

# Claire R. McNellan, Ph.D., M.P.H.

[Email](#) | [Website](#) | [Google Scholar](#)

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

2024- **Assistant Professor**, Colorado School of Public Health  
Department of Health Systems, Management and Policy  
University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus

## EDUCATION

2024 **Ph.D.**, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Social Work  
2017 **M.P.H.**, University of Washington  
Global Health: Health Metrics and Evaluation  
2014 **B.A.**, Colorado College  
Neuroscience (*with distinction*), Minor: Bioethics

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Child- & family-serving systems; child maltreatment epidemiology; injury and violence prevention; population health; maternal-child health; public child welfare systems; social policy; public health surveillance.

## PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

23. **McNellan, C. R.**, Prindle, J., & Eastman, A. L, Putnam-Hornstein, E. (2025) Mortality in a California cohort of emerging adults exiting foster care. Forthcoming in *American Journal of Epidemiology*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwaf055>
22. **McNellan, C. R.**, Richards, R.,\* Johnson, E.,\* Ingalls, M.,\* Tailer, S.,\* Putnam-Hornstein, E. (2025) The relationship between receipt of childcare subsidies and child protective services involvement in Douglas County, Colorado: A brief research report. Forthcoming in *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research* <https://doi.org/10.1086/731490>  
\* Agency partner
21. Gibbs, D. J., Lanier, P., **McNellan, C. R.**, Bryan, K. (2024) Identifying children at risk for maltreatment fatalities: Assessing the current landscape of birth match policies in the United States. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2024.2319732>
20. Fullman, N., et al. [including **McNellan, C.R.**] (2023) Assessing the impact of community-based interventions on hypertension and diabetes management in three Minnesota

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communities: Findings from the prospective evaluation of US HealthRise programs. *PLoS ONE*, 18(2). <https://doi-org.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/10.1371/journal.pone.0279230>

19. **McNellan, C. R.**, Gibbs, D. J., Knobel, A. S., & Putnam-Hornstein, E. (2022) The evidence base for risk assessment tools used in U.S. child protection investigations: A systematic scoping review. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105887>
18. Foust, R., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2022) The Children's Data Network: Harnessing the scientific potential of linked, administrative data to inform children's programs and policies. *International Journal of Population Data Science*, 6(3). <https://doi.org/10.23889/ijpds.v6i3.1702>
17. Flor, L. S., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2020) Community-based interventions for detection and management of diabetes and hypertension in underserved communities: A mixed-methods evaluation in Brazil, India, South Africa and the USA. *BMJ Global Health*, 5(6). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2019-001959>
16. **McNellan, C. R.**, Dansereau, E., Wallace, M. C., et al. (2019) Antenatal care as a means to increase participation in the continuum of maternal and child healthcare: An analysis of the poorest regions of four Mesoamerican countries. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-019-2207-9>
15. Duber, H. C., **McNellan, C. R.**, Wollum, A., et al. (2018) Public knowledge of cardiovascular disease and response to acute cardiac events in three cities in China and India. *Heart*, 104(1). <https://doi.org/10.1136/heartjnl-2017-311388>
14. Mokdad, A. H., et al. [including **McNellan, C.R.**] (2018) Supply-side interventions to improve health: Findings from the Salud Mesoamerica Initiative. *Plos One*, 13(4). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0195292>
13. Wollum, A., Gabert, R., **McNellan, C. R.**, et al. (2018) Identifying gaps in the continuum of care for cardiovascular disease and diabetes in two communities in South Africa: Baseline findings from the HealthRise project. *Plos One*, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0192603>
12. El Bcheraoui, C., Zuniga-Brenes, P., Rios-Zertuche, D., Palmisano, E. B., **McNellan, C. R.**, et al. (2018) Health systems strategies to increase HIV screening among pregnant women in Mesoamerica. *Population Health Metrics*, 16(5). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12963-018-0162-8>
11. Vos, T., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2017) Global, regional, and national incidence, prevalence, and years lived with disability for 328 diseases and injuries for 195 countries, 1990–2016: A systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. *The Lancet*, 390, 1211-1259. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)32154-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)32154-2)

