

General Internal Medicine Newsletter



Message from Division Leadership

2021 has ushered in hope for a meaningful downturn in the COVID-19 pandemic with the availability of three effective vaccines! While the distribution to our patients and our communities was fraught with challenges and inequities persisted during early vaccine rollout, our division rallied, true to form. Members of our division became vaccine ambassadors, pounded pavements, joined call pools, and volunteered at vaccination sites in order to bring accurate information to the public and reduce barriers to vaccine access. In the hospital, we continued to enroll patients in trials and protocols to elucidate better COVID-19 treatment options. While fatigue is a stark reality after a full year's battle, I see continued passion and creativity around me as we gain ground on this disease. Unfortunately, energy and activism is also needed in our continued fight against hate. Escalating acts of anti-Asian violence renews our commitment to stand against bigotry and commit to social justice. Our division is proud to lead in these charges.

Judy Tung, MD | Section Chief, Adult Internal Medicine

Clinical Updates

Under the direction of **Judy Tung, MD**, several faculty, staff, and students are aiding on a quality improvement assessment and intervention project to increase the vaccination rates of Black and Hispanic WCIMA patients. The project aims to assess interest in and barriers to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, address concerns or questions regarding the vaccine, and facilitate scheduling of vaccination for those interested.

Research Updates

Matthew McCarthy, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, was awarded by the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases for his study *Randomized Blinded Controlled Trial of the Safety and Efficacy of Multiple Therapeutics for the Treatment of COVID-19 in Hospitalized Adults (ACTIV-1)*. The current budget estimate is \$795,000 from 2020 through 2022.

Erica Phillips, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, together with John Leonard, MD, Senior Associate Dean for Innovation and Initiatives, Co-PIs, were awarded the Genentech Health Equity Innovations Award in the amount of \$678,000 for over two years. Dr. Phillips was also awarded the Connecting for Lung Health by Bristol Myers Squibb Health Equity Fund for \$93,000 from April 2021 through March 2023.

Education Updates

The Primary Care Clerkship had a transition in site director positions at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist this past January. We thank **Parvin Zawahir** and **Todd Simon** for their energy and efforts as our inaugural site directors, and we welcome **Anna Gorelik, MD**, and **Ahmed Shokry, MD**, into the new positions.

The Primary Care Clerkship has also transitioned from using the Family Medicine NBME exam to the Ambulatory Care NBME, which focuses more on adult outpatient medicine. Due to the slight shift in content, we're looking for **NEW PRECEPTORS** to work with our students one day a week in any outpatient internal medicine specialty. We are also looking for new faculty members to engage our students in "flipped classroom" didactics, or to facilitate Friday afternoon tutor groups. If you're interested in getting involved with undergraduate medical education, please reach out to [Brian Eiss, MD](#), and [Melissa Rusli, MD](#).

Primary Care Innovation (PCI) Program

The Primary Care & Hospital Medicine Innovation program received a total of **18 seed grant proposals** from faculty of various departments and divisions within WCM/NYP, residents, and students in response to its 2021-2022 seed award opportunity. Proposals are currently under review. Awardees will be notified in April and will be invited to present a poster at the upcoming symposium in May.

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CALL FOR ABSTRACTS! Due April 16, 2021, at 3PM. For eligibility and guidelines, visit our website at careinnovation.weill.cornell.edu.

SAVE THE DATE! Virtual 4th Annual Primary Care & Hospital Medicine Innovations Symposium on Thursday, May 27, 2021, from 9am-3pm EST via Zoom.

Cornell Center for Health Equity (CCHEq)

CCHEq is delighted to introduce [Gen Meredith, DrPH](#), Associate Director and Core Faculty for the Master of Public Health Program at Cornell University. Dr. Meredith will serve alongside Dr. Susana Morales as the new Co-Associate Director of the Education Core at the Center to arrange health equity education efforts in Ithaca, NY.



The Center is requesting collaborative, novel, and innovative applications for **one-year project grants, due on April 19, 2021**. To learn more about this opportunity, click [here](#).

The Center hosts a series of **Health Equity Seminars** on the first Friday of the month. Sessions are broadcasted via webinars for remote attendees. These colloquia are intended for Center members to share their work on various equity-focused and social justice issues and obtain multi-disciplinary input on works in progress. Recordings of seminars are now accessible on the Cornell Center for Health Equity website. For a list of presentations and recordings for this quarter, please click [here](#).

Diversity Center of Excellence (DCoE)

The DCoE has been working with several campus partners to address vaccine hesitancy and increase vaccine confidence. On January 18, 2021, Dr. Susana Morales joined faculty to host a **Virtual Vaccine Education Ambassador Training**. This event was aimed

at helping community members make an informed decision about vaccinations.

