

Department of Medicine

Spring 2022

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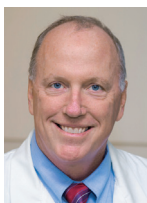
The Department of Medicine Newsletter
is published three times per year.

To submit an article or provide
information contact:

Alex Mayer at 401-444-5127
e-mail: amayer@Lifespan.org

Linda Mrozowski at 401-444-5315
e-mail: Linda.Mrozowski@Lifespan.org

Chairman's Message



Louis Rice, M.D.

One recent Sunday morning, as I was driving to my weekly guitar lesson, I had the occasion to listen to a New Yorker Radio Hour interview with the marvelous actor and Central Falls native Viola Davis. In one segment of the interview, the host David Remnick was asking about Ms. Davis' handling of fame. She replied that you should never believe the hype, that someone once said that fame was like "fattening a calf up for the slaughter." I think this attitude is easy to understand when one considers the rapid rise and, on occasion, the spectacular falls from grace of many famous people. Especially in the age of social media, the difference between being a hero or a villain can hinge on a single tweet.

Physicians who tread into the swirling waters of mainstream or social media are not immune to such treatment. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the long-time Director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases who more recently has become known as "America's Doctor", has been a ubiquitous presence on mainstream media dispensing information about the Covid-19 pandemic. Whenever I have listened to him, I have found him to be a careful, prudent, and scientifically sound voice on the best knowledge we had regarding the pandemic. He has said on numerous occasions that his advice will evolve based on the best evidence we have available, and he has stayed true to that principle. As new data emerge that advance and at times alter our understanding of the virus and its evolution, his guidance has adapted to that new reality. However, because his advice has evolved with scientific knowledge, he has been ridiculed and vilified by people who would prefer to politicize this tragic pandemic, including the former President. He has suffered threats on his life and has acknowledged that he fears for the safety of his family. More recently, one of our faculty colleagues here at Brown, Dr. Ashish Jha, the Dean of the School of Public Health, has become a public favorite for his practical and accessible advice on the pandemic, so much so that he has been chosen to serve

as the White House Covid-19 coordinator. I know Dr. Jha to be a thoughtful and adept communicator, and I wish him well for his sake and ours. But as his advice evolves with emerging data, I suspect he will be subject to the same second-guessing that has befallen Dr. Fauci.

It is worth remembering that in the eyes of many of our patients, we are as authoritative as either Dr. Fauci or Dr. Jha. We are highly respected for our knowledge, judgment, and dedication to the healing arts. Patients believe what we say to them because of who they believe us to be, creating an obligation on our part to live up to their expectations. They may think we are brilliant. We know in our hearts we are not brilliant, but we owe it to our patients to take advantage of all the resources around us (colleagues, journals, reviews) to make sure we are giving them good, state-of-the-art advice. They may think we are exceedingly kind. We know that we have our bad days, but we owe it to our patients to not let our bad days impact their care. I was once told "Remember, the patient is the one with the disease". They may think we are very wise, but we should always remember that one gains much more knowledge and wisdom by listening than by talking. Their regard for their physician leads patients to share their innermost feelings. This trust is part of our professional contract and leads to better clinical care.

I believe that the best way to avoid a precipitous fall from the level of regard with which we are held by our patients is to refuse to get on the high horse to begin with. Physicians who choose to wade into the media pool cannot avoid having others, who do not know them, "fatten them up for the slaughter". I admire them for their willingness to engage with that world, for we need good information to get out to the public. For the rest of us, I believe it is best for us to let our patients know in small ways that we are human, just like them. They'll still assume we are brilliant, but they'll be more comfortable letting us know who they truly are, which will make for a better therapeutic relationship...an outcome which one need not be brilliant to realize is a worthwhile goal for all of us. ■

Simmons Appointed New Medicine Residency Director



Rachel P. Simmons, M.D. was recently announced as the new Internal Medicine Training Program Director at Brown and Lifespan. Dr. Simmons was selected after an extensive national search. She is a graduate of the Johns

Hopkins University School of Medicine and completed her Internal Medicine, Infectious Diseases training and Chief Residency at Massachusetts General Hospital. She has been an Associate Program Director for the Residency Program in Internal Medicine

at Boston University for the last nine years with substantial responsibilities for several program initiatives and functions.

Her areas of interest include resident evaluation, assessment of clinical competence, equitable recruitment practices in graduate medical education, and infectious diseases education. Dr. Simmons is passionate about graduate medical education and feels privileged to work with residents as they transform from students to internists while also experiencing tremendous personal growth. She is also an avid reader of

fiction, a runner, an enthusiastic gardener, and eager to explore Rhode Island bakeries and beaches with her children.