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10. Gabert, R., Ng, M., Sogarwal, R., Bryant, M., Deepu, R. V., **McNellan, C. R.**, et al. (2017) Identifying gaps in the continuum of care for hypertension and diabetes in two Indian communities. *BMC Health Services Research*, 17(846). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-017-2796-9>
9. Hernandez, B., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2017) Barriers and facilitators for institutional delivery among poor Mesoamerican women: a cross-sectional study. *Health Policy and Planning*, 32(6), 769-780. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czx010>
7. Barber, R. M., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2017) Healthcare access and quality index based on mortality from causes amenable to personal health care in 195 countries and territories, 1990-2015: A novel analysis from the global burden of disease study 2015. *The Lancet*, 390, 231-266. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)30818-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30818-8)
6. Lim, S. S., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2016) Measuring the health-related Sustainable Development Goals in 188 countries: A baseline analysis from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2015. *The Lancet*, 388, 1813-1850. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(16\)31467-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31467-2)
5. Kulikoff, X. R., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2016) Health metrics priorities in the SDG era and beyond: a perspective from young researchers. *The Lancet*, 388: 2353-2354. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(16\)32134-1](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)32134-1)
4. Dansereau, E., **McNellan, C. R.**, Gagnier, M. C., et al. (2016) Coverage and timing of antenatal care among poor women in 6 Mesoamerican countries. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-016-1018-5>
3. Colombara, D.V., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] (2016) Institutional delivery and satisfaction among Indigenous and poor women in Guatemala, Mexico, and Panama. *PLOS ONE*, 11(4), e154388. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0154388>
2. Colombara, D. V., Hernandez, B., **McNellan, C. R.**, et al. (2016) Diarrhea prevalence, care, and risk factors among poor children under 5 years of age in Mesoamerica. *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, 94(3), 544-552. <https://doi.org/10.4269/ajtmh.15-0750>
1. Colombara, D. V., Hernandez, B., Gagnier, M. C., Johanns, C., Desai, S. S., Haakenstad, A., **McNellan, C. R.**, et al. (2015) Breastfeeding practices among poor women in Mesoamerica. *Journal of Nutrition*, 145(8), 1958-1965. <https://doi.org/10.3945/jn.115.213736>

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## MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

3. Ahn, E., **McNellan, C. R.**, Prindle, J., Sattler, K., Foust, R., Putnam-Hornstein, E. Educational disparities among children who experienced maltreatment.
2. Sattler, K., **McNellan, C. R.**, Foust, R. Learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from California.
1. Flor, L. S., et al. [including **McNellan, C. R.**] Endline assessment of community-based program on hypertension and diabetes management in Brazil. Preprint available at medRxiv: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2022.05.22.22275385>

## WORKING PAPERS

7. Marquez, N. M., **McNellan, C. R.**, Alexander, M., A person time framework for pregnancy-associated mortality risk using administrative data.
5. **McNellan, C. R.** et al., Using unsupervised machine learning to advance understanding of child maltreatment substantiation.
4. **McNellan, C. R.** et al., An empirical examination of organizational theories of maltreatment substantiation decisions made by a county-administered child protection system.
3. **McNellan, C. R.**, Palmer, L., Prindle, J., McCroskey, J. Disparities in community service referrals following an inconclusive or screened out child protection investigation.
2. Chen, W.-T., Huang, P.-Y., **McNellan, C. R.**, Vaithianathan, R., & Putnam-Hornstein, E. Child maltreatment registry policy change and allegation types in California: A difference-in-difference analysis.
1. Gibbs, D. J., **McNellan, C. R.**, Dawes, H., & Forte, A. Outcomes associated with child participation in United States dependency court proceedings: A systematic review.

