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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics, University of Texas at Austin, May 2020
M.S., Economics, University of Texas at Austin, 2016
B.A., Economics & Mathematics, Brigham Young University, Magna Cum Laude, 2014

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Texas at San Antonio, 2020 –

REFERENCES

Marika Cabral (Primary)
Department of Economics
University of Texas at Austin
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Richard Murphy
Department of Economics
University of Texas at Austin
richard.murphy@austin.utexas.edu

Mike Geruso
Department of Economics
University of Texas at Austin
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TEACHING AND RESEARCH FIELDS

Fields: Health Economics, Public Finance, Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

2018 Graduate Continuing Bruton Fellowship, University of Texas at Austin
2014 Office of Research and Creative Activities Grant, Brigham Young University
2011 – 2014 Brigham Young Scholarship, Brigham Young University

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2016 – 2020 University of Texas at Austin, Department of Economics, Research Assistant for Professor Marika Cabral
2017 University of Texas at Austin, Department of Economics, Research Assistant for Professors Michael Geruso, Dean Spears, and Diane Coffey
2013 – 2014 Brigham Young University, Department of Economics, Macroeconomics and Computational Laboratory, Research Assistant for Professor Rick Evans

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Fall 2020 Introduction to Econometrics and Business Forecasting, University of Texas at San Antonio, Professor
Spring 2018 Economics of Health, University of Texas at Austin, Teaching Assistant for Professor Helen Schneider

Fall 2016, 2017	Health Economics, University of Texas at Austin, Teaching Assistant for Professor Michael Geruso
Spring 2017	Economics of Education, University of Texas at Austin, Teaching Assistant for Professor Richard Murphy
Spring 2016	Introduction to Econometrics, University of Texas at Austin, Teaching Assistant for Professor Steve Trejo
Fall 2015	International Finance, University of Texas at Austin, Teaching Assistant for Professor Valerie Bencivenga
Fall 2014, Spring 2015	Macroeconomic Theory, University of Texas at Austin, Teaching Assistant for Professor Brian Trinqu

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING SCHEDULED):

Conferences:

National Tax Association's 113th Annual Conference on Taxation, Public Finance and Health Session, "What Causes Geographic Variation in Prescription Drug Spending? Evidence from Physician Migration", Fall 2020

Stata Texas Empirical Micro Conference, Poster Session, "The Impact of Opioids on the Labor Market: Evidence from Drug Rescheduling," September 2019

National Tax Association's 111th Annual Conference on Taxation, Health Policy Session, "Adverse Health Effects of Abuse-Deterrent Opioids: Evidence from the Reformulation of OxyContin," November 2018

Stata Texas Empirical Micro Conference, Poster Session, "Adverse Health Effects of Abuse-Deterrent Opioids: Evidence from the Reformulation of OxyContin," September 2018

BYU Economics Graduate Student Conference, "Adverse Health Effects of Abuse-Deterrent Opioids: Evidence from the Reformulation of OxyContin," June 2018

Referee: *Journal of Public Economics*

WORK IN PROGRESS

What Causes Geographic Variation in Prescription Drug Spending? Evidence from Physician Migration
Evidence from Physician Migration

The Impact of Opioids on the Labor Market: Evidence from Drug Rescheduling (Revise and Resubmit at *Journal of Human Resources*)

Press Coverage: Marginal Revolution

The onset of the opioid crisis coincided with the beginning of nearly 15 years of declining labor force participation in the US. Furthermore, the areas most affected by the crisis have generally experienced the worst deteriorations in labor market conditions. Despite these time series and cross-sectional correlations, there is little agreement on the causal effect of opioids on labor market outcomes. I provide new evidence on this question by leveraging a natural experiment which sharply decreased the supply of hydrocodone, one of the most commonly prescribed opioids in the US. I identify the causal impact of this decrease by exploiting pre-existing variation in the extent to which different types of opioids were prescribed across geographies to compare areas more and less exposed to the treatment over time. I find that areas with larger reductions in opioid prescribing experienced relative improvements in employment-to-population ratios, driven primarily by an increase in labor force participation. The regression estimates indicate that a 10 percent decrease in hydrocodone prescriptions increased the employment-to-population ratio by about 0.7 percent. These findings suggest that policies which reduce opioid misuse may also have positive spillovers on the labor market.

The Ratchet Effect and Optimal Compensation

Target ratcheting occurs when managers adjust future performance targets based on current performance. This creates an incentive for workers to suppress effort in order to avoid higher future expectations, a phenomenon known as the ratchet effect. Despite an extensive theoretical literature, there exists very little empirical evidence of the ratchet effect outside of laboratory experiments. Using proprietary sales and compensation data from a large firm, I find strong evidence of target ratcheting and behavior consistent with the ratchet effect. Salespeople who exceed annual targets are substantially more likely to have an increase in future year targets, without a corresponding increase in pay. I show that sales effort is suppressed relative to a counterfactual in which targets do not respond to past performance.

Do Firms Sacrifice Profits to Meet Short-Term Goals? Evidence from Sales Executives

Using proprietary data from a large firm, I show that sales executives game the timing of sales in order to reach targets set by managers. Salespeople are paid according to performance relative to an annual target, although there exist non-monetary incentives to reach quarterly targets as well. The timing of sales is broadly consistent with gaming, with sales spiking at the end of each fiscal quarter and an especially large increase in the last month of the fiscal year. While manipulation in sale timing is not harmful per se, preliminary estimates suggest that a key mechanism by which sales are moved from the future into the present is through pricing discounts on sales that would have been made at a higher price in the future. This finding indicates that manipulation reduces long-run profits in order to attain short-term goals.

Cross-State Spillovers from Medical Marijuana Laws

Previous research on medical marijuana laws (MMLs) has assumed that the effects of MMLs are only present in the states that adopt them. However, anecdotal evidence from politicians and law enforcement officials suggests that MMLs lead to increases in drug-related activity in neighboring states. In this paper, I utilize a difference-in-differences strategy to test whether the effects from MMLs spill over across state lines. Using drug rehabilitation admissions data from the Treatment Episode Data Set, I present indirect evidence that MMLs do affect nearby states. Most importantly, I find a substantial reduction in opioid abuse in states which border MML states, suggesting substitution away from prescription opioids and heroin toward marijuana.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Adverse Health Effects of Abuse-Deterrent Opioids: Evidence from the Reformulation of OxyContin.
2019. *Health Economics*.

The US is currently in the midst of the worst drug overdose epidemic in its history, with nearly 64,000 drug overdose deaths in 2016. In response, pharmaceutical companies have begun introducing abuse-deterrent painkillers, pills with properties that make the drug more difficult to misuse. The first such painkiller, a reformulated version of OxyContin, was released in 2010. Previous research has found no net effect on opioid mortality, with users substituting away from OxyContin toward heroin. This paper explores health effects of the reformulation beyond mortality. Exploiting variation across states in OxyContin misuse prior to the reformulation, I find large relative increases in the spread of hepatitis B and C in states most likely to be affected by the reformulation. In aggregate, the estimates suggest that absent the reformulation we would have observed between 66-75% fewer cases of hepatitis C and 46-60% fewer cases of hepatitis B. I document further evidence that points to the likely cause of these effects: the reformulation led individuals to substitute from OxyContin to heroin, which is substantially more likely to be injected, increasing exposure to blood-borne diseases.