The **Diversity Mentoring Cascade** program hosted a special session on vaccine ambassador training for physicians and trainees on March 9, 2021. The goal of the session was to provide information and resources on how to talk to patients and community members about COVID vaccinations. For a recording and access to resources, visit centerfortheequity.cornell.edu.

The Weill Cornell Diversity Center of Excellence team designed the **Careers in Medicine Enhancement Program (CMEP)**, an 8-week program to support and nurture premedical students' interests and journey to medical school through the lens of health equity. The program concluded on March 24, 2021, with thought presentations on health equity topics.

Quality Improvement Academy (QIA)

QIA is excited to announce that we have received 16 project applications from various WCM/NYP campuses and departments for the Class of 2022. We are mid-way through the selection process. Notification letters will be sent out by early April. We hope to support 10-12 projects.

The current Class of 2021 is now preparing poster presentations of their projects for graduation. Additionally, QIA fellows from the Department of Medicine will present at Weill Department of Medicine Grand Rounds on May 26, 2021. We hope you will all attend by Zoom.

The **WCM-QIPS Poster Symposium** will be held virtually again this fall. Final details and the call for abstracts will be shared during the next quarter. Stay tuned! To learn more about QIA and our initiatives, please visit us on [our website](#).

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Honors & Awards

Anthony Ogedegbe, MD, Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine, was the 2019-2020 recipient of the Jeanne and Herbert Siegel Award for Excellence in Medical Education. Overseer Herbert J. Siegel and his wife, Jeanne, made this award possible through an endowed gift to acknowledge professional achievement and innovation by an outstanding faculty member. In addition to receiving a \$50,000 prize, this honor will be recognized as part of the Commencement activities in May 2021 as well as on a plaque in the Medical College with past awardees.



Judy Tung, MD, Associate Dean for Faculty Development, was the 2019-2020 recipient of the Jeanne and Herbert Siegel Faculty Development Award. Overseer Herbert J. Siegel and his wife, Jeanne, made this award possible through an endowed gift to acknowledge professional achievement and innovation by an outstanding faculty member. In addition to receiving a \$50,000 prize, this honor will be recognized as part of the Commencement activities in May 2021 as well as on a plaque in the Medical College with past awardees.



Publications

Kimberly Bloom-Feshbach, MD [The Virtual Hospitalist: a Critical Innovation During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

Paula Roy-Burman, MD & Todd Cutler, MD [Brachial Plexopathy as a Complication of COVID-19](#)

Justin Choi, MD [A Palpable Miss: the Underrepresentation of History and Physical Errors as Identified by Internal Medicine Residents for Morbidity and Mortality Conference](#)

Brett Fischer, MD [Care Transitions: A Complex Problem That Requires a Complexity Mindset](#)

Parag Goyal, MD [Frailty and Post-Hospitalization Outcomes in Patients with Heart Failure with Preserved Ejection Fraction](#)

Lisa Kern, MD [Differences in Ambulatory Care Fragmentation by Race](#)

Alexandra King, MD [Association Between Caregiver Strain and Self-Care Among Caregivers With Diabetes](#)

Laura Kolbe, MD [On Gifts and Heroes](#)

Matthew McCarthy, MD [At-Home Coronavirus Testing: the Next Game-changer?](#)

Susana Morales, MD [COMMENTARY: New York, let's talk about the COVID-19 vaccine](#)

Iris Navarro-Millan, MD [Association of Cardiovascular Disease and Traditional Cardiovascular Risk Factors with the Incidence of Dementia Among Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis](#)

Iris Navarro-Millan, MD [Racial, Ethnic, and Healthcare Disparities in Rheumatoid Arthritis](#)

Monika Safford, MD [Number of Social Determinants of Health and Fatal and Nonfatal Incident Coronary Heart Disease in the REGARDS Study](#) | Click [here](#) for a full list of Dr. Safford's publications

Madeline Sterling, MD [The Influence of Preparedness, Mutuality, and Self-Efficacy on Home Care Workers' Contribution to Self-Care in Heart Failure: A Structural Equation Modeling Analysis](#)

Alexis Vien, MD [Impact of a Novel Hospital-Based Opioid Stewardship Program on Non-Surgical Acute Pain Management in the Hospital](#)

Appointments & Promotions

Mangala Rajan, MBA, was promoted to the academic role of Research Associate in Medicine, effective July 1, 2020.

