

# FATEMA Z. AHMED

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## EDUCATION

2023 **PhD in Public Affairs, specialization Health Policy and Services**

Global & Community Health Services Research

University of Central Florida

*Dissertation:* The Role of State Medicaid Policies in Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder in the Criminal Justice Population: Evidence from the Treatment Episode Datasets

*Committee:* Danielle Atkins (chair), Barbara Andraka-Christou, Jill Viglione, Lynn Unruh

2017 **MS in Health Administration**

University of Central Florida

2014 **BS in Psychology**

Minor in Health Sciences

University of Central Florida

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## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2024-present **Post-Doctoral Scholar**

School of Global Health Management & Informatics

University of Central Florida

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Health policy and services, insurance, vulnerable populations, health disparities, substance use disorder, treatment courts, quasi-experimental analysis, qualitative methods, mixed methods

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## PUBLICATIONS IN REFEREED JOURNALS

**Ahmed, F. Z.**, Golan, O. K., Totaram, R., Akil, S., Fatima-Hashani, N., Whitaker, D., Pigott, T., & Andraka-Christou, B. (2025). Analyzing the Discursive Framing of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUDs) in U.S. News Media: A Comparative Study of Benefits, Persuasion Methods, and Temporal Trends. *Health Communication*.

Del Pozo, B., Rouhani, S., Bailey, A., Clark, M. H., Martins, K., **Ahmed, F. Z.**, Atkins, D., & Andraka-Christou, B. (2025) The effects of framing on US police chiefs' support for public health and harm reduction interventions for people who use drugs: A randomized, controlled survey experiment. *Health & Justice*, 12(1), 50.

Andraka-Christou, B., Viglione, J., **Ahmed, F.**, Del Pozo, B., Atkins, D. N., Clark, M. H., ... & Pivovarov, E. (2025). Factors affecting problem-solving court team decisions about medications for opioid use disorder. *Journal of Substance Use and Addiction Treatment*, 168, 209525.

Golan, O. K., **Ahmed, F. Z.**, Andraka-Christou, B., Totaram, R., Asi, Y., Atkins, D. (2024). Impact of COVID-19 on Florida family dependency drug courts. *Health & Justice*, 12(1), 1-11.

**Ahmed, F. Z.**, Andraka-Christou, B., Clark, M. H., Totaram, R., Atkins, D. N., & Del Pozo, B. (2022). Barriers to medications for opioid use disorder in the court system: provider availability, provider "trustworthiness," and cost. *Health & Justice*, 10(1), 1-13.

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## ARTICLES SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION IN PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

Andraka-Christou, B., Golan, O., Asi, Y., Atkins, D., Totaram, R., & **Ahmed, F.Z.** Implementation of evidence-based practices in five Florida family dependency drug courts: Lessons learned from court team member perspectives. *Under review at Implementation Science.*

**Ahmed, F. Z.**, Noblin, A., Coutelyou, K., & Tynes, G. Evaluating the Readability, Accessibility, and Quality of Online Health Information on Opioid Use Disorder: A Comparative Analysis of Government and Non-Government Websites. *Under review at Advances in Health Information Science and Practice.*

Clark MH, Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, Pivovarova E, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Atkins D, Totaram R, & del Pozo, B. An Experimental Survey of Key Factors Involved in Problem-Solving Court Staff Decisions About Medication for Opioid Use Disorder. *Under Review at Journal of Substance Use and Addiction Treatment.*

Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, Clark MH, Pivovarova E, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Atkins D, Totaram R, & del Pozo, B. A Mixed Method Study of Problem-Solving Courts and MOUD Provider Partnerships. *Submitted to Health and Justice.*

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## CURRENT RESEARCH INVESTIGATIONS

### *Investigation Completed – Manuscript in Process*

**Ahmed, F.Z.**, Harris, S., Andraka-Christou, B., Akil, S., & Margaritis, W. *Factors Affecting Accessibility of Campus-Based Substance Use Disorder Treatment for U.S. College Students*

**Ahmed F Z**, Andraka-Christou B, Harris S, Margaritis W, Clark MH, Shewale S, & Akil S. *Perceived Reasons for Co-Using Opioids and Stimulants in the United States: A Mixed Methods Study.*

