

Dietary Patterns and Diet-Related Chronic Diseases Across the Lifespan: A Workshop

Committee

Robin A. McKinnon

Chair

Robin McKinnon, Ph.D., is a Senior Advisor for Nutrition Policy at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN). Dr. McKinnon works to advance nutrition-related activities across CFSAN, including the FDA elements in the White House National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition and Health. Prior to joining FDA, she was a health policy specialist at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health. Dr. McKinnon previously served on the planning committee for the 2009 National Academies' workshop "The Public Health Effects of Food Deserts," and in 2021 served on the planning committee for the National Academies' workshop "Challenges and Opportunities for Precision and Personalized Nutrition." She earned a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University in 2002 and a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration from the George Washington University in 2009.

Alison Brown

Member

Alison Brown, Ph.D., M.S., R.D.N., is a public health nutrition researcher committed to addressing diet-related health disparities through research, community engagement and empowerment, and systems change. Currently, she serves as a program director at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, where her work centers on the social determinants of health and nutrition health disparities. Dr. Brown's past research explored immigrant health and diet and cardiovascular disease outcomes. She also served as the past chair of the National Organization of Blacks in Dietetics and Nutrition and Adjunct Faculty at Prince George's Community College. She is a former AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Diversity Leader, American Society of Nutrition Science Policy Fellow, and Board Chair of a community-owned grocery store in Boston. In 2018, she was honored as a 40 under 40 Leader in Minority Health by the National Minority Quality Forum. Dr. Brown received a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from Spelman College, and thereafter completed her Master of Science degree from Columbia University in nutrition and applied physiology. She then earned her Ph.D. from Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

Cindy Davis

Member

Cindy D. Davis, Ph.D., serves as national program leader for the program in human nutrition conducted by the U.S. Department of Agricultural (USDA) Agricultural Research Service. In this role, she helps direct the scientific program for six Human Nutrition Research Centers. Prior to joining USDA, she was the director of Grants and Extramural Activities in the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) where she actively engaged and encouraged partnerships with other National Institutes of Health (NIH) Institutes and Centers to develop a portfolio that advances both nutritional and botanical dietary supplement research for optimizing public health. Dr. Davis is also actively involved in a number of government working groups focused on the microbiome including being a co-founder and co-chair of the Joint Agency Microbiome (NIH, Food and Drug Administration, National Institute of Standards and Technology, and USDA) working group. Before moving to ODS, she was a program director in the Nutritional Sciences Research Group at the National Cancer Institute. She completed her postdoctoral training at the Laboratory of Experimental Carcinogenesis at the National Cancer Institute. She then joined the Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center, USDA, as a research nutritionist. In 2000, she received a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers and was named the USDA Early Career Scientist. She has published more than 135 peer-reviewed journal articles and eleven invited book chapters. She is a supplement editor for the Journal of Nutrition, assistant editor for Nutrition Reviews, and a member of the editorial board for Advances in Nutrition. Dr. Davis received her B.S. degree in nutritional sciences with honors from Cornell University, and her Ph.D. degree in nutrition with a minor in human cancer biology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Mario Ferruzzi

Member

Mario Ferruzzi, Ph.D., M.S., is a professor and Chief of the Section of Developmental Nutrition in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He also serves as the Director of the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center, a partnership between Arkansas Children's Research Institute and USDA-ARS. Dr. Ferruzzi joined the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center as the Director in 2021 having previously served as a David H. Murdock Distinguished Professor at North Carolina State University's Plants for Human Health Institute (2016-2021) and as a professor of food science and nutrition science at Purdue University (2004-2016). Dr. Ferruzzi's research interests are at the interface of agriculture, food, and nutrition sciences in the study of food matrix and processing factors that influence micronutrient and phytochemical bioavailability, metabolism, and impact to human health. He has a particular interest in strategies that can be leveraged to improve the nutritional and functional quality of food products for at-risk populations. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. in food science and nutrition from The Ohio State University.

