

Research Topics & Ideas: Healthcare

About this document

This PDF contains 50 **healthcare research topics** for dissertations and theses, organized into 10 areas of healthcare, from chronic disease and long-term conditions to public and preventive health programs. Each topic is written as a researchable question and linked to a completed dissertation (2022–2026, 28 universities), so you can see how it was studied in practice. Use it to shortlist healthcare dissertation topics and thesis ideas, then narrow one down to your own population, setting and timeframe.

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Chronic disease and long-term conditions

1. What slows kidney decline in diabetes outside of the drug itself?

See it in a real dissertation: [Evidence-Based Intervention for Decreasing Chronic Kidney Progression in Patients with Type II Diabetes Mellitus](#) · Lynn Johnson · University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences · 2023

2. Is there a diet signal in the gut microbiota of dialysis patients?

See it in a real dissertation: [Carotenoids and the Associations with Gut Microbiota Bacterial Populations in Chronic Kidney Disease Hemodialysis Patients](#) · Andrea Kendall · Illinois State University · 2024

3. Can community health workers catch kidney disease earlier in rural areas?

See it in a real dissertation: [Enhancing Chronic Kidney Disease Awareness and Early Identification Through Community Health Worker Education in Rural Arkansas](#) · Samantha L.M. Smith · Walden University · 2026

4. Which policy barriers keep digital tools out of routine diabetes care?

See it in a real dissertation: [Policy barriers to the adoption of digital health interventions in the management of chronic type 2 diabetes among African-American adults in the United States](#) · B. M. Sagar · Northeastern University · 2023

5. What makes an older patient stay on a therapy they find difficult?

See it in a real dissertation: [Implementation of a GLP-1 Patient Education Adherence Toolkit to Improve Therapy Adherence and Clinical Outcomes in Older Adults With Type 2 Diabetes and Obesity](#) · Mekhla Raina · University of Virginia · 2026

Digital health, telemedicine and AI

6. Where does machine learning genuinely improve a clinical prediction?

See it in a real dissertation: [Machine Learning Approaches to Improve Prediction in Health Care](#) · Sadaf Kabir · West Virginia University · 2022

7. Which mental health patients are appropriate for telehealth, and who decides?

See it in a real dissertation: [Assessing the Appropriateness of Mental Health Patients for Telehealth Care](#) · Jacquelyn Hamed · Walden University · 2026

8. Does a telemedicine follow-up appointment work as well as an in-person one?

See it in a real dissertation: [Utilization of Telemedicine for Follow Up Appointments in Radiation Oncology](#) · Priya Patel · University of San Diego · 2023

9. What does virtual reality add to mental health care that a screen does not?

See it in a real dissertation: [Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality in Healthcare: Mental Health and Electronic Health Records](#) · Nadeem Jaffer Mohammed · Purdue University · 2026

10. Can automated detection find healthcare fraud without flagging honest providers?

See it in a real dissertation: [Optimizing efficiency and accuracy in medicare and medicaid fraud detection through artificial intelligence and machine learning](#) · Shunyi Zhang · Northeastern University · 2024

11. Has telehealth changed how much care people use, or only how they get it?

See it in a real dissertation: [The Impact of Telehealth on Healthcare Utilization, Health Behavior and Health Workforce Supply](#) · Zhang Zhang · University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill University · 2024

Emergency preparedness and disaster response

12. What did staff make of a therapy robot brought in during a crisis?

See it in a real dissertation: [Experience of Healthcare Workers who Used AI Therapy Robot PARO During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) · Ricco Nancy Julia · Walden University · 2025

13. How did people with chronic conditions cope when in-person care closed?

See it in a real dissertation: [Utilization of Telemedicine by People with Chronic Health Conditions during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) · Tori Saige Barker · University of North Texas · 2022

14. Did patients arriving with COVID present as more anxious or agitated?

See it in a real dissertation: [Anxiety and Agitation in Adult Patients Admitted to an Emergency Room during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) · Doris Asombrado · University of San Diego · 2023

15. What did home health nurses carry that the hospital response never saw?

See it in a real dissertation: [Home Health Care Nurses' Experiences and Perceptions of Providing Care to Older Adults During the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Descriptive Study](#) · Joan Dugas · University of Rhode Island · 2023

Health equity and access

16. What protects LGBTQ+ mental health when the surrounding environment does not?

See it in a real dissertation: [Queer Resilience: A Mixed Methods Examination of LGBTQ+ Positive Identity, Community Connectedness, and Mental Health Outcomes in Sexual Minority Emerging Adults](#) · Alana Harrison Fondren · University of North Texas · 2022