GIM Grand Rounds

GIM Grand Rounds takes place every first Thursday of the month. **Renuka Tipirneni, MD**, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Michigan,

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presented on January 7, 2021, on *Impact of the Affordable Care Act on Health Disparities: Progress and Future Needs*. **Lucinda Leung, MD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, and **Christopher Benitez, MD**, Associate Medical Director at the University of California, Los Angeles, presented on February 4, 2021, on *A Conversation between Primary Care and Mental Health About Collaborative Care for Depression*. **David Scales, MD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, **Dhruv Khullar, MD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, **Keith Roach, MD**, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, and **Laura Kolbe, MD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, all at Weill Cornell Medicine, presented on March 4, 2021, on *Writing in Medicine: It's Not Just a SOAP Note*. To learn more about upcoming grand rounds, click [here](#).

Spread the Word

Iris Navarro-Millan, MD, was featured in the 2020 Hospital for Special Surgery annual report. She was interviewed about her experience in treating patients with COVID-19 at NewYork-Presbyterian. Read more [here](#).



David Scales, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine, presented at the WCM David Rogers Health Policy Colloquium on January 20, 2021, on *Science Doesn't Speak for Itself: COVID-19 Vaccine Misinformation in an Age of Media Bubbles*.

Matthew McCarthy, MD, was invited to lecture on *From Pen to Patient: An Introduction to Medical Writing* at Wake Forest School of Medicine on February 5, 2021, and *One Year Later: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic* at the Medical School for International Health at Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, on February 23, 2021.

Martin Shapiro, MD, Professor of Medicine, gave Medicine Grand Rounds on February 17, 2021, on

Internal Medicine: The Essential Specialty? Click [here](#) for the recording.

Parag Goyal, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine, presented virtually at the American College of Cardiology on *Geriatric Cardiology Research Spotlight: Polypharmacy and Deprescribing in HF*. Click [here](#) to listen.

Monika Safford, MD, Professor of Medicine, was featured in Amol Gupta, MD, and Kush Gupta, MD's book *Reach Out! Unleash the Power of Mentorship to Achieve Your Peak Potential in Medicine*. This is a compilation of the pearls of wisdom that the authors have learned from 100+ physician mentors on *The Medicine Mentors Podcast*. Through this book, the authors hope to empower physicians-in-training with a toolkit to reach out and engage in meaningful relationships with mentors. Click [here](#) to read more.

Monika Safford, MD, and colleagues have published a paper in *Circulation* that has uncovered seven social determinants to prevent fatal heart attacks. Dr. Safford was also featured in WCM Newsroom, click [here](#) to read more.

Monika Safford, MD, was featured in the American Heart Association on COVID-19 registries offering lessons beyond the coronavirus. Read more [here](#).

Jyoti S. Mathad, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine, was recently interviewed by Podcasts360 about *Tuberculosis in Pregnant Women Living with HIV*. Read more [here](#).



Susana Morales, MD, Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, published an op-ed in *City Limits* on March 2, 2021, titled *NY's Vaccine Plan Must Include Education, Similar to Census Outreach*. Read more [here](#).

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Susana Morales, MD, was invited to speak on PBS MetroFocus on the Chasing the Dream initiative on poverty, justice, and economic opportunity in America on March 16, 2021. To watch, click [here](#).

Iris Navarro-Millan, MD, appeared on Telemundo and NBC6 Miami talking about the COVID-19 vaccine for Hispanics with rheumatic diseases and patients with chronic autoimmune diseases. Click [here](#) to watch.

Erica Phillips, MD, presented on March 17, 2021, on *Understanding and Addressing Social Determinants to Advance Cancer Health Equity*.

Madeline Sterling, MD, was the Virtual Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan's Division of General Medicine on March 24, 2021. During her visit, she met with their faculty and gave a seminar at the Lena M. Chen Research Conference in General and Hospital Medicine.

Madeline Sterling, MD, was one of the clinician-scientists selected by the NIH-NHLBI to be featured for Women's History Month in March. The NHLBI featured her research on home health aides and healthcare delivery for adults with chronic conditions. Read more [here](#).

Nell Eisenberg, MD, received her Society of Hospital Medicine certification and is a nationally certified POCUS provider!

The **GIM Internship** received an overwhelming number of applications in a very competitive year (900+). This summer, we have accepted 17 interns for 13 divisional programs. Interns are expected to start on June 1, 2021.

Mina Redzematovic, MA, Financial and Grants Coordinator, was nominated as a SUPER STAR Performer, and **Jacqueline Yunga**, Senior Medical Secretary, was nominated as a STAR Performer. Keep up the excellent work!

Welcome to the Team!

Staff:

Christina Ramasami, NP, Nurse Practitioner for HFpEF program

Catherine Fugelsang, Acupuncturist for Integrative Health and Wellbeing (IHW)

Johanne Morisseau, Medical Assistant for IHW

Sherry Vega, Medical Assistant for IHW

Farewell!

Rosio Ramos, Research Coordinator for Dr. Erica Phillips, has been promoted to Research Program Manager in the Division of Clinical Epidemiology & Evaluative Sciences Research, Weill Department of Medicine.