

Missouri Abt Associates, Inc. Liaisons CMS Real Choice Systems Transformation

Deborah Klein Walker, Ed.D. is Vice President and Principal Associate in the Health Division of Abt Associates. Dr. Walker is the leader of the Public Health Practice and Principal Investigator on several major evaluation projects (e.g., National Healthy Start, Implementation of New WIC Food Guidelines, and Medicaid Real Choices Systems Transformation State Grants). Before joining Abt in 2004, Dr. Walker was at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for 15 years where she most recently was the Associate Commissioner for Programs and Prevention responsible for programs in maternal and child health, health promotion and disease prevention (including the tobacco control program), primary care and community health programs (including those for HIV/AIDS and substance abuse), minority health, data integration and information systems.

Dr. Walker is the immediate past president of the American Public Health Association, a current trustee of the Cambridge Health Alliance and a board member of the Massachusetts Public Health Association. She is a member of the Research Consortium for Children with Chronic Conditions and a past president of the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs. She is a founding member and current senior policy advisor to New England SERVE, a network for enhancing family-centered, community-based services for children with special health care needs.

Dr. Walker is currently an Adjunct Professor at the Boston University School of Public Health and an Adjunct Lecturer at the Harvard School of Public Health. Prior to state service, Dr. Walker was an Associate Professor of Human Development at the Harvard School of Public Health and a faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. She has a B.A. from Mount Holyoke College and an Ed.M. and Ed.D. in human development from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dr. Walker has authored three books and over 100 articles and book chapters. Her research and policy interests include child and family policy, program implementation and evaluation, public health practice, disability policy, community health systems, health outcomes and data systems.

Melanie Wasserman is a health services researcher who uses qualitative methods (focus groups, in-depth interviews, content analysis, cognitive-based interviewing), quantitative methods (linear regression, categorical data analysis, survey data analysis, longitudinal data analysis), and mixed methods to evaluate access to care and quality of care for vulnerable and Limited-English Proficient populations. She has received grant funding from AHRQ, NCHS, and NIA for research on utilization of preventive care among Latina immigrant women, and has five years of project management experience in both contract and grant environments. She is also experienced in technical assistance using technologies of participation and team-based quality assurance methods. Dr. Wasserman teaches a program evaluation course at Brown University, where she has also led a senior's and master's level health policy seminar and a week-long intensive Stata programming course for doctoral students in sociology. She speaks fluent Spanish, French, and Hausa, as well as intermediate German and Portuguese, and has over 15 years of experience as a professional translator.