

department of Medicine Newsletter

January 2014

Volume 13 Issue 1

THE WARREN ALPERT SCHOOL OF MEDICINE OF BROWN UNIVERSITY



BROWN
Alpert Medical School

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The Department of Medicine Newsletter is published 3 times per year. To submit an article or provide information contact Alex Mayer at 444-5127, e-mail to amayer@Lifespan.org or contact Dan Bryant at 444-6893, e-mail to dbryant@Lifespan.org.

Advocacy Update

Zoe Tseng, MD
PGY 3 IM resident

There have been several efforts this year initiated by residents to engage each other in advocacy activities. This has included a new curriculum for the primary care track residents in physician advocacy, spearheaded by Pamela Egan, Megha Garg, and Zoe Tseng with oversight from Dr. Kelly McGarry. The curriculum covers topics such as writing an Op-Ed or letter-to-the-editor and making a visit to congress.

In addition, a group attended the town hall hosted by Congressman Cicilline at the Pawtucket Library before Thanksgiving. The group included ACP governor Dr. Tom Bledsoe and residents Margret Chang, Mariah Stump, and Zoe Tseng. Issues raised centered around the threats to GME funding and the projected loss of residency and fellowship spots at Lifespan next year due to Sequestration's cuts on funding for Medicare, which in turn funds GME. Congressman Cicilline was aware of this issue and said there is work in Congress on trying to reverse Sequestration and avoid the all-across-the-board cuts. In addition, the group spoke about the flawed SGR (Sustainable Growth Rate) formula and the planned 25% cuts in payments to physicians who take care of Medicare patients in January 2014. Congressman Cicilline was also supportive and said that Congress is working on a bill that will hopefully address this situation long-term. The town hall was an informal and good opportunity to chat casually with Congressman Cicilline. The residents remain in contact with his office to communicate pressing issues on healthcare and hope to continue local advocacy work.

Marguerite A. Neill Receives Society Citation



Marguerite A. Neill, MD, of the Division of Infectious Diseases at Memorial Hospital, was recently presented with a Society Citation from the Infectious Diseases Society of America. She was presented the honor in recognition of her years of service to the Society in helping infectious disease clinicians prepare for and respond to outbreaks, emerging pathogens and other timely issues that are relevant to the specialty of ID.

First awarded in 1977, this is a discretionary award given in recognition of exemplary contribution to IDSA, an outstanding discovery in the field of infectious diseases, or a lifetime of outstanding achievement.

Since 1998, Dr Neill has continuously volunteered her time as an IDSA leader to enable the Society to respond to the members' needs for timely, clinically focused updates on topics such from anthrax to H1N1, and fungal meningitis.

Dr Neill earned a medical degree from George Washington University; had an internship and residency at Case Western Reserve University Hospital; was an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer in Special Pathogens Branch in the Bacterial Disease Division at CDC; and completed her fellowship in ID at the University of Washington.

As chair of IDSA's Bioterrorism Work group (2000-2006), she was responsible for overseeing the development of extensive IDSA web resources on the six category-A agents that were deemed most likely to be used in a bioterror attack. Working with her colleagues on the Work Group and medical writers at the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of

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Neill Receives Society Citation *continued*

Minnesota, she played a critical role in sifting through vast amounts of information, prioritizing content that was most relevant to the clinical practice of ID and organizing that information in a way that would be most useful in helping busy ID clinicians quickly identify and manage potential threats.

In her current role as chair of IDSA's Rapid Communications Task Force, she is responsible for monitoring emerging pathogens and bioemergencies, and for establishing ongoing methods to keep members informed in a timely fashion about developments. During the novel H1N1 influenza pandemic in 2009, she was a key member of IDSA's Leadership Response Team, which provided a forum for dialogue between federal health officials and ID experts and coordinated IDSA response activities. She was instrumental in developing the H1N1 section of the IDSA website, which provided a simple, much-needed filter for the most up-to-date content from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization.

