

**Robert Valdez, PhD, MHSA**  
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“Social science research provides the science base for effective health policy. Bringing clinical and social science expertise together creates new insights to help policy makers address society’s complex health issues.”

Robert Otto Valdez, Ph.D., RWJF Professor of Family and Community Medicine and Economics, serves as the executive director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico, a national program office for increasing diversity in health and health care leadership. As associate director of the UNM Health Science Center’s Office of Community Health, he is engaged in improving the delivery and quality of health services across New Mexico.

Professor Robert Otto Valdez conducts policy analyses and research at the University of New Mexico where he serves as the executive director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy, a national program office for increasing diversity in health and health care leadership. As the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Professor of Family & Community Medicine and Economics he guides graduate education in the social and clinical sciences to address society’s complex health issues. As associate director of the UNM Health Sciences Center’s Office of Community Health, he is engaged in improving the quality of health services across New Mexico. He remains affiliated with RAND where he is an adjunct senior health scientist and is also a senior fellow at Emory University’s Institute for Advanced Policy Solutions. Dr. Valdez served as founding dean and professor of health policy and management at the Drexel University School of Public Health in Philadelphia. From 1985 through 1999, he was professor of health services at the UCLA School of Public Health and directed the health services doctoral studies program. He is internationally recognized as an expert on health services research methodology, the U.S. health care system, and health policy analysis. Dr. Valdez received his Ph.D. from the RAND Graduate School for Public Policy Studies where he specialized in studies of health care financing and quality of care for children. He studied health policy and administration at the University of Michigan and history and science at Harvard University.

Dr. Valdez has been active in health policy and health services research at the international, national, state, and local levels. In 1998, he served as special senior advisor to the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. From 1993 to 1996 he served in a dual capacity at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health, Public Health Service, and Director of Interagency Health Policy, Health Care Financing Administration. His responsibilities covered a wide range of issues including children and adolescent health initiatives—expansion of school-based clinics, Medicaid expansion, and SCHIP legislation; care for the uninsured; American Indian health care initiatives; and state health care reforms. Prior to joining the Department of Health and Human Services, he served as a senior advisor to the White House on health care reform in 1993.

Dr. Valdez has provided service on numerous national advisory boards, including the American Hospital Association Foster McGaw Prize, the National Cancer Institute’s Hispanic Cancer Prevention and Control program, the Office of Technology Assessment’s Adolescent Health Study, the Robin Hood Foundation “Kids Having Kids” project, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation’s “Opening Doors” Program, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Investigator Awards for Health Policy Research Program, the Scholars in Health Policy Research Program, the Covering Kids Program, the Covering Kids and Families Program, the Maximizing Kids Coverage Program, and the Supporting Families after Welfare Reform and the IOM Health Policy Fellowships Program.

On the state and local levels, Dr. Valdez has provided policy analyses on numerous health related issues throughout the Southwestern states, especially issues related to the uninsured and Medicaid. He led NuStats’ evaluation of the State of Texas youth tobacco use prevention and cessation outreach pilot program. He regularly contributes work to the California Department of Health Services, the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, and the Department of Insurance. In addition, he regularly collaborates with the California Senate Office of Research and legislative committees. More recently he has worked with the states of California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware on public health infrastructure rebuilding. Currently, Dr. Valdez assists the State of Virginia legislature in evaluating proposed health insurance mandates and health coverage expansions. In Los Angeles County, Dr. Valdez has examined disparities in health and how the medical care system serves various ethnic and low-income populations. He has served in various advisory capacities to the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, Department of Sanitation, and the Long Beach Department of Health. On behalf of the California Endowment, he has led a decade-long effort to reduce health care disparities by improving the quality of care of primary care practices in low-income communities working with small physician practices, safety-net hospitals, Medicaid health plans, and federally qualified health centers.

Dr. Valdez is the author of numerous studies on children’s health and health care finance. He serves as a board member or advisor to numerous community agencies, including Children NOW, the Public Health Trust, St. Francis Medical Center Foundation, the Children’s Partnership, and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Chapter of the Red Cross. He was the founding chair of the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California, the nation’s leading Latino health policy advocacy organization in the country. He served as chairman of the Public Health Institute, the nation’s largest nonprofit public health research and programming organization.