Shewale S, **Ahmed, F. Z.**, Akil, S., Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D. N., Clark, MH., & Totaram, R. A *Recovery program for family members with loved one's with substance use: Impacts on inner peace, communication, and addiction knowledge.*

Polischuck, L., Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D. N., Clark, MH., **Ahmed, F. Z.**, Totaram, R., & Akil, S. A *qualitative study of medical marijuana policies in Florida's family treatment courts.*

Shewale S, Andraka-Christou B, Harris S, **Ahmed F Z**, Clark MH, Margaritis W, & Akil S. *Association of State Political Orientation, Location of Services, Funding Source, and the Range of Services Offered in Syringe Services Programs in the United States.*

Andraka-Christou, B., **Ahmed, F.Z.**, Koval, A., Madeira, J., & Cortelyou, K. *Developing the Mobile Mental Health Instrument for College Students.*

Atkins D, Andraka-Christou B, & **Ahmed F.Z.** *Public Knowledge, Awareness, & Attitudes Toward Medications for Opioid Use Disorder.*

### *Investigation Ongoing*

Andraka-Christou B, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Shewale S, Pivovarova E, Martinez N, & Shields M. *A scoping review of outcomes and experiences with involuntary civil commitment (ICC) and/or conservatorship for substance use disorder among people with SUD.*

Andraka-Christou B, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Akil S, & Nelson B. *A Scoping Review of Problem-Solving Court Staff Attitudes, Practices, and Policies Regarding Medication for Opioid Use Disorders.*

Siger M, Loch S, Andraka-Christou B, **Ahmed FZ**, Shewale S, & Thomas N. *Improving Outcomes for Substance-Affected Families in the Child Welfare System: Review of State and Federal Laws on Plans of Safe Care*

Andraka-Christou B, Atkins D, **Ahmed F.Z.**, & Clark MH, *Trends in Florida family dependency drug court data participant treatment usage and outcomes.*

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## **RESEARCH FUNDING**

### ***Externally Funded Research***

Title: Improving Outcomes for substance-affected Families in the Child Welfare System

Funder: NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse, R01DA05643601A1,

Role: Post-doctoral researcher; Patrick; Vanderbilt/Emory Medical School, PI

Grant: \$648,897; July 1, 2023 – December 31, 2027

Title: Identifying MOUD Decision-Making Factors in Criminal Problem-Solving Courts

Funder: NIH Helping End Addiction Long-term Initiative (HEAL) Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network (JCOIN) Rapid Innovation Grant, 1U2CDA050097

Role: Post-doctoral Research; Barbara Andraka-Christou, PI

Grant: \$44,000; February 1, 2022 – February 1, 2024

Title: Exploring attitudes and policies toward medical marijuana

Funder: University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School

Role: Post-doctoral researcher; Barbara Andraka-Christou, PI

Grant: \$10,000; August 1, 2022 – August 1, 2024

Title: Identifying MOUD Decision-Making Factors in Criminal Problem-Solving Courts

Funder: Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network (JCOIN, an NIH Initiative)

Role: Co-Investigator; Barbara Andraka-Christou, PI

Grant: \$110,000. February 1, 2022 – February 1, 2024

Title: “The Role of State Medicaid Policies in Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder in the Criminal Justice Population: Evidence from the Treatment Episode Datasets”

Funder: National Institutes of Health (NIH) R36 – Dissertation Grant.

Role: Principal Investigator

Grant: \$50,000. March 15, 2022 – February 28, 2023

Title: “Enhancement & Evaluation for Florida’s Family Dependency Drug Courts.”

Funder: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice.

Role: Local Co- Investigator & Program Evaluator at UCF; Elisabeth Kiel, PI

Grant: \$1,492,871 total with \$146,786 as subaward to UCF. October 1, 2019 – October 31, 2022.

Title: “Evaluating the Florida Opioid Initiative.”

Funder: Florida Supreme Court Office of States Court Administrator.

Role: Co-Investigator; Barbara Andraka-Christou, PI

Grant: \$16,148. May 1, 2019 – May 31, 2020.

### ***Internally Funded Research***

Title: "Exploratory Mixed Method Study of Recovery Coaching for Family Members of Loved Ones with Substance Use Disorder"

Funder: University of Central Florida Office of Research Seed Funding Exploratory Research Award.