Dr. Simmons will replace Dominick Tammaro, M.D., who has led our program for more than 30 years and created one of the most enviable Internal Medicine learning environments in the country. Dr. Tammaro is nationally renowned for his work in residency education and will be continuing in his role as Vice Chair for Education in the Department of Medicine after returning from his journey hiking the Appalachian trail. ■

Faculty Honored by the Miriam Hospital

Infectious diseases physician **Karen Tashima, M.D.** has been named the Charles C.J. Carpenter, M.D., Outstanding Physician of the Year at The Miriam. Dr Tashima led the launch of a local clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine and has served on the Governor's COVID-19 Vaccine Subcommittee.

As director of clinical trials at the hospital's Immunology Center, Tashima serves as the principal investigator for a phase 3 clinical trial at The Miriam Hospital for the COVID vaccine developed by Novavax. She received an NIH grant to facilitate vaccine trials in Rhode Island and has been widely interviewed by the media during the pandemic.

Tashima has served on the Lifespan COVID-19 Vaccine Committee and was also the principal investigator for two Gilead ReM.D.esivir studies for moderate and severe COVID disease.

Also honored at the ceremony were **Kwame Dapaah-Afriyie, M.D., MBA** and **Richard Besdine, M.D.**

Dapaah-Afriyie, a professor of medicine at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, received the Riesman Family Excellence in Teaching Award. The annual award recognizes a Miriam physician who teaches at the medical school.

Dapaah-Afriyie has been associated with The Miriam and Brown since beginning his residency in internal medicine in 1993. In 1997, he and his colleagues started the program for hospitalist medicine, and in 2004, he became the Division Director. Dapaah-Afriyie is a past recipient of the Physician of the Year Award.



From left to right: Kwame Dapaah-Afriyie, M.D., MBA, Karen Tashima, M.D. and Richard Besdine, M.D.

Besdine received the Charles "Bud" Kahn, M.D., Lifetime Leadership Award. He has devoted his career to the advancement of geriatrics. Besdine is currently a professor of medicine and health services policy and practice at Brown, and recently retired from his position as Director of the Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine in the Department of Medicine after 20 years of service. During his career he served as the first Chief Medical Officer and Director of the Health Standards and Quality Bureau for the Health Care Financing Administration, the predecessor to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

The Charles "Bud" Kahn, M.D., Lifetime Leadership Award is sponsored by The Miriam Hospital Medical Staff Association. It recognizes a Miriam physician for "outstanding leadership over a lifetime of service" and who "exemplifies professionalism and leadership in a variety of ways, to include open communication, collaboration, cooperation, commitment, and integrity." ■

News from the Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Care

David Dosa, M.D. was appointed as a Workgroup member to the National Advisory Committee on Seniors and Disasters. This is a new HHS committee that will provide groundwork for management of disasters for older adults.

Nadia Mujahid, M.D. and **Lynn McNicoll, M.D.** were named among Rhode Island Monthly's Top Doctor for 2022.

Dr. Sevdener Cizginer, Associate Professor of Medicine (Geriatrics) & Surgery & Health Services, Policy and Practice, was appointed as the Director of Geriatric Surgery Quality Committee (GSQC) and initiated the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Geriatric Surgery Verification (GSV) Program implementation at Lifespan Hospitals. As the initial step, The Miriam Hospital was enrolled into this national initiative with a plan to disseminate this program at all Lifespan Hospitals. The ACS GSV Program was developed for older adults (75+ years old) undergoing inpatient surgery to improve outcomes. ■

John H. Harwood Research Center Opens

The doors to the newly renovated John H. Harwood Research Center, based at the Providence VA Medical Center, opened on March 21st. The Center aims to improve the care provided to aging veterans in Rhode Island. Researchers are working on new interventions to reduce veteran suicide and substance abuse after hospitalization, and ways to reduce depression among elderly veterans living in community living centers. They're also identifying risk factors for food insecurity among veterans, assessing for

Alzheimer's disease and dementia among homeless veterans and looking at how veterans respond to COVID-19 vaccines and booster doses. ■

New Hires in the Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Care

Prema Daniel, AGPCNP - BC

Working as NP in Geriatric and Palliative Medicine of Brown Medicine since December 2021. Adult Geriatric Primary care Nurse Practitioner graduated from University of Massachusetts - Lowell. Nearly 9 years of work experience in Primary care Internal medicine setting serving culturally diversified Adult as well as elderly population of Lowell Massachusetts. Also served as full time clinical faculty at U Mass Lowell for 3 years teaching master's and bachelor's degree Nursing students. Prior to her Nursing education in the US, Prema obtained a master's degree in Human Anatomy from University of Madras, India and worked as Lecturer in a private medical college. ■



Rohit Tyagi, M.D.

MEDICAL SCHOOL
Assam Medical College

RESIDENCY
Anesthesia and critical care, VMMC Delhi, India; Internal Medicine residency at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, NY.

