



GW Medicine Notes

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October 2020

Update on the Phase 3 Moderna mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Trial at GW

Enrollment into the COVE Study, the phase 3 vaccine trial of the mRNA-1273 COVID-19 vaccine, that was co-developed by Moderna and the NIH, was initiated at GW on August 12th. Under the leadership of Drs. David Diemert and Marc Siegel from the Division of Infectious Diseases, GW has so far enrolled just under 300 participants into the trial. The GW site has been particularly successful in enrolling people from communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the epidemic: over 50% of participants at GW are either African American or Latinx.

Furthermore, approximately 40% of the participants at GW are individuals who are more likely to have worse outcomes due to the SARS-CoV-2 infection, including people over age 65 and those with underlying medical conditions like diabetes, severe obesity, chronic lung disease, significant cardiac disease, liver disease, or HIV. Enrollment into the trial will likely continue through mid-October.

The study is placebo-controlled with each participant getting two injections in the deltoid, 1 month apart. There are a total of 6 clinic visits over 2 years with periodic telephone contacts and symptom diaries.

The study DSMB has met twice so far and has recommended the study continue as planned. The first interim analysis will take place once approximately 50 cases of symptomatic COVID-19 infection have been recorded in study participants.

Anyone who is interested can provide their information directly to the GW COVE Study recruitment team via the following:

Website: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe0-GwbWUsfA9W-pLzKYG2Pf62xcnzP9L199zoixNj3nGkYyxQ/viewform>,
Telephone: 202.994.0047
Email: COVID19VaxTrial@gwu.edu
Nationwide Registry: <https://www.coronaviruspreventionnetwork.org/> (use site code GWUS)

From the Chairman

Unfortunately (I think) we have, or COVID has, created a new norm when it comes to health care and that norm is avoid, ignore, downplay and wait. For example: where have all the STEMI's gone? At the height of the pandemic during spring, cities in Italy were reporting a 70% drop in admissions for an MI. It appears that the fear of COVID was worse than chest pain, because patients were too afraid of coming to the hospital. The Spanish Society of Cardiology published a paper saying that STEMI admissions were down 40%. In Madrid, which was hit hard by COVID, it was estimated that the drop was closer to 80%. This was a good thing because there were no available hospital beds.

In April, at the GWUH, Jonathan Reiner estimated they saw just two or three STEMI cases in the previous three-week period when they typically had been seeing three a week. This has been coupled with a "dramatic decrease" in ACS admissions, he added.

A cardiologist at Mass General in Boston said he spent a week in the CCU and didn't have one traditional MI patient, something which had never happened in his 12 years covering the CCU.

So where are they or where did they go? Speculations range from people doing less physical activities or being more compliant with meds, or to cleaner air with fewer cars on the road. But if you add the stress of the fear of getting infected, do you really think the decrease was due to less air pollution? Some people think that the MI's have been coming in. But with ED's overwhelmed by the hordes of COVID+ patients, the MI's have gotten lost - especially since many infected patients are complaining of chest pain.

If people were too scared to come into the hospital with an acute MI, imagine how easy it becomes to avoid seeking medical care for less acute problems. A CDC study done in June revealed that an estimated 41% of U.S. adults have avoided medical care during the pandemic because of concerns about COVID-19, including 12% who avoided urgent or emergency care, and 32% who avoided routine care.

This country already had an epidemic, before COVID, of an unhealthy overweight underfit population. Avoiding preventive care can't be a good thing. But fear and possibly cost, with many people out of work, are major drivers of putting things off. How many people have resumed dental visits? The fear of dentists may be close to the fear of COVID. And if you could put off taking your prep for colonoscopy....but if you are having crushing chest pain, really?

Peter, Paul and Mary may have had it right when they sung (with improvising):

"Where have all the STEMI's gone
Gone to graveyards everyone
When will they ever learn?
When will they ever learn?"

Alan G. Wasserman, M.D.

