



# LEADERSHIP COUNCIL PROFILE

Representatives serving on the Leadership Council advise, assist, support and advocate on issues of strategic importance to the operations and functions of the SelfMade Health Network in fulfillment of its mission.



## Bruce Christiansen, PhD

Senior Scientist

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

Dr. Bruce Christiansen's focus in tobacco research includes addressing tobacco use among people with low incomes and those with mental illness.

Dr. Christiansen first became interested in tobacco research over a decade ago while exploring ways to eliminate monetary waste in the Medicaid program. That led to the realization if you encourage people to stop smoking, you can save money in the long run and improve the overall health of a community.



School of Medicine  
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As Dr. Christiansen continued his work, he saw that there were certain populations who were adversely affected by smoking and smoking-related illnesses. He also noticed there were certain strategies that could be put in place to help these vulnerable populations overcome their addictions, including partnering with nontraditional partners such as community agencies and veterinarians. He believes there is room for health professionals to simultaneously treat addictions to tobacco and substance abuse to improve community health.

Dr. Christiansen manages the Wisconsin Nicotine Treatment Integration Project (WINTiP), which works to help behavioral health patients quit tobacco use. He has authored numerous community-based publications on tobacco-cessation, tobacco-related health disparities and the financial and health benefits of enacting tobacco-free policies in society.

**“Everyone knows smoking affects people differently. By directing our attention to reducing health disparities in underserved populations, we can address spaces where the gaps are increasing. It is incredibly important to meet people where they are and connect with organizations that work directly with populations experiencing higher tobacco-related illnesses and health effects.”**

Dr. Christiansen joined the Leadership Council in August 2015.

*The SelfMade Health Network is a member of the Center for Disease Control (CDC)'s consortium of national networks established to advance prevention efforts related to tobacco-related and cancer health disparities among vulnerable populations, specifically those with low socio-economic characteristics.*