FELLOWSHIP
Geriatric Medicine from Cleveland Medical Center, Case Western University.

GENERAL INTERESTS
Dr Tyagi has special interests in co-management model of care, Dementia, chronic disease management and House calls.

Olimpia Radu, M.D.

MEDICAL SCHOOL
Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bucharest, Romania

RESIDENCY
Internal Medicine, New York Flushing Hospital Medical Center, Flushing, New York

FELLOWSHIP
Geriatric Medicine, New York Flushing Hospital Medical Center, Flushing, New York

GENERAL INTERESTS
Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Winthrop University Hospital, Mineola, New York

Journal of Hospital Medicine Launches

The Brown Journal of Hospital Medicine was Founded in 2022 and is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through the production of rigorous, scientific, and clinically relevant material in Hospital Medicine. The mission is to provide its readers with up-to-date, practical, clinical information relevant to Hospital Medicine and related fields.

The journal was founded by **Kwame Dapaah-Afriye M.D., Arkadiy Finn M.D., and Vijairam Selvaraj M.D.** of the Division of the Hospital Medicine at the Miriam Hospital.

"Events of past few years have galvanized our efforts to collaborate with colleagues in other disciplines in sharing medication information through a number of peer-reviewed journals," Dr Dapaah-Afriye said of the journal. "With the support of the department of medicine, this e-journal will serve as another avenue for enhancing ongoing scholarly activities in Inpatient medicine."

The *Brown Journal of Hospital Medicine* publishes original work in Hospital Medicine, which advances the knowledge and understanding of the field by and for clinicians. The journal will consider case reports, original research, and other work concerning topics in Hospital Medicine which include but are not limited to diagnosis and management of inpatient disease conditions, perioperative care, medical education, approaches to quality and safety improvement, and transitions of care. The journal is dedicated to promoting the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. ■

Recently Awarded Grants

Paul Gordon, M.D., of the Cardiovascular Institute (CVI), was awarded site investigator by University of British Columbia for project "A Randomized, Comparative Effectiveness Study of Staged Complete Revascularization with Percutaneous Coronary Intervention to Treat Coronary Artery Disease."

Dana Guyer, M.D., Geriatrics, was awarded a Pilot Project RFA from the Legorreta Cancer Center at Brown University for her project "Sexuality and Intimacy in Patients with Advanced Cancer Receiving Palliative Care."

Christopher Mantsounga Ph.D., received a Cardiopulmonary vascular biology COBRE Project PI award for "Uncoupling of IL-1 beta and VEGF Crosstalk Contributes to Impaired Arteriogenesis Response to Ischemia in Chronic Diabetes Mellitus" \$377,500 from March 2022 to May 2023.

Nephrology Division Contributes to Care at Rhode Island Free Clinic

In response to a growing population of patients needing Nephrology specialty care for a variety of conditions at the Rhode Island Free Clinic our own Division of Nephrology and Hypertension have volunteered one session per month starting in January 2022. These sessions have allowed patients with Chronic Kidney Disease and other conditions to receive appropriate specialty care, hopefully helping to prevent progression of their diseases. RIFC Medical Director Ross Hilliard, M.D. expresses his gratitude to Nephrology colleagues, "Our patients often face significant barriers to care outside of the clinic, including limited transportation, time off work, and concerns regarding bills and collection.

Though the Nephrology Division is committed to providing care for uninsured patients at no cost, the care provided inside the RIFC walls allowed patients to be in a location they are comfortable with. I am grateful to the physicians who have generously given of their time." Drs. Reginald Gohh, Susie Hu, Eric Kerns, Matthew Lynch, Ankur Shah, and Doug Shemin have volunteered so far, and the division has committed to one session per month, helping greatly to meet a need for some of the most vulnerable patients in our community. If other physicians or providers are interested in volunteering to provide care at RIFC please contact Ross Hilliard (rhilliard@lifespan.org). ■

Shah to Lead American College of Gastroenterology

Samir A. Shah, Gastroenterology Associates, Inc., was elected by the membership as the 2021-2022 president of the American College of Gastroenterology, a national medical organization representing more than 16,000 clinical gastroenterologists and other specialists in digestive diseases.

Dr. Shah serves as chief of gastroenterology at the Miriam Hospital in Providence, and is a partner with Gastroenterology Associates Inc. He earned his bachelor's degree in biochemistry at Brown and his medical degree at Harvard Medical School. He completed his residency in internal medicine at the Harvard-affiliated Beth

Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He is an expert in the area of inflammatory bowel disease, including Crohn's and colitis.