More recently she was the lead author of a mass email on fungal meningitis sent to attendees of IDWeek 2012, as well as all members of IDSA, SHEA, HIVMA and PIDS. The email was also adapted into web resources and a manuscript was published in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

Cardiovascular Research Center awarded 7.36M grant

The Cardiovascular Research Center (CVRC) has been awarded a \$7.36 million research project grant (R01) from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health to study sudden cardiac arrest. The research will be focused on mechanisms to develop new therapies and strategies to prevent sudden cardiac arrest and to measure the impact of genetic and environmental factors on risk for sudden cardiac death. The grant will be paid out over five years and is the largest grant of its kind to be paid to a Lifespan partner hospital.

News from the Cardiovascular Institute

Dr. Dan Levine has been appointed the director of the CVI Heart Failure program. As the only board certified specialist in heart failure in Rhode Island and a long history successfully leading the CHF program, it was a natural fit. Lifespan has provided additional funding for this new position.

Dr. Ken Korr was appointed as the Director of Inpatient Services for the CVI and is hard at work coordinating our inpatient activities across the hospital campuses. He brings his wealth of knowledge of the inpatient activities of the CVI and a vision for change and collaboration with nursing moving forward.

Dr. Brian Abbott has been appointed the Director of Continuing Medical Education for the CVI, responsible for all of the educational activities for the Institute. Brian's expertise in education nationally makes this an excellent fit, and we view education as a major way to outreach the broad, diverse and expanding capabilities of the CVI to community based cardiologists and primary care physicians.

Brian Abbott has also been appointed vice-president for the American Society of Nuclear

Cardiology for 2014 and has been appointed to the editorial board for the *Journal of Nuclear Cardiology*.

Dr. Jamie Robertson is the CVI's representative to all things EPIC. Jamie's activities are being supported by the Lifespan Information Services team.

Dr. Hank Wu has been appointed as the Acting Chief of Cardiology for the VA Providence since March 2013. He additionally is participating in a new study section: VA Quality Enhancement Research initiative (QUERI) Service Directed Project Proposal Review Section.

Dr. Gaurav Choudary has assumed the co-Chair position in the AHA peer review committee (Cardiac Biol Reg – Bsci-4) and is now the Associate program Director for the Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship Program.

Dr. Karen Aspary is now seeing patients with difficult to manage dyslipidemias at one of the CVI's Centers of Excellence in Comprehensive Lipid Management. Patients can be referred via Karen's office in East Greenwich.

New Outpatient Cancer Care Center in East Greenwich

In September, the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Rhode Island Hospital opened a new location in the Lifespan Ambulatory Care Center on South County Trail in East Greenwich: a full-service satellite location easily accessible from Routes 4 and 95, with ample free parking. The Comprehensive Cancer Center in East Greenwich offers complete hematology and oncology care including physician visits, chemotherapy and non-chemotherapy infusions, and ancillary services such as patient navigation, social services and consultation. The new center provides patients with the added benefits of on-site laboratory services, physical and lymphedema therapy, urgent care and more. It also minimizes the need for patients to travel to one of Lifespan's hospital campuses for services or appointments, affording those living south, southeast and west of Providence the convenience of receiving hospital quality care close to home. Appointments are available Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Patients can be referred by calling 401-444-4853 and requesting an appointment at the East Greenwich office.

New COBRE established at Providence VA

The National Institute for General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health has awarded a \$10 million, 5-year grant to establish the CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE). The grant will support junior investigators as they develop into independent investigators researching the causes and cures of vascular diseases affecting the lungs and cardiovascular systems. Diseases of the heart and lungs are the first and third leading causes of death in Rhode Island and in the US as a whole.

This COBRE is awarded to Ocean State Research Institute, a non-profit corporation located at the Providence VA Medical Center (VAMC) that supports research and education. The CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology COBRE supports 5 junior investigators who will perform mentored vascular biology research in laboratories located at either the Vascular Research Laboratory at the Providence VAMC or Rhode Island Hospital, with Core support via the Providence VAMC and Brown University.

The CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology COBRE is led by Sharon Rounds, MD, Program Director, and by Elizabeth Harrington, PhD, Deputy Director. Sharon Rounds is Chief of the Medical Service at the Providence VAMC and Professor of Medicine and of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. Elizabeth Harrington is Research Biologist at the PVAMC, Associate Dean for the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in the Division of Biology & Medicine at Brown University, and Associate Professor of Medicine (Research) at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

The junior investigators and projects supported by the CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology COBRE are:

Qing Lu, DVM, PhD, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Research). “Adenosine and Lung Endothelial Injury”. Mentor: Alfred Ayala, PhD, Professor of Surgery (Research)

Joanne Lomas-Neira, PhD, Instructor in Surgery (Research). “Effects of Angiopoietins on Shock-Induced Acute Lung Injury”. Mentors: Jonathan Reichner PhD, Associate Professor of Surgery (Research) and Sharon Rounds MD, Professor of Medicine

Ruhul Abid, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor of Surgery (Cardiothoracic Surgery, Research). “Improvement of Coronary Vascular Functions by Endothelium-targeted Increase in Reactive Oxygen Species in vivo”. Mentors: Frank Sellke MD, Karlson and Karlson Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, and Elizabeth Harrington PhD, Associate Professor of Medicine (Research)

Peng Zhang, MD, MS, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Research) “Regulation of Cardiac Fibroblast Function by MicroRNAs”. Mentors: Ulrike Mende MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, and Bharat Ramratnam, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine

Corey Ventetuolo, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine. “Sex Hormones and Pulmonary Vascular and Right Ventricular Dysfunction”. Mentors: James R. Klinger MD, Professor of Medicine, and Peter J. Quesenberry MD, Professor of Medicine

The Administrative Core of the CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology COBRE, led by **Sharon Rounds**, will organize mentoring and career development activities for the Junior Investigators, including visits



Elizabeth Harrington and Sharon Rounds

from expert visiting professors from other universities. The Administrative Core will also make available Pilot Project funding in vascular biology.

The Cell Isolation/Organ Function Core, directed by **Elizabeth Harrington**, will provide high quality isolation, characterization, and propagation of vascular and cardiac cells, as well as cardiopulmonary organ function studies. The Core will provide expertise in assessing cardiac function using rodent echocardiography, intra-cardiac pressure-volume analysis, and lung function studies. These services will be available to all Rhode Island vascular biology researchers.

The research performed by the CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology COBRE investigators and mentors is highly likely to improve care of lung and heart diseases and thus positively impact the health of Rhode Islanders. Since lung and heart diseases are common among veterans, this Center is likely to result in work that improves the health of veterans. The CardioPulmonary Vascular Biology COBRE is an example of the important benefits that are gained by collaboration among Brown University faculty and affiliated institutions.

Michelle Lally Appointed Associate Chief at Providence VAMC



The Medical Service at the Providence VAMC is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Michelle Lally, MD, MSc, as Associate Chief of the Medical Specialty and Acute Care Service. Dr. Lally is a specialist in Infectious Diseases who is Associate Professor of Medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. She also holds a secondary appointment as Associate Professor of Health Services, Policy and Practice at the Brown School of Public Health. Dr. Lally is a graduate of Boston College and received the MD from the University of Virginia School of Medicine and the MSc in Epidemiology from the Harvard School of Public Health. She did residency in Internal Medicine and fellowship training in Infectious Diseases at the Beth Israel/Deaconess Hospital in Boston. She joined the faculty at Brown in 1999 and has been on the staff of the Miriam and Rhode Island Hospitals. Dr. Lally is expert in clinical trials, and is the chair of the Community Prevention Leadership Group of the NIH supported Adolescent Medicine Trials Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions. She

will retain a part-time appointment at the Miriam and Rhode Island Hospitals in Infectious Diseases. Please join the PVAMC Medical Service in welcoming Mickey to the VA!

New faces and places in the Division of General Internal Medicine

Susan Oliverio, MD

It is a very exciting time for the Division of General Internal Medicine. In early 2014, we will move our ambulatory care practice, the Medical Primary Care Unit, from APC-5 to our new home located nearby in Providence. We will share our space with specialty clinics. Our colleagues in Medicine-Pediatrics Primary Care are also located in this newly renovated building at 245 Chapman Street. Our new practice is state of the art and will allow us to evolve into a very unique patient centered medical home (PCMH). The MPCU serves thousands of disadvantaged patients and remains one of the largest providers of care to this population in Providence. We are the primary outpatient training site for over 100 internal medicine residents and medical students. In our new space, we have the physical capacity to reorganize into smaller mini-practices within the MPCU. This new model for patient care will begin with 3 physician practice leaders on board who will head up a care team including an RN, medical residents, and several outpatient services medical assistants (OSMAs). The OSMA is a newly defined position created to facilitate our evolution into a patient centered medical home.



