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Dr. Palmer is Assistant Professor of Preventive Medicine at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California and adjunct Associate Professor at the Claremont School of Community and Global Health, Claremont, California. Her research and teaching focus on health promotion and research capacity building in California and developing nations, primarily China and South Asian countries. Her current funded research projects include, the National Cancer Institute's Transdisciplinary Tobacco and Alcohol Use Research Center (TTURC), which focuses on preventing tobacco use and alcohol abuse among youth in Hawaii, the U.S. and China; the China Seven Cities Study, a longitudinal study of transition in lifestyles and health-related behaviors in the era of globalization in seven of China's largest urban areas; an investigation of HIV risk and substance use behavior among rural to urban Chinese migrants, and a longitudinal study of recovery among tsunami victims in India and Sri Lanka.

Dr Palmer is also co-director of the USC Pacific Rim Global Health Framework program (NIH Fogarty), which brings together 22 academic and public health institutions from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, and China to develop joint research and training programs that address chronic, non-communicable disease to increase awareness of key global health issues. A health and community psychologist by training, Dr. Palmer also serves as research coordinator of Weaving an Islander Network for Cancer Awareness, Research, and Training (WINCART), a National Cancer Institute funded community participatory grant to reduce cancer health disparities among Pacific Islanders in Southern California.