

# General Internal Medicine Newsletter

## Message from the Chief

Fall is upon us, allowing us to reflect on the summer's events and accomplishments. I hope that you all had a well-deserved break to enjoy a summer holiday. Vacations are an essential part of our lives, allowing us to disengage from everyday routines, stretching us in new ways through new experiences, and refreshing and renewing us. My vacation this year accomplished all these goals and more. I had the great pleasure of vacationing with several family members I don't get a chance to hang out with enough, allowing us to reconnect. The first week we spent in central Germany and the highlight was our jaunt around the Nürburgring's Nordschleife. This 20+ Km loop is filled with sharp curves and is used for races and as a test track for auto manufacturers, but it is also open to anyone with a roadworthy car 2 days per week during Touristenfahrten hours. I rented a race car (BMW 328i)



and professional racer (my "coach" sitting shotgun) and after strapping into my helmet and 3-point restraint, we zipped around the loop twice, made infinitely more fun

by my coach's familiarity with the track (as in "brake now, harder, harder, HARDER!"). Definitely a new and adrenaline filled experience! The second week was spent with 15 other family members who congregated in the Austrian alps for a week of hiking, alpine sliding, and general merriment. Within 3 days I no longer checked email and truly checked out. I hope your vacations were as refreshing and invigorating!

**Monika M. Safford, MD**

**Update on Alex Ajeto.** A little over a week ago, Alex, one of our hospitalists, suffered a T6 vertebral body burst fracture while playing baseball, immediately losing the ability to move his legs. He underwent surgery here and has begun to walk again! He was transferred to Rusk Rehabilitation Hospital on 9/28. In a show of the camaraderie that typifies our division, his colleagues started a GoFundMe to help with the unreimbursed costs of such a serious injury, but Alex has redirected the fund to support the people who volunteered their time, energy, and money to help him and his family. Thank you for this wonderful demonstration of why it is such a privilege to work in this division!

## Research Updates

**Madeline Sterling, MD**, was awarded an R01 for \$3.71M from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute for her study on *I-TRANSFER-HF: Improving Transitions and Outcomes for Heart Failure Patients in Home Health Care: A Type 1 Hybrid/Effectiveness Implementation Trial*. The project duration is from September 2023 - June 2028 and will test whether early visiting nurse assessment can reduce readmissions.



**Monika M. Safford, MD**, received \$4.5M from the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) for her role as MPI of the NY Community-Hospital-Academic Maternal Health Equity Partnerships, or NY-CHAMP (see CCHEq update below). With Lauren Osborne, MD, Ob-Gyn Vice Chair for Research, she co-leads the Center's signature project, called *Living Healthy Moms*, a randomized trial which will test whether a doula-delivered intervention can reduce post-partum depression and improve maternal cardiovascular health.



**The REasons for Geographic And Racial Differences in Stroke-Myocardial Infarction-4 (REGARDS-MI-4) Study**, funded by National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, held its second annual Summer Institute at WCM from July 31 – August 1. The 30 participating investigators included teams from WCM, led by Dr. Safford; University of Alabama at Birmingham, led by Emily Levitan; and Duke, led by Barrett Bowling. Division members participating included Parag Goyal, Maddie Sterling, Lisa Kern, Laura Pinheiro, Arnab Ghosh, Ro-Jay Reid, Joanna Ringel, Mangala Rajan, Musarrat Nahid, Orysya Sorokova, Jennifer Lau, Sara Venkatnarayan, and Elizabeth Baquero. Presentations included the use of machine learning to improve cardiovascular risk prediction, stability over time of variables reflecting structural racism, structural equation modeling to examine the role of structural racism and cardiovascular disease, perspectives on aging well of patients living with a chronic condition, and factors associated with

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home days following hospitalization for cardiovascular disease. The group plans to build on this work over the coming year, continuing to highlight and support the work of fellows and junior investigators. Plans are underway to develop a process for engaging community members in all our studies over the next year as a model for other observational research studies.

Investigators interested in using data from this large national cohort study should contact [Dr. Monika Safford](#).

**Cornell Center for Health Equity (CCHEq) New York Community-Hospital-Academic Maternal Health Equity Partnerships (NY-CHAMP).** WCM and Columbia successfully competed for an NICHD-funded Maternal Health Research Center of Excellence as part of NIH's Implementing a Maternal Health and Pregnancy Outcomes Vision for Everyone (IMPROVE) initiative. CCHEq and its available resources played a prominent role in the application. These centers will develop and evaluate innovative approaches to reduce pregnancy-related complications and deaths, as well as promote maternal health equity. ] The NY-CHAMP aims to establish a sustainable, highly collaborative infrastructure for community-centered maternal health science in New York City and New York State. [Learn More about NIH CoE](#) and [Learn More about CHAMP](#).