## WHITE PAPERS & REPORTS

3. Putnam-Hornstein, E., Vaithianathan, R., McCroskey, J., Webster, D. [Data & Implementation Support: **McNellan, C. R.**] (2022) Los Angeles County Risk Stratification Model: Methodology and Implementation Report (Model Version 1.0). Children's Data Network. <https://dcfs.lacounty.gov/resources/reports/>
2. National Court Appointed Special Advocates/Guardians ad Litem Association For Children. [Impact estimates & outcomes: **McNellan, C. R.**] (2019) Change a Child's Story: 2019

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Annual Report. <https://nationalcasagal.org/about-us/reports/national-casa-gal-association-for-children-2019-annual-report/>

1. National Court Appointed Special Advocates/Guardians ad Litem Association For Children. [Impact estimates & outcomes: **McNellan, C. R.**] (2018) Building a Better Future: 2018 Annual Report. <https://nationalcasagal.org/about-us/reports/national-casa-gal-association-for-children-2018-annual-report/>

## GRANTS & RESEARCH SUPPORT

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 2024-2025 | <b>Co-Investigator</b> (PI: Lindsey Palmer, PhD)<br>University of Utah<br><i>If we build it, will they come? An evaluation of uptake and engagement in alternatives to Child Protective Services</i>  |
| 2024      | <b>Research Coordinator</b><br>Morgridge Family Foundation<br><i>Pilot: Colorado Implementation Science Unit (CISU)</i><br><i>Colorado Office of Children, Youth and Families</i>   |
| 2022-2024 | <b>Research Assistant</b> (PI: Emily Putnam-Hornstein, PhD)<br>Conrad N. Hilton Foundation<br><i>Risk Stratification Pilot: Data and Implementation</i><br>Subaward (\$600,000)   |
| 2021-2022 | <b>Lead Investigator</b> (Faculty PI: Emily Putnam-Hornstein, PhD)<br>Douglas County Department of Human Services<br><i>A Retrospective Population-Based Study of Child Protective System Involvement</i><br>Research Contract (\$40,000)   |
| 2021-2023 | <b>Principal Investigator</b> (Faculty Co-I: Emily Putnam-Hornstein, PhD)<br>Center for Innovation in Child Maltreatment Policy, Research, & Training at Washington University in St. Louis<br><i>Assessing the Utility of a Risk-Stratification Model to Increase Equitable Service Connection</i><br>Pilot Project Award (\$20,000) |
| 2020-2022 | <b>Research Assistant</b> (Site PI: Emily Putnam-Hornstein, PhD)<br>Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) 1P50HD096719-01<br><i>Project Data SMART (Selection, Management, Analysis, Replication &amp; Transfer)</i><br>Subaward (\$247,500)  |

# Claire R. McNellan, Ph.D., M.P.H.

- 2020      **Research Assistant** (PI: Patricia Pavlinac, PhD)  
National Institutes of Health (NIH) R01-AI150978-01  
*The Role of Enteric Pathogens and Antimicrobial Resistance in Driving Clinical and Nutritional Deterioration, and Azithromycin's Potential Effect, Among Children Discharged from Hospital in Kenya*  
(\$782,247)
- 2014      **Principal Investigator**  
Keller Family Venture Grant  
*Studying the "Father of Modern Neuroscience," Santiago Ramón y Cajal, in-situ at neuroscience research center, Instituto Cajal, and throughout Spain*  
(\$3,000)

## HONORS & FELLOWSHIPS

- 2023      **Comprehensive Oral Substantive Examination, passed with distinction**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work
- 2022      **Fulbright Student Program Semi-finalist**  
U.S. Department of State
- 2022      **Comprehensive Methods Examination, passed with distinction**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work
- 2021-2022      **Injury and Violence Prevention Research Fellowship**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Injury Prevention Research Center
- 2021      **Most Outstanding Student Presentation**  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Injury Prevention Research Center conference, "Intersectional Approaches to Injury and Violence Prevention in a Post-COVID World"
- 2014-2017      **Post-Bachelor Fellowship**  
Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation
- 2014      **Distinction in the Major of Neuroscience**  
The Colorado College
- 2014-      **Psi Chi International Honors Society**
- 2011-      **Alpha Lambda Delta National Honors Society**
- 2010-2014      **Women's Educational Society Scholarship**  
The Colorado College

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (\*= presenting author)

- 2025      **McNellan, C.R.\*** When Is Maltreatment Confirmed? Using Unsupervised Machine Learning to Advance Understanding of Child Protective Services Decisions. Part of a symposium: Exploring Decision-Making at the Front-End of the Child Protection System. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. *Seattle, WA.*

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2024 Putnam-Hornstein, E. \*, **McNellan, C.R.**, Prindle, J. Using Vital Death Records to Validate a Child Protection Risk Algorithm. Society for the Advancement of Violence and Injury Research (SAVIR) Annual Conference. *Chapel Hill, NC*.

