



## THE HERO RESEARCH AGENDA – 2016

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HERO research agenda reflects the research issues most important to HERO members. HERO members meet annually to review key health and well-being research activities completed over the preceding twelve months, discuss emerging industry trends, and share their thoughts on important research topics that should be studied in the future. The results of that meeting are reviewed by the HERO Research Advisory Group (RAG), a subcommittee of the HERO Research Committee comprised of outstanding leaders in research, business and education with many years of experience in the field. Based on their expert review, HERO leadership finalizes the agenda that will guide HERO's research priorities in the coming year.

The 2016 HERO Research Agenda focuses on the following **top five priorities** based on feedback from HERO members:

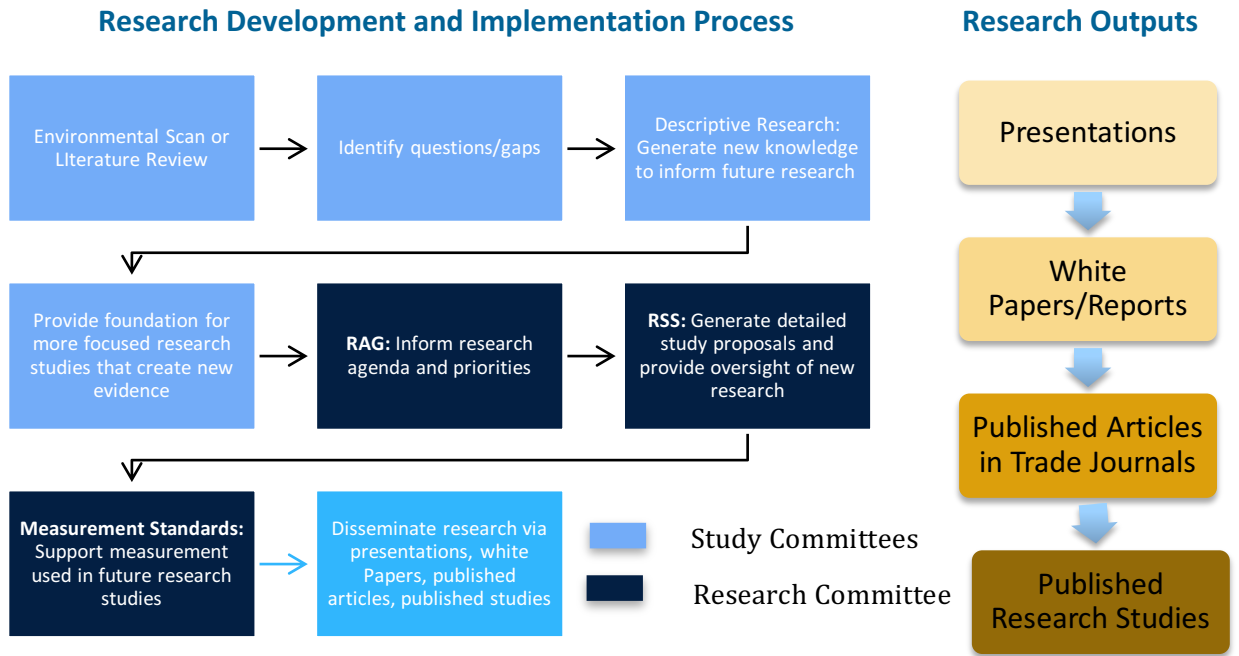
- **Well-being:** There is no consensus definition of well-being but the term is increasingly being used as a replacement for “wellness” and “health”. HERO needs to define the concept from HERO's point of view as well as identify strategies for measurement.
- **Sustainability:** HERO members would like HERO to define sustainability, identify best practices for sustaining health management programs over time and for understanding how workforce health and well-being contributes to organizational sustainability.
- **Health and Business Results:** HERO conducted a study linking investment in workforce health to company stock performance. The study is published in the January 2016 issue of JOEM. HERO will continue to support research demonstrating the impact of improving health in the workplace on business results. The work of the Health, Performance, and Productivity (HPP) Study Committee and the HERO-PHA Measurement and Program Evaluation Guide are related to this research topic.
- **Culture of Health:** HERO members are interested in research that guides organizations in creating a workplace culture that supports employee health and well-being. The Culture of Health Study Committee has identified elements of culture and completed a literature review on the evidence base supporting those elements. More research is needed to demonstrate how to influence a culture of health so it yields business outcomes.
- **Engagement:** HERO members are interested in research that defines meaningful engagement and identifies the factors that create and sustain both organizational and individual engagement as well as the relationships between them. The Engagement Study Committee has completed its initial charter statement and launched a workgroup dedicated to an environmental scan on the definition and drivers of engagement.