Role: Co-Investigator; Danielle Atkins, PI

Grant: \$20,000. February 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

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### **PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

*\*Presented by*

#### ***Podium Presentations***

2024 \*Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, **Ahmed F**, Clark MH, del Pozo B, Pivovarova E, Atkins D, & Totaram R. *Mixed method study of collaborations between problem-solving court staff and community providers of medications for opioid use disorder*. NIH Justice Community Opioid Innovation Network Steering Committee Annual Meeting. June 12, 2024; Baltimore, MA.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, Totaram Rs, **Ahmed F**, Clark MH, del Pozo & B, Atkins DN. *Factors involved in problem-solving court decisions to allow medications for opioid use disorder*. Oral presentation at the annual conference of Addiction Health Services Research; October 19, 2023; New York City.

2023 \* Asi, Y. & **Ahmed, F.Z.** *Medical neglect of political prisoners: Scoping review and analysis*. Oral presentation at American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting; November 12, 2023; Atlanta, GA.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou, B., Viglione, J., Totaram, R., **Ahmed, F.Z.**, Clark M.H., del Pozo, B., & Atkins, D.N. *Factors involved in problem-solving court decisions to allow medications for opioid use disorder*. Oral presentation at the annual conference of Addiction Health Services Research (AHSR); October 19, 2023; New York City, NY.

2023 \***Ahmed, F. Z.** & Atkins, D. *The Effects of State Medicaid Policy on Health Services Outcomes for Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder Referred to Treatment By the Criminal Justice System*. Oral presentation at AsheCon; June 14, 2023; St. Louis, MO

2022 \*Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, Clark MH, Totaram R, **Ahmed F**, del Pozo B, & Atkins D. *Identifying MOUD Decision-Making Factors in Criminal Problem-Solving Courts*. Oral presentation at annual meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management; November 17, 2022; Washington. D.C.

2022 \***Ahmed, F.Z.** & Atkins, D. *The Effects of State Medicaid Policy on Health Services Outcomes for Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder Referred to Treatment by the Criminal Justice System*. Oral Presentation at Southern Economic Association (SEA) 2022 Annual Conference. Fort Lauderdale, FL.

2022 \*Andraka-Christou B, **Ahmed F**, Totaram R, Clark MH, Atkins D, & Del Pozo B. Court staff perceptions of "trustworthy" providers of medications for opioid use disorder annual conference. Oral presentation at annual Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice Health. April 6, 2022 (virtual).

2022 \***Ahmed, F.Z.** & Atkins, D. *The Effects of State Medicaid Policy on Health Services*

*Outcomes for Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder Referred to Treatment by the Criminal Justice System.* Oral Presentation at Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) 2022 Fall Conference. Washington DC.

2022 \***Ahmed, F.Z.**, Atkins, D., & Andraka-Christou, B. *Individual and Structural Characteristics Associated with Medication Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder for Criminal Justice Referred Individuals.* Oral Presentation at 2022 Public Administration Research Conference (PARC). Orlando, FL.

2021 \***Ahmed, F.Z.** & Entress, R. *Food Security and Inequality during COVID-19: Policy Tools to Promote Equality and Resilience.* Oral presentation at 2021 American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) Conference. Washington DC. (*Virtual due to COVID-19*)

2021 \***Ahmed, F.Z.**, Totaram, R., Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D., & Asi, Y. *Barriers and Facilitators of Implementation of Evidence-based Practices in Five Florida Family Dependency Drug Courts.* Oral presentation at 2021 UCF Public Administration Research Conference (PARC). Orlando, FL. (*Virtual due to COVID-19*)

2021 \***Ahmed, F.Z.** & Entress, R. *Food Insecurity and Inequality during COVID-19: Policy Tools to Promote Equality and Resilience.* Oral presentation at 2021 UCF Public Administration Research Conference (PARC). Orlando, FL. (*Virtual due to COVID-19*)

2021 \***Ahmed, F.Z.** *State Medicaid Policies and Utilization of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder in the Criminal Justice Population.* Oral presentation at Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) Student Seminar. Washington DC. (*Virtual due to COVID-19*)

### **Poster Presentations**

2025 \***Ahmed F Z**, Andraka-Christou B, Harris S, Margaritis W, Clark MH, Shewale S, & Akil S. *Perceived Reasons for Co-Using Opioids and Stimulants in the United States: A Mixed Methods Study.* UCF CCIE Research Impact Showcase. March 27, 2025; Orlando, FL.