Department of Medicine October 2020 Grand Rounds

WEBEX LINK (12:00 PM)

Join by phone +1-415-655-0001 Meeting number: 160 293 7989

or <https://mfa.webex.com/mfa/j.php?>

[MTID=m888d29fea5823e8418cfc7e4b175d2c3](https://mfa.webex.com/mfa/j.php?MTID=m888d29fea5823e8418cfc7e4b175d2c3)

Password: DOMGrandRounds

- October 1** "Cervical Cancer Screening"
Dr. Beverly Long
Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology
GW MFA
- October 8** "Multi System Inflammatory Syndrome in Children"
Dr. Roberta DeBiasi
Professor of Pediatrics
Professor of Microbiology, Immunology, and Tropical Medicine (Secondary)
Children's National Medical Center
- October 15** "Electrophysiology Monitoring and Treatment"
Dr. Marco Mercader
Director, Electrophysiology Research
Professor of Medicine
GW MFA
- October 22** "Mohs and Cutaneous Malignancies"
Dr. Vishal Patel
Assistant Professor of Dermatology
Assistant Professor of Medicine (Secondary)
GW MFA
- October 29** "PrEP"
Dr. Ben Taylor
Whitman Walker

The George Washington University Medical Center (GWUMC) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians. GWUMC designates this continuing medical education activity on an hour-for-hour basis in Category I of the Physician's Recognition Award of the American Medical Association. (AMA).

Medicine Team Contacts

Need to find a Resident on an inpatient team?

Please use Tiger text to reach the appropriate physician. Go to gwu.medhub.com/paging; password: GWUPublicCall; Select Internal Medicine.

Alternatively

GWUH Defining Medicine Intranet: Go to Applications \ Inactive-Non-Production \ Directory Contact System

GWUH Citrix Portal—<https://gwportal.gwu-hospital.com/vpn/index.html>

MFA URL— <http://192.168.254.132/miTeamWebWA/Home> (Logon) - <http://192.168.254.132/miTeamWebAL/Home> (View Only)

If you have trouble with your MedHub account, please contact Anna Sufczynski at asufczynski@mfa.gwu.edu.

Cardiology Grand Rounds

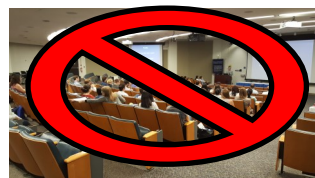
WEBEX LINK (5:00 PM)

<https://shanekeweerakoon.my.webex.com/shanekeweerakoon.my/j.php?>

[MTID=ma05dd6da846285f4231171496d680b35](https://shanekeweerakoon.my.webex.com/shanekeweerakoon.my/j.php?MTID=ma05dd6da846285f4231171496d680b35)

Meeting number (access code): 126 501 5555 Meeting password: zTG3TyRkB23 (98438975 from phones and video systems)

- October 7** "Pulmonary Embolism 2020: Art or Science"
Dr. John Paul
Associate Professor of Medicine
University of Chicago
- October 14** "Cardiovascular Imaging in Trauma Cases"
Dr. Susie Hong-Zohlman
Assistant Professor of Medicine
University of Maryland
- October 21** Fellow M&M
- October 28** "Changing Practice Patterns for the Treatment of Coronary and Valvular Heart Disease"
Dr. Robert Pyo
Director, Interventional Cardiology, Stony Brook Medicine
Director, Cardiac Catheterization Laboratories, Stony Brook University Hospital
Director, Structural Heart Interventions
Stony Brook University



Resident Lecture Series October 2020 Noon Conference

All Faculty Invited to Attend

In an effort to practice social distancing, we will host Chairman's Rounds, Patient Safety Conferences, and Clinical Pathology Conferences via WebEx.

Join by phone +1-415-655-0001 Access code: 739 912 912 or <https://mfa.webex.com/mfa/j.php?MTID=m0a9fcb5540f4a6dc3ea0918af35b9b7d>
Meeting password: PeaceLoveCOVID

- October 2** Case Based Conference
- October 5** Primary Care Case Conference
- October 6** Journal Club
- October 7** Jeopardy!
- October 9** Case Based Conference
- October 12** Primary Care Case Conference
- October 13** Patient Safety Conference
- October 16** Case Based Conference
- October 19** Primary Care Case Conference
- October 20** Clinical Pathology Conference
- October 21** "Pulmonary Hypertension"
Dr. Mardi Gomberg-Maitland
Professor of Medicine
GW MFA
- October 23** Case Based Conference
- October 26** Primary Care Case Conference
- October 27** Chairman's Rounds
- October 28** "Documentation"
TBA
- October 30** Case Based Conference

Department's Diversity, Equity, Inclusive Excellence Council Executive Committee

The executive committee had their first organizational meeting on September 24th. The committee members include: Drs. Hana Akselrod, Jillian Catalanotti, Allen Solomon, Marie Borum, Scott Cohen, Adrienne Poon, Margaret Pruitt, and Mrs. Deborah Corvalan.

