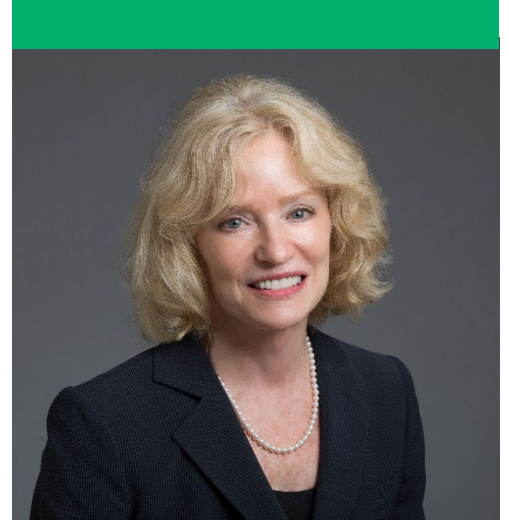


Lynda H. Powell, PhD, MEd

The Charles J. and Margaret Roberts Professor of Preventive Medicine



Advancement of Medicine

Our Enhancing Lifestyles in the Metabolic Syndrome multisite behavioral efficacy clinical trial, also known as ELM, is now in its sixth and final year.

A global epidemic, metabolic syndrome affects 1 in 3 U.S. adults and is spreading to young adults, Asian Americans and Latinos. The condition — a strong risk factor for chronic and infectious diseases — is diagnosed when at least 3 of 5 cardiometabolic risk factors are present. Although metabolic syndrome has its fundamental roots in lifestyle, doctors currently treat each component separately with drugs but do not have evidence-based options for patients who want to manage this problem by changing their lifestyle.

Our work aims to determine if a lifestyle program can produce sustained remission of metabolic syndrome. The baseline paper from this trial was accepted for publication by the *American Heart Journal*. The paper received considerable reviewer praise for its significance and timeliness. Results from the trial were revealed in the second quarter of 2024. We are completing the primary paper which will be written and presented at a top medical conference.

This is the first time Rush has led an entire multi-site trial that includes five national sites, a data coordinating center and an intervention coordinating center. The rigor of the methods used is establishing Rush as a leader in behavioral clinical trial methods.

I am a leading faculty member in three training institutes for young investigators. Two of these are supported by the National Institutes of Health, or NIH, for intervention development and behavioral clinical trial methods, and the third is an international training institute aimed at development and methods.

Research

Your generosity enables me to provide mentoring for junior faculty at Rush and across the US as well as to international investigators. I am currently actively mentoring 11 junior investigators. Over the course of my career, I have trained over 150 junior investigators in various institutes and workshops.

In 2023, I led a project aimed at determining how to implement a lifestyle program into medical care and thus fill an important gap. This project involved interviews with key stakeholders in medical center leadership, third party payers, experts in health care reimbursement, physicians, and patients, and has resulted in a strategic plan for implementation. Our aim is to conduct a demonstration project at Rush to determine feasibility, acceptability and cost-effectiveness of integration of a lifestyle program into the system of referrals in clinical care.

Selected Publications, Presentations and Contributions

- “Enhancing lifestyles in the metabolic syndrome (ELM) multi-site behavioral trial. Design and baseline cohort,” *American Heart Journal*, 2024.
- “Testing psychosocial interventions in context: Comment on Beidas et al.” *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 2024.
- “Development of a targeted behavioral treatment for smoking cessation among individuals with chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases,” *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 2024.
- “Cardiovascular health, race, and decline in cognitive function in midlife women: The Study of Women’s Health Across the Nation (SWAN)” *Journal of the American Heart Association*, 2024.
- Invited Workshop on Developing Behavioral Treatments, Society of Behavioral Medicine, 2023.
- Invited Advisory Committee to the NIH/NIA Duke Roybal Center on Aging, 2023.
- Invited Faculty at the NIH Summer Institute for Behavioral Clinical Trials, 2023.
- Co-Director, NIH Obesity-Related Behavioral Intervention Trials (ORBIT) Institute for Behavioral Treatment Development, 2023.



Grants

We have submitted a grant to the NIH to study the impact of a combined treatment of one of the new obesity drugs (i.e., Tirzepatide) and the lifestyle program evaluated in the ELM trial on sustained remission of the metabolic syndrome.

The Year Ahead: 2024 and Beyond

Our top priority in 2024 is to publish the main results of our multi-site trial in a high-visibility medical journal and present these main results at a high-visibility medical conference. All the trial results will subsequently be disseminated in 11 papers that are slated for publication—half of the authors are junior investigators. A new grant will be prepared to support a demonstration project at Rush on the integration of a lifestyle program into clinical care. Working jointly in the research and training arenas, our aim is to build a pipeline of young investigators who will be leaders in the integration of preventive care into medical practice.

With Gratitude

My sincere thanks for your support of preventive medicine research and practice. Lifestyle is key to preventing disease, but our health care system focuses more on disease management than disease prevention. Your generosity helps us work to promote a shift in these priorities.