Geetika Gupta

Our new “team leaders” will have their own patient panels and precept in the MPCU. All of us are former Brown GIM graduates. I completed my training in 1994 and returned in November to serve as medical director of the MPCU. Dr Heather Cassidy (GIM 2012) joined DGIM this year and serves as a clinician educator on “Med B”, the internal medicine residency’s inpatient medical service. Dr. Melinda Hooton (GIM 2007) will join us in January. She will provide women’s health care and serve as assistant medical director of the MPCU.



Robert Velasco

This year, we welcome two other new faculty members and former resident physicians to the Division. Dr. Geetika Gupta (GIM 2012) has joined Women’s Health Associates. Dr. Robert Velasco (IM 2013) practices at Women’s Health and Plain Street Internal Medicine. Both physicians have joined our team of preceptors in the MPCU.

We look forward to the upcoming year with great optimism. We believe that our new location and structure brings tremendous opportunity for innovation in both medical education and care of our special patient population.

Division of Infectious Diseases Congratulates Seed Funding Grant Winners

The Lifespan Seed Funding Grant Program provides funding for new and established investigators. The program is designed to finance pilot research projects that may receive new external funding in the future, as well as to encourage new areas of investigations and/or projects that involve collaborations across academic departments or disciplines.

Philip Chan – “Evaluation of risk factors and sexual networks associated with the statewide syphilis epidemic in Rhode Island: Implications for prevention interventions.”

Mia Coetzer – “Prevalence of CXCR4 usage in HIV-1 non-B subtypes after first and second line ART failure in resource limited settings.”

Bettina Knoll – “Longitudinal study of the oral and distal gut microbiome during induction chemotherapy for acute myelogenous leukemia.”

Ming Li – “Stem-loop binding protein (SLBP) regulates the expression of APOBEC3G.”

Amy Nunn – “Exploring the sexual and HIV transmission networks of African American sexual and gender minorities in Jackson, Mississippi.”

Awards and Leadership Roles for Division of Endocrinology Physicians

Dr Bin Feng, a postdoctoral research associate in the Laboratory of Dr Haiyan Xu, is the recipient of 2013 Dr. George A. Bray Research Scholars Award. For the Bray fellowship, Dr Feng proposed to study the role of MAP kinase phosphatase 3 (MKP-3) in lipid metabolism. Dr. Xu’s laboratory has identified MKP-3 as a novel insulin resistant gene and MKP-3 deficient mice are resistant to the development of diet-induced obesity and hepatosteatosis. Understanding the mechanism of action of MKP-3 in lipid homeostasis will provide novel insights for treating obesity-related metabolic syndrome.

Dr. Harikrashtra Bhatt was selected by the Rhode Island Diabetes Council to serve as a committee member. The Rhode Island Diabetes Council provides leadership for diabetes-related activities in the state. Rhode Island Diabetes Council comprises representatives from the community, professional groups, business organizations, third party insurers, health institutions and voluntary organizations.

Dr Sarah Mayson is a member of the MKSAP 17 Endocrinology & Metabolism Committee. As a committee member, she is responsible for writing and reviewing the Endocrine curriculum and questions for this section.

Dr. Geetha Gopalakrishnan was nominated to the Clinical Endocrine Education Committee at Endocrine Society. The committee is charged with developing and overseeing the Society’s Continuing Medical education and Maintenance of Certification programs. She is also a member of the Endocrine Educators forum at the Endocrine Society whose goal is to assist the efforts of educators across the spectrum of training by providing skill development and on-line resources.

Research and Grant Awards

Gaurav Choudary, MD, of the Vascular Research Laboratory at the Providence VA

received a shared equipment grant of \$490,030 and is participating in a new study investigating the effects of tadalafil in pulmonary hypertension associated with COPD with principal investigators, Sharon Rounds and Ron Goldstein.

Ulrike Mende, MD was awarded an RO1 grant entitled "Regulation of Gq Signaling in Cardiac Fibroblasts and its Role in Cardiac Remodeling" in September 2013. Total award amount is \$1,986,051 (over 4 years).