**CCHEq Co-Directors Collaborate on Anti-Racist Health Policy Grant.** In partnership with Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awardee [Community Change](#), CCHEq Co-Directors Jamila Michener (PI) and Jeff Niederdeppe (Co-PI) are leading the project "Advancing a Vision for Antiracist Health Policy," focused on strengthening and expanding the emerging field of anti-racist health policy. Community Change is a national organization

that centers the leadership of people directly affected by injustice, especially people of color (total subaward \$300,000).

**CCHEq Team Awarded NIH Health Equity Grant.** The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities has awarded \$2.3 million over four years to a CCHEq-exclusive investigator team including Co-Director Jamila Michener (PI); Research, Training and Mentoring Core Co-Associate Director Will Schpero (MPI); and members Colleen Carey (Co-I), Arnab Ghosh (Co-I), and Martin Shapiro (Co-I). "Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Access to the Medicaid Transportation Benefit and Implications for Patient Outcomes" will research the extent to which the Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) benefit is associated with racial/ethnic disparities in health care access and outcomes. The team aims to determine how transportation services and associated policy are related to health care disparities in the US and how they can be used to improve health equity.

## Quality Improvement Academy (QIA)

Quality Improvement Academy – Weill Cornell Medicine (QIA-WCM) is proud to be in its eighth year of training junior faculty and nurses who are passionate and committed to becoming strategically vital leaders dedicated to patient care excellence through interdisciplinary process and quality improvement, QI education and mentorship, and QI research and scholarship. With 17 physicians, nurses and fellow from the departments of Medicine, Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, Anesthesiology, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Psychiatry and NYP Nursing, this year's class joins our growing QIA network inclusive of WCM, Lower Manhattan, NYP-Queens, NYP-Brooklyn Methodist and Hospital for Special Surgery.

Recruitment for the Class of 2025 will open in October. If you are interested in being a part of our growing community, please consider submitting your application. Please visit us on [our website](#) to learn more about our program and other QIA initiatives. For questions, please contact us at [QIA-WCM@med.cornell.edu](mailto:QIA-WCM@med.cornell.edu).

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## Appointments & Promotions

**Margaret McNairy, MD**, Associate Professor of Medicine, has been appointed Interim Chief of the Section of Hospital Medicine effective October 2, 2023. Dr. McNairy has been a practicing hospitalist in the section of Hospital Medicine since 2010. She is excited to build on the program's exceptional foundation of high-quality inpatient clinical care, health care delivery innovation, and outstanding training of medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty. With the continuing search for a Chair of Medicine, a strong interim leader will assure continued growth and achievement until a permanent Chief can be sought after the Chair is named.



**Arthur Evans, MD**, is stepping down from his position as Hospital Medicine Section Chief. We thank him for his outstanding leadership of the section he started over 14 years ago. From a handful of faculty members to a vibrant group that now includes more than 100 outstanding faculty members, the section has grown to the leading academic Hospital Medicine program in New York City and one of the top programs in the country. His legacy of mentorship and encouraging innovation as well as demanding the highest standard of clinical excellence and teaching has created a strong foundation to propel the section to new heights. Dr. Evans will go on sabbatical to design and initiate a new Hospital Medicine fellowship in artificial intelligence. He will remain active in the division, co-directing the Clinical Scholars Program, helping advance several other programs, and continuing his exemplary and long-standing mentorship of Hospital Medicine faculty.



## Publications

**Justin Choi, MD** [Towards diagnostic excellence on academic ward teams: building a conceptual model of team dynamics in the diagnostic process](#)

**Arthur Evans, MD** [Randomized controlled trial of a group peer mentoring model for U.S. academic medicine research faculty](#)

**Christopher Gonzales, MD** [Hepatitis C Treatment](#)

[Initiation Among US Medicaid Enrollees](#)

**Parag Goyal, MD** [Life's Essential 8: Optimizing Health in Older Adults](#)

**Michelle Loy, MD** [Clinician Wellness—Self-Care for Staying Healthy: How Nature and Horticultural, Culinary, and Botanical Medicine Can Improve Clinician Health](#)

**Matthew McCarthy, MD** [Abatacept, Cenicriviroc, or Infliximab for Treatment of Adults Hospitalized With COVID-19 Pneumonia: A Randomized Clinical Trial](#)

**Matthew McCarthy, MD** [Optimizing the use of vilobelimab for the treatment of COVID-19](#)

**Matthew McCarthy, MD** [Inhaled Fluticasone Furoate for Outpatient Treatment of Covid-19](#)

**Matthew McCarthy, MD** [Paxlovid as a potential treatment for long COVID](#)

**Iris Navarro-Millan, MD** [Frailty and emergency department utilisation in adults with systemic lupus erythematosus ≤65 years of age: an administrative claims data analysis of Medicaid beneficiaries](#)

**Laura Pinheiro, PhD** [Diabetes and Cancer Co-management Education: Leveraging the Patient Activated Learning System \(PALS\) for Patients with Breast Cancer](#)

**David Scales, MD** [Pre-emptively tackling vaccine misinformation for a successful large-scale roll-out of malaria vaccines in Africa](#)

**David Scales, MD** [‘They’ve all endorsed it...but I’m just not there:’ a qualitative exploration of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy reported by Black and Latinx individuals](#)

