planning” in your subject line