17. Does screening for social needs change anything if the services are not there?

See it in a real dissertation: [Addressing Health Disparities Through Social Needs Screening](#) · Adelagun Adelaja · Fort Hays State University · 2025

18. Can a community nonprofit close a health literacy gap the system leaves open?

See it in a real dissertation: [Health Care Disparities and Chronic Disease Burden: Policy Implications for NGOs](#) · Stella S. Obot · Georgia State University · 2022

19. Can entrepreneurship reach patients the health system does not?

See it in a real dissertation: [An Assessment Model of the Healthcare Entrepreneurship Ecosystem to Foster Solutions for Underserved Communities](#) · Abdalilah Owaishiz · Portland State University · 2022

Health policy, systems and financing

20. How quickly does a change in reproductive health policy show up in care people receive?

See it in a real dissertation: [Three Essays on Reproductive Health Policy](#) · Raymond Caraher · University of Massachusetts Amherst · 2025

21. Does more precise diagnostic coding change the health care a patient gets?

See it in a real dissertation: [Essays in Health Economics and Social Insurance](#) · Yalun Su · University of Chicago · 2025

22. Did Medicaid expansion change what perinatal mental health providers can offer?

See it in a real dissertation: [Perinatal Mental Health Providers' Perceptions of Medicaid Expansion](#) · Chelsea Desiree Walls · Walden University · 2025

23. Where should public health policy draw the line on genomic enhancement?

See it in a real dissertation: [The ethics of human genomic enhancement: a framework for public health policy](#) · Tess Frances Johnson · University of Oxford · 2022

24. What stops Medicaid beneficiaries with opioid use disorder from getting care?

See it in a real dissertation: [Improving Access to Care for Medicaid Beneficiaries with Opioid Use Disorders](#) · Soham Sinha · University of Chicago · 2026

25. Who writes the health policy for an industry that has no regulator?

See it in a real dissertation: [Understanding Mental, Emotional, and Social Health Policy within the Camp Industry](#) · Alexandra Skrocki · Clemson University · 2026

Health workforce, burnout and retention

26. Can leadership alone hold a public health workforce together?

See it in a real dissertation: [Leadership-Mediated Retention Strategies to Sustain Workforce Capacity and Performance in Public Health](#) · Meredith Winslow Wilkins · Walden University · 2026

27. Do leadership walkrounds reduce burnout, or add another thing to the day?

See it in a real dissertation: [Leadership walkrounds and the effect on burnout](#) · Jill D. Sanders · University of Missouri · 2024

28. What actually reduces burnout in health care workers, as against what is offered?

See it in a real dissertation: [An Evidence-Based Approach for Decreasing Burnout in Health Care Workers](#) · Leonor Salalila · University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences · 2024

29. Can burnout be predicted in healthcare students before placement breaks them?

See it in a real dissertation: [Predicting Burnout among Graduate Healthcare Students in Clinical Placements](#) · Meghan E Visek · Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine · 2026

30. What is it about health work that pushes health workers out early?

See it in a real dissertation: [The effect of work on the health of health workers and the impact on early workforce exit](#) · Rosie Annabelle Neall · Edinburgh Napier University · 2026

Healthcare leadership and management

31. Which leadership strategies actually move organizational performance in a hospital?

See it in a real dissertation: [Leadership Strategies Healthcare Leaders Use to Improve Organizational Performance](#) · Rushell Latoya Bryce · Walden University · 2026

32. How do you run a health service where the supply chain barely reaches?

See it in a real dissertation: [Improving Community Health Services in Remote Settings: Papers on Operations Management Approaches to Global Health](#) · Robert John Montgomery · University of Chicago · 2023

33. What does managing an emerging outbreak teach about managing the next one?

See it in a real dissertation: [MPOX 2022: Strategic Management During a Public Health Emergency](#) · Rob Palmer · University of Illinois Chicago · 2025

34. Are patient safety and staff engagement the same problem wearing two hats?

See it in a real dissertation: [Aligning patient safety and employee engagement strategies to achieve organizational outcomes](#) · Colleen Clark · Northeastern University · 2024

35. Which leadership style actually keeps healthcare staff from leaving?

See it in a real dissertation: [Examining the Relationship between Leadership Styles and Staff Retention in Healthcare](#) · Stephanie Michelle Brown · Walden University · 2026