2024 \*Andraka-Christou B, **Ahmed F Z**, Atkins D, Clark MH, Totaram Rs, & Akil S. *Evaluation of BALM: An alternative to Al Anon for family of people with SUD.* Addiction Health Services Research annual conference. October 16, 2024; San Francisco, CA.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou B, Golan O, Totaram R, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Asi Y, & Atkins D. *Implementation of evidence-based practices in five Florida family dependency drug courts: Lessons learned from court team member perspectives.* Poster presentation at 16th Annual Dissemination and Implementation Conference of Academy Health. December 11, 2023; Arlington, VA.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou B, Totaram R, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Atkins DN, Golan, O, & Asi, Y. *Implementation of evidence-based practices in five Florida family dependency drug courts: Lessons learned from court team member perspectives.* Academy Health D&I Conference. Arlington, VA.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, Totaram R, **Ahmed F**, Atkins D, Clark MH, & del Pozo B. *Problem-solving courts & decisions about opioid use disorder.* Poster presented at: UCF

College of Community Innovation and Education Research and Impact Showcase; Orlando, FL; March 9, 2023.

2023 \*Golan OK, Totaram R, **Ahmed F.Z.**, Akil S, Fatima-Hashani N, Whitaker D, & Andraka-Christou B. *A Qualitative Comparison of Persuasion Methods and Descriptions of Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Medications in U.S. News Media*. Society for Prevention Research 31st Annual Meeting. Washington, D.C.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou B, Asi Y, Totaram R, **Ahmed F**, & Atkins D. *Implementation of peer support specialists in Florida family dependency drug courts*. Oral presentation at annual meeting of the 16th Academic Health and Policy Conference on Correctional Health; April 13, 2023; Raleigh, NC.

2022 \*Totaram, R., \***Ahmed, F.Z.**, Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D., & Asi, Y., *Family Dependency Drug Court Service Modifications During Covid-19*. American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM). Hollywood, FL.

2021 \***Ahmed, F.Z.**, Totaram, R., Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D., & Clark, M.H. *Florida Court Staff Perceptions Regarding Barriers to Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder*. University of Central Florida Scholar Symposium. Orlando, FL. (Virtual due to COVID-19)

2020 \*Totaram, R., Randall-Kosich, O., Andraka-Christou, B., **Ahmed, F.Z.**, Pereira, V., Akil, S., Gonzalez, J., Ildefonso, C., Joshi, A., El-Sabawi, T., & Rivera-Atilano, R. *Codebook Development to Analyze Mentions of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder/Naloxone in National News Media*. CCIE RAST Virtual Research Showcase. Orlando, FL. (Virtual due to COVID-19)

2020 \***Ahmed, F.Z.**, Totaram, R., Randall-Kosich, O., Andraka-Christou, B., Pereira, V., Akil, S., Gonzalez, J., Ildefonso, C., Joshi, A., El-Sabawi, T., & Rivera-Atilano, R. *Medications for Opioid Use Disorder and Naloxone in News Media from 2005-2019*. CCIE RAST Virtual Research Showcase. Orlando, FL. (Virtual due to COVID-19)

2020 Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D., & \***Ahmed, F.Z.** *Florida court staff beliefs and social norms regarding medications for opioid use disorder*. American Public Health Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. (Virtual due to COVID-19)

2020 \*Unruh, L., **Ahmed, F.Z.**, & Totaram, R., *Growth in Administrative Staff Compared to Nursing Staff in Pennsylvania Hospitals, 1991-2018*. American Public Health Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. (Virtual due to COVID-19)

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## INVITED PRESENTATIONS

2024 \***Ahmed, F. Z.**, Atkins, D., & Andraka-Christou, B. *Admissions to Treatment and Receipt of Medications for Opioid Use Disorder for Criminal Justice Referred Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder*. Oral Presentation at the Substance Use Policy and Evaluation and Research Symposium; February 8, 2024; Orlando, FL.

2023 \***Ahmed, F. Z.** & Totaram, R. *Graduate Assistant Orientation at School of Global Health Management & Informatics*. School of Global Health Management & Informatics, University of Central Florida. Orlando, FL.