Anthony Reginato, PhD, MD, of the Division of Rheumatology, received an \$80,000 Grant from the New England Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation on May 24, 2013 to support the Rheumatology Research Laboratory at RIH.

Hank Wu, MD, of the Division of Cardiology at the VA, has four new grants:

- VA DM QUERI, RRP 12-452 "Video-Conference Shared Medical Appointments to Improve Rural Diabetes Care." Role: PI, \$100,000, 2013-14.
- VA CHF QUERI "Pre-Implementation Study of Spironolactone Appropriateness and Safety Monitoring." Role: co-PI (Dev, PI); \$100,000. 2013-2014
- VA HSRD DM QUERI SDP 1 I01 HX000869-01A1 "Implementation Study of the Peer-to-Peer Program for Patients with Diabetes". Role: co-I & site PI (PI: Heisler) \$335,000. 2013 - 2017
- VA VISN 1 CDA "Process Quality and Outcomes in Cataract Surgery." Co-I and mentor: (mentee and PI: Greenberg) \$245,000. 2013-2015

Brown University represented by the Liver Research Center, directed by Dr. Jack Wands for Medical Science and the Department of Physics, was awarded 2 million dollars over 5 years by the European Union as part of the Nova Domus Consortium. The grant will support mobility of researchers and scholars which may spend up to 18 months with full financial support between selected North American and European Universities. Brown University was the only American University chosen. The clinical and scientific excellence of the Liver Research Center and evidence of successful long-standing international collaboration were cited as determining factors, said Dr. Silvia Degli Esposti. She is the coordinator for Erasmus Mundi for Medicine at Brown and a member of the Gastroenterology Division and Women's Medicine Collaborative at Lifespan.

Brian Kimble's Photography Talents Showcased in NEJM

In addition to being an outstanding clinician and educator, Dr. Brian Kimble is an outstanding photographer. One of his pictures, below, was recently published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Another image has also been accepted for publication.

Dr. Kimble is Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine and staff pulmonary/critical care physician at the Providence VA Medical Center.



Internal Medicine Residency Program Celebrates Successes in 2014 Fellowship Match

The Department of Medicine congratulates our internal medicine residents on a successful fellowship match! We are very proud of the prestigious programs from the all over the country that our residents will be joining, and we are also fortunate that so many are continuing their training here at Alpert Medical School of Brown University. Please check back for our summer issue when we will share the career plans of our residents who will be joining primary care practices and working as Hospitalists. The below list also includes recently-matched physicians from the classes of 2012 and 2013.

Cardiovascular Diseases

Akinniran Abisogun, MD

University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

Jorge Alvarez, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Tiffany Chen, MD *(Class of 2013)*

University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Aalap Chokshi, MD

Tufts University, Boston, MA

Arslan Johngar, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Albert Lin, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Chiduzie Madubata, MD *(Class of 2013)*

Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA

Manisha Reddy, MD *(Class of 2013)*

Rutgers University/Robert Wood Johnson

Leslie Russell, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Endocrinology

Abby Tubman, MD

Duke University, Durham, NC

Gastroenterology

Michael Engels, MD *(Class of 2013)*

University of Maryland

Sean Fine, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Ashil Gosalia, MD

University of Miami

Michael Kelso, MD

University of Texas Southwestern, Dallas, TX

Eric Mao, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

General Internal Medicine

Corinne Rhodes, MD *(Class of 2013)*

Harvard University

Hematology-Oncology

Emmanuel Apor, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Robert Black, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Infectious Disease

Antonella Fine, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Nephrology

David DeWolfe, MD

Beth Israel Deaconess, Harvard, Boston, MA

Matthew Lynch, MD

Beth Israel Deaconess, Harvard, Boston, MA

Pulmonary Diseases & Critical Care Medicine

Timothy Amass, MD *(Class of 2013)*

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

David Chu, MD

Boston University

Andrew Foderaro, MD

Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Joshua Giaccotto, MD

Lahey Clinic, Burlington, MA

Rheumatology

Irene Yang, MD *(2012)*

University of California, Irvine, CA



Office of the Chairman of Medicine
Rhode Island Hospital
593 Eddy Street
Providence, RI 02903