



**Rebecca Lassell, PhD, MOT**

Assistant Professor

Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington

*“This award will provide me with the crucial mentorship and training necessary for launching my career focused on designing and evaluating interventions to improve well-being and health equity in dementia care.”*

Dr. Lassell is an assistant professor at Indiana University's School of Public Health-Bloomington and an affiliated scientist at the Regenstrief Institute, IU Center for Aging Research. Dr. Lassell seeks to design interventions to improve brain health and advance health equity in dementia care. Her research focuses on bridging the gap between community resources and health care systems to enable people living with dementia (PLWD) and their care partners (CPs) to participate in health promoting activities they find meaningful within their homes, neighborhoods, and communities. Dr. Lassell's research focus grew from applying nature-based approaches in her clinical outpatient pediatric practice and her work with PLWD in long-term care. Her research interests include exercise and lifestyle medicine, gerontology, and advancing health equity.

### **Adapting Green Activity Prescriptions with Black People Living with Dementia**

Black Americans are twice as likely to develop dementia with scarce representation in interventions to support their well-being and stave off cognitive decline. One way to mitigate risk factors associated with accelerated cognitive decline (sedentary behavior, stress, social isolation) are green prescriptions, which prescribe nature activities to promote an active lifestyle and improve well-being. This Career Development Award will build upon Dr. Lassell's previous work developing a Green Activity Prescription (GAP) program with Hispanic and Latino and Chinese Americans living with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and mild dementia in New York. This project will expand the GAP program to include Black Americans and adapt the intervention for a new geographic location and health care system. This Award will provide Dr. Lassell with the necessary mentorship and training to: 1) cultivate leadership skills in embedded pragmatic clinical trials (ePCTs), 2) gain equity-informed approaches to engage Black communities in research, 3) apply intervention adaptation using participatory methods, and 4) gain skills interpreting data relevant to her future remote therapeutic monitoring approach. The training will support the following **Specific Aim**: Adapt GAP with Black people living with MCI and mild dementia and their CPs and explore a wearable device (e.g., Fitbit) as a potential pragmatic outcome measure of intervention adherence and response in a future study. This work will prepare Dr. Lassell to lead interventional research as an independent investigator and lay the foundation to test GAP in a pilot randomized controlled trial and a future ePCT to improve well-being in racially and ethnically diverse PLWD and their CPs.