Emily Oken

Member

Emily Oken, M.D., M.P.H., is Alice Hamilton Professor and vice chair in the Department of Population Medicine at Harvard Medical School (HMS) and the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute, and professor in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health. Dr. Oken directs the Division of Chronic Disease Research Across the Lifecourse within the Department of Population Medicine. Her research focuses on the influence of nutrition and other modifiable factors during pregnancy and early childhood on long-term maternal and child health, especially cardiometabolic health and cognitive development. She was a planning committee member for the National Academies' 2020 workshop "Nutrition During Pregnancy and Lactation: Exploring New Evidence." Dr. Oken served on the Technical Expert Collaborative 1 for the Dietary Guidance Development Project for Birth to 24 Months and Pregnancy and coauthored the work that came out of the committee. She received her medical degree from Harvard Medical School in 1996 and completed her internship and residency in internal medicine and pediatrics at the Harvard Combined Program. She completed her fellowship in general internal medicine at Harvard Medical School and obtained her master's degree in public health from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Rebecca A. Seguin-Fowler

Member

Rebecca Seguin-Fowler, Ph.D., M.S., R.D.N., L.D., CSCS, is associate director for the Texas A&M Institute for Advancing Health through Agriculture, where she leads the Healthy Living social and behavioral research program. She is also chief scientific officer for the Healthy Texas Institute, professor with tenure in the Department of Nutrition in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, and graduate faculty in the Department of Health Promotion and Community Health Sciences at the School of Public Health at Texas A&M University. Dr. Seguin-Fowler is also the owner of StrongPeople, LLC, an organization that provides consulting services in the areas of nutrition, food, exercise, and wellness as well as resources, such as trainings and curricula, to advance community health. She is recognized internationally for her expertise in behavioral intervention development for rural residents, low-income families, and older adults; food systems and food access interventions; civic engagement to catalyze policy, systems, and environmental change; and dissemination and implementation science. She has received numerous awards including the Mead Johnson Award from the American Society for Nutrition, an Excellence Award from the Society of Behavioral Medicine, and most recently, the Friedman School Alumni Excellence in Nutrition Award from Tufts University. A registered and licensed dietitian, Dr. Seguin-Fowler received her bachelor's degree in clinical exercise physiology from Boston University, a master's degree in nutrition communication, and a doctorate in food policy and applied nutrition from Tufts University.

Jessica Smith

Member

Jessica Smith, Ph.D., is a senior principal scientist at Mars Wrigley where she leads nutrition scientific and regulatory affairs for the North American region. Prior to joining Mars Wrigley in February 2022, she held various roles from 2015 to 2022 at General Mills' Bell Institute of Health and Nutrition. Before transitioning to the food industry, Jessica began her career in academia by completing two postdoctoral fellowships at Laval University (Quebec, QC) and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (Boston, MA) where her research focused on the associations between diet, obesity, and chronic disease risk. Jessica has a B.S. in nutrition from the University of Western Ontario (London, ON), an M.S. in nutrition from McGill University (Montreal, QC), and a Ph.D. in physiology from Laval University (Quebec, QC) where her thesis focused on the physiology of adipose tissue in obesity.

Fang Fang Zhang

Member

Fang Fang Zhang, Ph.D., M.D., is associate professor and interim chair of the Division of Nutritional Epidemiology and Data Science at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University. She is a nutritional epidemiologist with expertise in assessing dietary intake patterns, trends, and disparities in the population, and conducting observational studies and clinical trials to investigate the role of nutrition in chronic disease prevention and control. Dr. Zhang's research interests also include quantifying the preventable cancer burden associated with suboptimal diet and assessing the cost-effectiveness of population strategies to improve diet and reduce cancer burden and disparities in the U.S. and evaluating strategies to integrate food and nutrition into healthcare. She is co-leading the LASTING project focused on assessing the impact of diet on four pillars (health, environment, cost, and society). Dr. Zhang received her Ph.D. from Columbia University in the City of New York and M.D. from Fudan University Shanghai Medical College. She is a recipient of the Eileen O'Neil Citation for Excellence in Teaching and an inaugural recipient of the Miriam E. Nelson Tisch Faculty Fellow from Tufts University.