

UofSC Greenville receives \$400,000 from the Duke Endowment to study Exercise is Medicine Greenville

GREENVILLE, S.C. -- The Duke Endowment has awarded the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville a \$400,000 grant to evaluate a first-of-its-kind, physical activity health promotion model for health care providers.

Launched in 2016, Exercise is Medicine Greenville® (EIMG®) pioneered a partnership between the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville, Prisma Health, and YMCA of Greenville to connect patients who have chronic diseases such as obesity, hypertension, type 2 diabetes to a clinically-informed exercise program delivered in their own community. [Preventive Medicine Reports](#) recently published the initial success of EIMG, reporting improvements in the first 210 graduating patients' blood pressures and body weights and demonstrating that the program had high patient satisfaction.

Scientists from UofSC School of Medicine Greenville, UofSC Department of Orthopedics, Temple University, and Prisma Health will conduct the research. "We are honored to receive The Duke Endowment award, which will allow us to comprehensively examine key factors behind the initial success of EIMG, how we can improve it, what the cost is to run the program, and what the savings and health benefits are from patients participating in the program," said the study's principal investigator, Dr. Jennifer L. [Trilk](#), Program Director of EIMG and an Associate Professor at the UofSC School of Medicine Greenville. "This information will help us optimize the program, scale across counties, and may also help provide a model for other health care systems to improve the health of their patients."

"We are grateful to The Duke Endowment for its generosity, and to our partners, Prisma Health and YMCA, which helped develop EIMG into a robust clinic to community health program. This grant will ultimately help bring this impactful, clinic-community model to the national stage to benefit the health of many communities," said Dr. Marjorie Jenkins, Dean of the UofSC School of Medicine Greenville.

Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, and established in 1924 by industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, The Duke Endowment is a private foundation that strengthens communities in North Carolina and South Carolina by nurturing children, promoting health, educating minds and enriching spirits. Since its founding, it has distributed more than \$4 billion in grants.

Dr. Meenu Jindal is an internal medicine specialist at Prisma Health and co-investigator for the study. "EIMG provides a great opportunity for patients in need, especially for those who cannot afford the program otherwise," said Dr. Jindal, who will provide important insight into patients who have lower socioeconomic status and unique lifestyle challenges. YMCA of Greenville strives to make sure EIMG is delivered equitably, through YMCA provided scholarships covering 5-100% of the programming costs to patients who need it the most. "The YMCA is honored and committed to provide critical funding needed to ensure that every patient

referred can participate in EIMG, regardless of financial status,” said Scot Baddley, President and Chief Operating Officer of YMCA of Greenville.

Information gained from the grant will have implications across the state and nationally, at a moment when medical experts are acknowledging the essential role physical activity plays in preventing and treating the nation’s top chronic diseases.

For more information or to schedule an interview contact Kendall Givens-Little at givenslk@greenvillemed.sc.edu or 864-455-8209.