**McNellan, C.R.\*** When is Maltreatment Confirmed? Using Unsupervised Machine Learning to Advance Understanding of Child Protective Services Decisions. Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Meeting. *Columbus, OH*.

2023 **McNellan, C.R.\***, Ahn, E. \*, Noll, J. \*, Miyamoto, S.\* Symposium: Community-Based Services for the Prevention and Detection of Child Abuse and Neglect. The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN) International Congress. *Edinburgh, United Kingdom*.

**McNellan, C.R.**, Putnam-Hornstein, E. (Poster) Using a Multi-State Markov Model to Estimate Mortality Risk Among Foster Youth During Transition. Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Meeting. *New Orleans, LA*.

**McNellan, C.R.\***, Gibbs, D., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Knobel, A. The Evidence for Risk Assessment Tools Used in Child Protection Investigations: A Scoping Review. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. *Phoenix, AZ*.

**McNellan, C.R.\***, Palmer, L., Putnam-Hornstein, E., McCroskey, J. Risk, Race, and Community-Based Service Referrals in Los Angeles County, California. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. *Phoenix, AZ*.

Putnam-Hornstein, E. \*, Vaithianathan, R., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., McCroskey, J., Ahn, E., **McNellan, C.R.** Developing and Implementing a Predictive Risk Model to Support Child Protection Supervisors: Results from Los Angeles County Risk Stratification Pilot. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. *Phoenix, AZ*.

2022 **McNellan, C.R.\***, Eastman, A., Prindle, J., Putnam-Hornstein, E. Mortality During Transitions Out of Foster Care: Evidence from California. Population Association of America (PAA) Annual Meeting. *Atlanta, GA* (presented remotely due to COVID-19).

**McNellan, C.R.\***, Eastman, A., Prindle, J., Foust, R., Herd, T. Leveraging Linked, Administrative Data to Inform Policy and Practice for Adolescents who have Child Protective Services (CPS) Involvement. The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN) International Congress. *Tallinn, Estonia* (withdrawn due to COVID-19).

**McNellan, C.R.\***, Prindle, J., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Palmer, L. Risk Assessment Tools to Support Child Welfare Practice. The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN) International Congress. *Tallinn, Estonia* (withdrawn due to COVID-19).

*McNellan*

*Current as of: Mar., 2025*

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**McNellan, C.R.\***, Palmer, L., Putnam-Hornstein, E., McCroskey, J. Assessing the Utility of a Predictive Risk Model to Increase Service Connections in Los Angeles, California. The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN) International Congress. *Quebec City, Quebec* (withdrawn due to COVID-19).

Prindle, J.\*, Foust, R., **McNellan, C.R.**, Putnam-Hornstein, E. Modeling Academic Achievement Among Maltreated Children: Implications for Policy. Annual Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) Conference. *Austin, TX*.

**McNellan, C.R.\***, Palmer, L., McCroskey, J., Putnam-Hornstein, E. Using a Predictive Risk Model to Assess Racial Disparities in Service Referrals Following a Child Protection Investigation. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. *Washington, DC*. (withdrawn due to COVID-19).

- 2021 Prindle, J., Eastman, A.L., **McNellan, C.R.**, Putnam-Hornstein, E. Cohort Study of Mortality Among Youth in Foster Care. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual Conference. *Virtual*. (withdrawn due to COVID-19).

Gibbs, D., **McNellan, C.R.** The Empirical Evidence for Child Participation in Dependency Court Proceedings: Results of a Systematic Review of the Literature. National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) Child Welfare Law Conference. *Denver, CO*. (withdrawn due to COVID-19).