In addition to the topics above, HERO will initiate or maintain very active and productive workgroups in the following areas of research:

- **Employer-Community Collaboration in Improving Population Health:** Research on the value of employer involvement in community health initiatives, including identification of the activities that make the most sense for employer involvement, and how best to facilitate collaboration.
- **Health and Performance:** Research on the relationship between workforce health and employee performance and productivity.
- **HERO Scorecard:** Research focused on validating and mining the data collected in the *HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer* for the purposes of identifying best practices.
- **Incentives:** Research on the design, application and effectiveness of incentives in employee health management programs.
- **Technology:** Best practice application of how technology supports engagement in health strategies and improved outcomes.

**ACCOMPLISHING THE RESEARCH AGENDA**

The HERO Research Committee is comprised of three subcommittees including the Research Advisory Group (RAG), the Measurement Standards Subcommittee (MSS), and the Research Study Subcommittee (RSS). The RAG establishes HERO’s research agenda and priorities while the RSS provides guidance and oversight of new research studies. The MSS provides data from the HERO Scorecard to inform new research and also establishes standards for measurement in the workplace health and well-being field. The role and structure of the groups is captured in the flow diagram below. Additionally, topic-specific Study Committees outside of the Research Committee often set the foundation for HERO research projects by helping members understand what is already known about a given topic and by identifying knowledge and research gaps. This work provides the foundation for identifying opportunities for focused formal research studies. The Research Committee and the Study Committees are collectively charged with production of research reports, presentations, and/or published papers to share what they’ve learned as a result of their research activities.



HERO is a member driven organization so our priorities are based on your priorities. HERO's research agenda and projects are primarily volunteer-led and membership driven through the infrastructure of its study committees and the Research Committee. Participation in these committees is the greatest way to derive value for yourself and your organization.

HERO committees contribute new knowledge or information in several different ways:

- Environmental scans or literature reviews identify what is already known about a given topic area and typically identifies knowledge gaps with recommendations for future research.
- Descriptive research studies examine employer attitudes or practices in a specific area and are often accomplished through qualitative and quantitative methods including survey, informational interviews, case studies, or focus groups.
- Original research studies rely on sophisticated data analysis techniques to generate new discoveries about a specific research topic.
- Consensus or guidance papers that represent collaborations with other organizations seeking to identify common ground around policy and program design, implementation, and evaluation.

The table below summarizes the research activities and deliverables produced by HERO committee members by research topic area.

### Research Activities and Deliverables

Research Topic	Completed Work	Status and Work in Progress
Culture of Health (CoH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified CoH elements</li> <li>• Literature review</li> <li>• Knowledgebase article published in TAHP in AJHP in 2012</li> <li>• Presentations of findings from literature review at HERO meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active study committee</li> <li>• Manuscript in development for peer-reviewed journal based on literature review</li> <li>• Case studies on how to create and sustain a CoH in development</li> </ul>
Employer-Community Collaboration (ECC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations at HERO meetings</li> <li>• Environmental Scan Report</li> <li>• Business Case Report</li> <li>• Environmental Scan on Measures Report</li> <li>• Identifying Culture of Health Measures Report</li> <li>• Published paper on business case in JOEM in 2015</li> <li>• Developed and launched Healthy Workplaces Healthy Communities (HWHC) website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active study committee</li> <li>• Ongoing enhancements and maintenance of HWHC website</li> <li>• Phase 3 of RWJF grant-funded effort to identify and test measures used in employer-community collaborations</li> </ul>
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charter established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active study committee formed in 2015</li> <li>• Environmental scan in progress</li> </ul>

