# Investigator Spotlight

Real World Data Scholars Program

NIA IMPACT COLLABORATORY
TRANSFORMING DEMENTIA CARE

**Mary Louise Pomeroy, PhD, MPH**
Research Associate
Johns Hopkins School of Nursing

*“This award will provide me with training in EHR and nursing home data integration to develop a scalable measure of “unrepresented” status among nursing home residents with dementia, advancing pragmatic research to improve decision-making and care outcomes for people navigating dementia with limited social support.”*

Dr. Pomeroy is a research associate and health services researcher in the Center for Equity in Aging at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. Her research focuses on how social isolation shapes healthcare use, aging in place, and outcomes among older adults with dementia, with a growing emphasis on unrepresented patients. She has extensive experience using large-scale, population-based datasets, including the National Health and Aging Trends Study and the Health and Retirement Study. Her work aims to develop policy-relevant measures and pragmatic, real-world data approaches to improve care delivery, strengthen social support, and promote aging with dignity among older adults with chronic illness and complex social needs.

## Developing a Measure of Unrepresented Status Among Nursing Home Residents with Dementia

Nearly half of nursing home residents live with dementia, a population in which social isolation, limited caregiving support, and impaired decisional capacity may leave some individuals without a surrogate or advance directives during critical medical decisions. These “unrepresented” patients face substantial clinical and ethical risks yet remain poorly characterized in national data due to the absence of validated, scalable measures. This project will leverage nursing home electronic health record (EHR) data to develop a data-driven measure of unrepresented status, generating population-level estimates, and laying the groundwork for future clinical, policy, and pragmatic research. This award will provide Dr. Pomeroy with training and experience using linked EHR and Medicare data to: (1) Develop a pragmatic measure of unrepresented status and (2) Generate population estimates of unrepresented nursing home residents with dementia. This project will establish a scalable, EHR-based approach to identifying unrepresented status among nursing home residents with dementia, addressing a critical gap in detecting residents who lack decisional support. These findings will inform future validation efforts, pragmatic trial design, and clinical and policy strategies to improve decision-making and end-of-life care for this high-risk population. This work will establish the foundation for leveraging real-world data to improve care for socially isolated and unrepresented older adults with dementia.