

Social Networks and Health: Measurement, Contagion, and Interventions

Abstract

In this seminar, Dr An Weihua will provide a high-level overview of his three research projects on social networks and health. In the first project, he studies how to combine peer-reports and self-reports to provide a more accurate measurement of sensitive behaviors. He proposes a framework for examining the accuracy of peer-reports and shows that weighting peer-reports by peers' network centrality can more effectively correct self-reporting bias. His second project studies peer effects in social networks. He identifies a list of methodological challenges and implements a design-based instrumental variable approach that helps to estimate causal peer effects with validated, stronger instrumental variables. Dr An will also introduce the third project about multilevel meta network analysis and applies it to study network dynamics of a network-based smoking prevention intervention. The findings highlight the importance of examining network outcomes in evaluating health and social interventions and the potential of using social networks to design more effective interventions.