Dr Shah has been a member of the American College of Gastroenterology board of trustees since 2013 and served as an officer since 2017. He is highly engaged in legislative and regulatory matters and has received numerous honors and awards, the ACG said in a news release. Shah has also been honored for his teaching excellence at Brown and was co-principal investigator for the Ocean State Crohn's and Colitis Area Registry, or OSCCAR ■

Alan R. Morrison, M.D., Ph.D., received an NIH NHLBI R01 Award for “Combining Targeted Demethylation with Noncoding RNA-mediated mRNA Stabilization as a Strategy for Therapeutic Arteriogenesis in the Aged,” totaling \$2,091,154 from March 2022 to February 2026.

Dr. Ju Park was recently awarded seed funding from the Providence/Boston Center for AIDS Research (funded by NIAID) titled “Implementation Science Research on Supervised Injection Facilities in Rhode Island”. The goal of this mixed-methods study is to evaluate the legalization and authorization of supervised drug consumption sites, spaces where people can use drugs safely with medical staff present to aid in preventing overdose death, provide support and facilitate access to health and social services. The study is comprised of document review and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders in several states.

Bum-Rak Choi, Ph.D., from Cardiovascular Research Center (CVRC) was awarded a one-year pilot study by Cardiovascular Institute (CVI) for project titled “Mechano-electric Feedback in Triggering Atrial Fibrillation”.

Sharon Rounds, is project leader on a \$1.4 million grant to address barriers to COVID-19 testing and vaccination among the Latinx population as well as high-risk children in Rhode Island. The new funding is the second phase of a RADx-UP grant to the University in partnership with Progreso Latino, a nonprofit that serves Rhode Island’s Latinx and immigrant communities, and the Rhode Island Quality Institute, which collects and analyzes health care data from across the state.

Peter Soukas, M.D., was awarded site investigator by Yale University for project “SCOPE-CLI: Shifting Care and Outcomes for Patients with Endangered limbs – Critical Limb Ischemia.” ■

Christopher Mantsounga Joins CVI

Christopher Mantsounga Ph.D., is a graduate of the University of Paris V Descartes at Paris (France) where he obtained a Ph.D. in Cardiovascular Pathology. He came to the US in Dr. Morrison Laboratory in 2016 and completed a postdoctoral research fellowship in vascular biology at the Rhode Island Hospital. Dr. Mantsounga is currently appointed Instructor in Medicine (Research) at the Ocean State Research Institute located at the Providence VA Medical Center and Brown University affiliate. Basic science research interests include mechanisms of immune-mediated vascular remodeling focusing on areas where macrophages direct the biologic processes of arteriogenesis and vascular calcification in age-related defects. ■

Faculty Appointments

January 1 to
December 31, 2021

Care New England Hospitals

May Aldaabil, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Rheumatology

Betritz DeMoranville, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Endocrinology

Medhavi Gupta, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, Hematology/Oncology

Jan Karczewski, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Rheumatology

Michael Picchioni, M.D., Associate Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Lifespan Hospitals

Pinar Arkan, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Matthew Austin, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Hematology/Oncology

Amy Brotherton, PharmD., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Infectious Disease

Rebecca Cangemi, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Myra Chaudary, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

Yannick D’Silva, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

Khawaja Faisal, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

Negar Faramarzi, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

Stephanie Graff, M.D., Assistant Professor, Hematology/Oncology

Alma Guerrero Bready, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, General Internal Medicine

Dawa Gurung, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Bridget Hottenstein, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Andrew Hsu, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

William Lang, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Hetal Mistry, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Lauren Conner, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

William Page, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Diane Parente, PharmD., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Infectious Disease

Ju Park, Ph.D., Assistant Professor (Research), General Internal Medicine

Reema Qureshi, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Kyle Rumery, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Marwan Saad, M.D., Assistant Professor, Cardiology

Rajeev Shah, PharmD., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, Infectious Disease

Burton Shen, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, Pulmonary and Critical Care

Yu Zhao, M.D., Assistant Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Providence VA

Chris Mantsounga, Ph.D., Instructor (Research), Cardiology

Promotions to Senior Ranks Effective July 1, 2021

Kate Cahill, M.D., Associate Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Sevdnur Cizginer, M.D., Associate Professor, Clinician Educator, Geriatrics

Cheston Cunha, M.D., Associate Professor, Teaching Scholar, Infectious Disease

Kwame Dapaah-Afriyie, M.D., Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Dimitrios Farmakiotis, M.D., Associate Professor, Teaching Scholar, Infectious Disease

Jennifer Jeremiah, M.D., Professor, Clinician Educator, General Internal Medicine

Shafiq MaM.D.ani, M.D., Clinical Associate Professor, Cardiology

Nadia Mujahid, M.D., Associate Professor Clinician Educator, Geriatrics

John Reagan, M.D., Associate Professor, Teaching Scholar, Hematology/Oncology

William Sikov, M.D., Professor, Clinician Educator, Hematology/Oncology

Sarita Warrier, M.D., Associate Professor, Teaching Scholar, General Internal Medicine

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