Maternal, child and family health

36. Which state policies actually move maternal and infant outcomes?

See it in a real dissertation: [State Policies On Maternal And Infant Health In The United States](#) · Heeun Kim · University at Albany, State University of New York · 2024

37. What does heat exposure in pregnancy do to infant health?

See it in a real dissertation: [The impact of in-utero exposure to ambient temperature on maternal health, infant health, and population composition](#) · J Abdel Ghany · University of Oxford · 2025

38. How do overlapping conditions compound in the postpartum period?

See it in a real dissertation: [Migraine, Depressive Symptoms, and Maternal Quality of Life in the Postpartum Period: The Role of Comorbidity, Disengagement, and Personal Resource Strain](#) · Anna Matthews · University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill University · 2026

39. Where in the care pathway does bias turn into maternal harm?

See it in a real dissertation: [Biases impact on Black maternal morbidity and mortality](#) · Alexandra Lopes · Northeastern University · 2025

40. What changes when partner violence is treated as a maternal health issue?

See it in a real dissertation: [Reframing Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence Through a Maternal and Child Health Lens: Implications for Integrated Prevention, Policy, and Practice](#) · Daija C. Gibson · Columbus State University · 2026

Patient safety and quality of care

41. Does a redesigned handoff sheet change how staff perceive safety on the unit?

See it in a real dissertation: [Enhancing Patient Safety and Team Communication via Standardized Unit Handoff Tools in Inpatient Rehabilitation](#) · Julia Rae Before · University of New Hampshire · 2026

42. Why do medication errors persist through a decade of policy aimed at them?

See it in a real dissertation: [Medication Safety: A Policy Journey to Reduce Medication Errors](#) · Edith Zapata Campos · University of San Diego · 2025

43. How much does patient education reduce harm from a high-risk medication?

See it in a real dissertation: [An Oral Anticoagulant Patient Education Session to Improve Patient Safety](#) · Holly Anna Pizzini · University of Arizona · 2025

44. Does staff education change safety outcomes, or only safety knowledge?

See it in a real dissertation: [Staff Education to Improving Patient Safety Outcomes Through Structured Staff Education](#) · Imuetinyan Phillipa Ehondor · Walden University · 2026

45. Which parts of a central line bundle carry the prevention effect?

See it in a real dissertation: [Prevention of Central Line-Associated Blood Stream Infection \(CLABSI\) in Adult ICU Patients](#) · Salima Allahbachayo · University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences · 2022

Public and preventive health programs

46. What do teenagers actually believe about vaccines, and what would shift it?

See it in a real dissertation: [Adolescent Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs toward Vaccination](#) · Richard Brendan Noggle · Georgia State University · 2022

47. Which messages raise vaccine uptake in a community that distrusts the messenger?

See it in a real dissertation: [Increasing COVID-19 Vaccine Awareness Among Hispanic Families: A Policy Perspective](#) · Allison Chico · University of San Diego · 2022

48. How far does health literacy explain who takes up cancer prevention?

See it in a real dissertation: [Health Literacy and Cervical Cancer Prevention Behaviors Among Hispanic Women in Idaho](#) · Delmy Flores · Boise State University · 2024

49. Can health education shift mental health stigma inside an immigrant community?

See it in a real dissertation: [The Impact of Mental Health Education on Nigerian Immigrants in the United States](#) · Paschal Chinedu Ukwu · Walden University · 2024

50. Where in a hospital is there unmet need a community health worker could fill?

See it in a real dissertation: [Uncovering a hidden need for community healthcare workers in surgical departments](#) · Morgan Alexandra Palumbo · Temple College · 2026

How to turn a topic into your research question

A topic is a starting point, not something you can research yet. These four steps take you from a topic on this list to a focused question you can actually answer.

- 1. Shortlist three, not one.** Pick three topics from this list that genuinely interest you and fit the access you have to people and data.

Recommended reading: [How to find and choose a dissertation topic](#)

- 2. Read the dissertation behind each one.** Its literature review and its "recommendations for future research" section show you what is already known and what is still open.

Recommended reading: [How to find a research gap](#)

- 3. Narrow it to your setting.** Name one population, one setting and one thing you will measure or explore. That turns a broad topic into a question you can finish.

Recommended reading: [How to write a research question](#)

- 4. Line up your aims, objectives and questions.** Your committee will check that they agree.

Recommended reading: [Research aims, objectives and questions](#)

Work through these once and you will have a focused question rather than a broad topic, which is what the rest of your proposal is built on.