2023 \*Andraka-Christou B, Viglione J, Totaram R, **Ahmed F**, Clark M, Atkins D, & del Pozo B. *Drug courts & MOUD providers: a complicated relationship*. Oral presentation at Indiana University School of Medicine – Department of Psychiatry; Addiction Psychiatry Symposium; April 10, 2023; Indianapolis, IN (virtual).

2022 \*Andraka-Christou, B., Viglione, J., Atkins, D., Clark, M.H., **Ahmed, F.Z.**, Totaram, R., & del Pozo, B. *Examining MOUD Decision-Making Factors in Problem-Solving Courts*. Virtual presentation at: JCOIN Steering Committee Meeting; National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health.

2022 \***Ahmed, F.Z.** & Totaram, R. *Service Modifications During Covid-19 and its Impacts on Florida Dependency Drug Courts*. Florida Supreme Court Office of States Court Administrator. (Virtual)

2022 **Ahmed, F.Z.**, Totaram, R., & Akil, S. *Study of Law Enforcement Officers' Attitudes, Subjective Norms, & Perceived Behavioral Controls about Referrals to Opioid Use Disorder Treatment*. St. Louis Police Department LEAD Program. St. Louis, MO.

2021 **Ahmed, F.Z.** *Trends in substance use history and social determinants of health*. University of Central Florida's Pre-Academia Fellowship. Orlando, FL. (Virtual due to COVID-19)

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## OTHER PUBLICATIONS

2022 Totaram, R., **Ahmed, F.Z.**, Andraka-Christou, B., Atkins, D., & Asi, Y. *Service Modifications During COVID-19 and its Impact on Problem-Solving Courts*. *International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services Newsletter*. 7(1):7. Available at: [http://iafmhs.org/resources/Documents/Newsletter/IAFMHS%20Newsletter%202022%207\(1\)%20Winter%20.pdf](http://iafmhs.org/resources/Documents/Newsletter/IAFMHS%20Newsletter%202022%207(1)%20Winter%20.pdf)

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## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

*Guest Lecturer* for Dr. Barbara Andraka-Christou, School of Global Health Management & Informatics. University of Central Florida, *Spring 2022*  
PHC 6420 Case Studies in Health Law

*Guest Lecturer* for Dr. Yara Asi, School of Global Health Management & Informatics. University of Central Florida, *Fall 2021*  
HSA 6766 Health Care Statistics and Research

*Lead Teaching Assistant* for Dr. Yara Asi, School of Global Health Management & Informatics. University of Central Florida, *Fall 2021, Spring 2022*  
HSA 6776 - Health Care Statistics & Research

*Lead Teaching Assistant* for Dr. Danielle Atkins, School of Global Health Management & Informatics. University of Central Florida, *Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021*  
HSA 2117 - Civic Engagement in the US Healthcare System  
HSA 3430 - Health Care Economics  
HSA 4702 - Health Sciences Research Methods  
HSA 6115 - Health Economics and Policy  
HSA 6128 - Health Care Service Management  
PHC 6146 - Health Planning and Policy

*Lead Teaching Assistant for Dr. Samuel Towne, School of Global Health Management & Informatics.  
University of Central Florida, Fall 2020*  
HSC 4564 - Health Care Needs of the Elderly

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### **TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS**

- 2025 Certificate in Legal Epidemiology from Temple University's Center for Public Health Law Research
- 2021 Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Course  
*This course allows graduate students to gain a realistic perspective on the skills required for success as a faculty member in higher education, including designing significant portions of a college-level class and creating a teaching portfolio.*
- 2021 Stata Web-based Training: Using Stata Effectively: Data Management, Analysis, and Graphics Fundamentals  
*This course teaches the fundamentals of data management, analysis, and graphics through a synchronous online classroom limited to 24 participants.*
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### **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- 2022 Graduate Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship from the College of Graduate Studies (One dissertation chosen per college)  
University of Central Florida
- 2022 Pi Alpha Alpha Honor Society  
Member of the Network of Schools of Public Policy Affairs & Administration (NASPAA) local chapter
- 2021 College of Graduate Studies Presentation Fellowship  
University of Central Florida
- 2020 Doctoral Research Support Award from the College of Graduate Studies (One dissertation chosen per college)  
University of Central Florida
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### **SERVICE & LEADERSHIP**

- 2024 Assistant Coordinator of Substance Use Policy and Evaluation Research Symposium  
University of Central Florida
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### **SOFTWARE EXPERTISE**

STATA  
Dedoose