**David Scales, MD** [Addressing Viral Medical Rumors and False or Misleading Information](#)

**Madeline Sterling, MD** [Covid-19: Home Health Aides' Perceived Preparedness and Self-Reported Availability for Work: Six Month Survey Results](#)

**Lily Yan, MD** [Health systems performance for hypertension control using a cascade of care approach in South Africa, 2011-2017](#)

## GIM Grand Rounds

GIM Grand Rounds takes place by zoom every first Thursday of the month. **Peggy Leung, MD, et al**, presented on July 6, 2023, on *Updates in Medical Education 2023*, and **Amanda Ramsdell, MD, et al**, presented on September 7, 2023, on *Improving Care for Patients Experiencing Homelessness in the Hospital: Contextualizing Clinical Care and Leading Local Systems*.

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## Spread the Word

**Matthew McCarthy, MD**, gave Medicine Grand Rounds on September 15, 2023, at the Staten Island University Hospital on *Advances in the Treatment of Severe COVID-19*. He has also been named to the National Institutes of Health "Strategies and Treatments for Respiratory Infections and Viral Emergencies (STRIVE)" Scientific Steering Committee Extended Protocol Team.

The Department of Medicine awarded **Drs. Rebecca Berger, Carly Borinsky, Franklyn Fenton, Elaine Gee, William Levine, Neha Nagpal, and Rochelle Wong** with a Commendation for Exemplary Service to the Medicine Clerkship. These faculty members have dedicated at least 12 hours of their time over the past year to teaching our students.

**Michelle Loy, MD**, joins the [Plant-Based Nutrition Podcast](#) to talk all things Integrative Medicine and the role of nutrition in overall health and wellbeing. The conversation includes evidence based research citations, personal examples from her own life and family and how she applies nutrition and culinary medicine in her clinical practice both for individuals and groups. Providers may better appreciate the power of culinary medicine on patients and clinicians and acquire practical tasty tips and resources.

## GIM Summer Internship

GIM is proud to have continued the Anita Mesi Summer Internship. We continued our support for the Travelers Summer Research Fellowship Program – read more [here](#). The division also hosted several summer interns who were matched with research faculty for a summer research experience.



**David Scales, MD**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, presented at two National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine events in March and April on the topic of medical misinformation ([one here](#), [the other here](#)). He currently serves on two WHO expert panels, one on the "[Ethics of Social Listening](#)" and another on "[Evidence Gap Mapping on interventions](#)

[to address the infodemic](#)." Additionally, he wrote two reports for the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation: one providing [a framework for evaluating efforts to address misinformation](#) and another (co-authored with Dr. Jerel Ezell) on [strategies clinicians can use to address misinformation at the point of care](#).

**Iris Navarro-Millan, MD**, Associate Professor of Medicine, was featured on WCM's Twitter in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. Watch her journey [here](#)!

**Curtis Cole, MD**, Vice President, and Chief Global Information Officer, will speak at the Academia Nacional de Medicina in Rio de Janeiro on November 16, 2023, on, "Challenges in Data Privacy and Protection." The theme of the conference is artificial intelligence.

## Welcome to the Team!

### Faculty:

#### Assistant Professors

**Donald Dietz, MD**

**Anita Ganti, MD**

**E. Mason Jeffries, MD**

**MD Manjinder Kandola, MD**

**Lisa Koers, MD**

**Andrew Mekaiel, MD**

**Waqas Rahman,**

**Anqi Zheng, MD**

#### Instructors

**Susan Cavender, MD**

**Amanda Ceravolo, MD**

**MD Ashley Dixon, MD**

**MD**

**Rachel Ducote, MD**

**MD Mary Ann Hernando, MD**

**MD Kirsten Homma, MD**

**MD Samara Levin, MD**

**Kara Ryan, MD**

**Lee Seligman,**

**Deborah Silber,**

**MD**

**Hank Swerdloff,**

**Christine Wang,**

**Maeve Ward,**

### Staff:

**Aileen Aylward**, Research Coordinator for Dr. Goyal

**Briana Bell**, Research Program Manager for Dr.

Phillips **Daniel Garcia**, Research Assistant (RA) for

Dr. Navarro **Clarence Perez-Mejia**, RA for Dr.

Gonzalez

**Akua Sarkodee**, Financial Administrator

**Nathaniel St. Clair**, Grants Specialist

**Daniel Spertus**, Assistant Research Coordinator for Dr.

Sterling

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## Congratulations!

**Maryam Hyder** has transitioned to a full-time Research Assistant for Dr. Goyal

## Farewell!

**Dr. Jerel Ezell** left on August 31 and will continue to build his career at the University of California Berkeley  
**Yuliana Domiguez Paez** Research Coordinator for Dr. Navarro

**Lindsay Hurth**, Research Coordinator for Dr. Scales

**Maryem Zaki**, Research Coordinator for Dr. Phillips

Best of luck on your new endeavors and thank you for your contributions to GIM!