- 2017 **McNellan, C.R.** (Poster) Uptake of Antenatal Care and its Relationship with Participation in Health Services and Behaviors: An Analysis of the Poorest Regions of Four Mesoamerican Countries. The Consortium of Universities for Global Health Annual Conference. *Washington, DC*.

## INVITED TALKS

- 2024 **McNellan, C.R.** Mortality in a California Cohort of Adolescents and Young Adults Exiting Foster Care. HSMP 7010: Foundations in Health Services Research, Department of Health Systems, Management & Policy, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

Putnam-Hornstein, E., **McNellan, C.R.** Mortality Outcomes for Young Adults Transitioning from Foster Care. California's Workgroup on Suicide and Overdose Prevention.

- 2023 **McNellan, C.R.** Learning Loss During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Children's Data Network Brown Bag.



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## TEACHING

2024 (Spring),

2023 (Fall) *Doctoral Professional Development Seminar*

(Teaching Assistant)

My lectures covered best practices in data management and I offered statistics office hours for first year doctoral students.

2022 (Fall)

*Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities*

(Mentored Second Instructor)

Graduate course covering theoretical foundations of “macro” practice, including critical theories and systems theories; data interpretation and analysis; local, state, and national policy; intervention planning; community-based needs assessments.

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

### Peer Reviewer

*Child Maltreatment* (2022, 2025)

*Reproductive Health* (2021, 2022)

*BMJ Open* (2020)

### Member

Population Association of America

Society for Social Work and Research

International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

## UNIVERSITY SERVICE

2023-2024 **Doctoral Candidate Representative**

2020-2022 **Doctoral Student Representative**

Doctoral Program Committee

University of North Carolina School of Social Work

2022-2024 **Chair**

2020-2022 **Member**

Child Maltreatment Research and Practice Network

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Injury Prevention Research Center

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## PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS & AFFILIATIONS

2025-	<b>Firearm Injury Prevention Initiative, University of Colorado School of Medicine</b> Faculty Affiliate, Aurora, CO
2024-	<b>Injury and Violence Prevention Center, Colorado School of Public Health</b> Faculty Member, Aurora, CO
2024-	<b>Learning Community on Family Economic Well-Being Research</b> Member, Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab, Denver, CO
2024	<b>Office of Children, Youth and Families' Colorado Implementation Science Unit</b> Research Coordinator, Denver, CO
2020-	<b>Children's Data Network</b> Research Affiliate, Los Angeles, CA & Chapel Hill, NC
2020	<b>Global Center for Integrated Health of Women, Adolescents, &amp; Children</b> Research Scientist, Seattle, WA
2018-2019	<b>National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)/Guardians ad Litem (GAL) Association for Children</b> Associate Director of Data Analysis & Governance, Seattle, WA
2017-2018	<b>National CASA/GAL Association for Children</b> Data Governance & Evaluation Specialist, Seattle, WA
2016	<b>Public Health Foundation of India</b> Visiting Fellow, Gurgaon, India
2014-2017	<b>Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation</b> Post-Bachelor Fellow, Seattle, WA
2014	<b>Western Organization for People Living with HIV/AIDS &amp; GlobeMed</b> Intern, Mumias, Kenya
2012	<b>Melghat Maitri</b> Intern, Chilati, India

## SELECTED TRAININGS

2024	<b><i>The Road to Equity: Children's Bureau 2024 Race Equity Challenge</i></b> The Children's Bureau
2022	<b><i>Interdisciplinary Research Institute: Challenges in Child Maltreatment Research</i></b> The Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect
2020	<b><i>Data Matters: Intro. to Big Data and Machine Learning for Social Scientists</i></b> University of North Carolina Odum Institute for Research in Social Science
2019	<b><i>Interdisciplinary Research Institute: Challenges &amp; Opportunities in Child Maltreatment Research</i></b> The Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect
2018	<b><i>Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Training</i></b> National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) /Guardians ad Litem (GAL) Association for Children