Research Topic	Completed Work	Status and Work in Progress
<p>Health and Business Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study published in JOEM in 2016 links HERO Scorecard to company stock price</li> <li>• HERO-PHA Program Measurement and Evaluation Guide</li> <li>• CEO brief on business relevance of physical inactivity</li> <li>• Infographics on business relevance of physical inactivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Began beta testing HERO-PHA Program Measurement and Evaluation Guide</li> <li>• Developing articles for peer-reviewed and industry trade journals on business implications of physical inactivity</li> </ul>
<p>Health and Performance (HPP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 research studies completed linking worker health with productivity and published in 2012 Population Health Management and in 2013 in JOEM</li> <li>• Survey of business leaders</li> <li>• Case studies on HPP measurement</li> <li>• 2015 issue of TASP section of AJHP features HPP survey results and case studies</li> <li>• Survey on employer use of wearables</li> <li>• HERO Think Tank and Forum presentations on business leader survey and wearables survey</li> <li>• IHC Forum presentation on HPP</li> <li>• HERO public webinar on wearables survey results</li> <li>• Infographics created for both surveys</li> <li>• Articles published in several business trade magazines on business leader survey results and wearables survey results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active study committee</li> <li>• Case studies on use of wearables in development</li> <li>• Quarterly incubator roundtable discussions</li> </ul>
<p>HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• V3 launched online in 2013</li> <li>• V4 launched in 2014</li> <li>• International version launched in 2016</li> <li>• 2012 Annual Report</li> <li>• 2014 Annual Report</li> <li>• Study published in JOEM in 2014 links HERO Scorecard to health care cost trends</li> <li>• Study published in JOEM in 2016 links HERO Scorecard to company stock price</li> <li>• Launched Preferred Provider program</li> <li>• Annual training and presentations at HERO Forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurement Standards subcommittee supports ongoing development</li> <li>• Research Study Subcommittee supports ongoing data analysis using normative database</li> </ul>
<p>Incentives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus Paper on Program and Incentive Design published in 2012 issue of JOEM</li> <li>• Developed consensus response to EEOC proposed rules with white paper delivered to EEOC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consensus paper on response to EEOC proposed rules on ADA and GINA in press in JOEM</li> <li>• Current research study in data collection stage with oversight by Research Committee</li> </ul>

Research Topic	Completed Work	Status and Work in Progress
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No activity to date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to identify how to address this topic within HERO</li> </ul>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No activity to date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to identify how to address this topic within HERO</li> </ul>
Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No activity to date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to identify how to address this topic within HERO</li> </ul>

## AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE *HERO RESEARCH PARTNERS*

Our success in accomplishing this ambitious research agenda depends on funding support from various sources including HERO member organizations, other employers interested in workplace health and well-being research and, where relevant, grants from foundations and government agencies.

Based on our considerable experience in facilitating research, we anticipate carrying out projects supported by four different funding models:

1. A single organization funding research projects of interest to it;
2. Two or more organizations collaborating to fund projects of mutual interest;
3. A group of organizations coming together to create a funding pool to support research projects they agree upon;
4. Grants secured to fund projects.

HERO is pursuing all of these options to facilitate research that aligns with the HERO research agenda. The option of bringing several organizations together to combine financial resources to fund multiple research projects is important to HERO as we plan near-term research projects. We have created a collaboration called "*HERO Research Partners*" to help HERO move research forward and are currently seeking organizations interested in becoming partners.

We invite you to join the *HERO Research Partners* by contributing \$10,000 to help fund our research agenda. As a HERO Research Partner, your organization will have a voice in determining the projects to pursue, along with the opportunity to be involved, at your option, in authoring manuscripts resulting from these projects. Members of the HERO Research Partners will be listed on the HERO website. Previous projects made possible by the *HERO Research Partners* fund have been published in peer-reviewed journals with early access to the findings made available first to funding partners. These studies assessed the validity of the HERO Scorecard by comparing employers' health management best-practice scores with their actual medical claim trends and also by demonstrating that HERO Scorecard high-scoring companies outperformed the stock market. These studies found that there was a strong correlation between employers' self-reported best practices and meaningful business outcomes.

Please consider this invitation to help move the science and practice of employee health management forward as a member of the HERO Research Partners. Contact Paul Terry ([paul.terry@hero-health.org](mailto:paul.terry@hero-health.org)) to discuss participation in the HERO Research Partners.