The members agreed on the following goals for the Department's Diversity, Equity, Inclusive Excellence Council:

In a commitment to enhancing a culture of inclusive excellence and equity within the department and larger institution, the council's goals include:

- Guide the department in the deliberate promotion of inclusive, excellence, and equity through ongoing initiatives that reflect national best practices.
- Initiatives include but are not limited to: facilitated critical conversations, trainings in implicit bias, anti-racism, and bystander response, weaving an equity thread in research and QI initiatives, and reviewing and revising policies and procedures that perpetuate inequities.
- Recommend and ensure intentional practices that enhance recruitment, retention, and the success of residents, fellows, and faculty from groups underrepresented in medicine.
- Collaborate with GW SMHS and GW Hospital on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Inspire us all to be pillars of inclusive excellence.

AAIM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

Dr. Alan Wasserman has been invited to serve on the AAIM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. The AAIM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force is a one year effort that will prepare a recommendation for the AAIM Board of Directors for an 18 to 36 month plan to consider AAIM's existing and future DEI initiatives for physician and administrator members and provide feedback on priorities.

Team Names Changing for the Medicine Inpatient Consult Services

As of October 3, 2020, we are changing the naming schema for medicine inpatient teams. This is due to patient and provider preference and to more easily allow for any potential future expansions or structural changes.

MED1 Team will be the PA service (currently called orange team).

MED2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Teams will be the current gen med teaching teams (currently bronze, purple, green, yellow, silver, teal not necessarily in that order).

Med Night Team will be the temporary name for patients admitted overnight by night floats/moonlighters until they are assigned a team the next morning (currently called pink team).

Pulm Team will be the pulmonology inpatient service (currently called blue team).

Heart Team will be the cardiology inpatient service (currently called gold team).

Heme/Onc Team will be the heme/onc inpatient service (currently called red team).

IT will be making the appropriate changes in Cerner, CORES, and other locations on October 3. Please note that for a few hours that morning, team patient lists in Cerner may look a little confusing while the actual changeover occurs.

Please Join Us In Welcoming Our Newest Addition to the Department of Medicine

Caroline M. Bockus, MD joins us as a Clinical Instructor of Medicine in the Division of General Internal Medicine at the 2300 M Street, NW location.

Caroline Bockus, MD received her Medical Degree here at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences in 2017. She was subsequently accepted to our 3 year Internal Medicine – Primary Care Residency Program at The George Washington University, which she completed in June 2020.

Dr. Bockus is licensed in the District of Columbia and is board eligible in Internal Medicine.

Dr. Bockus has special interests in transitions of care and wellness. She plans to broaden her experience as an educator and researcher.

Catherine “Annie” Varnum, MD MPH will join us as an Instructor of Medicine in the Division of General Internal Medicine in November.

Dr. Varnum received her BA with a major in Biochemistry from Vassar College. After college, she completed a Masters of Public Health in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at The George Washington University – Milken Institute School of Public Health, performing research for her Master's thesis at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden. She attended the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD where she participated in the primary care track program. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine-Primary Care at New York University (NYU), serving patients in three hospital settings and two ambulatory clinics. While at NYU, she also contributed to the development of the telemedicine resident curriculum.

Dr. Varnum is passionate about understanding and implementing strategies to improve primary care health outcomes and patient satisfaction, particularly by incorporating telemedicine and home-based primary care. She is interested in patient compliance, wellness, and prevention. She also enjoys teaching and mentoring medical trainees, focusing on physical as well as psychosocial contributors to patient health. She values meaningful connections with her colleagues in Medicine and long-term relationships with her patients. After three years in the Big Apple, Dr. Varnum is excited to return home to both the DC area and GWU to continue her medical career.

Article on Cleve Francis, former GW resident and cardiology fellow and country singer.

The events of the past few months have caused us to recognize the depth, breadth, and implications of inequalities in our society and disparities in care as never before. Dr. Cleveland Francis shares the story of the indignities and barriers he encountered over the course of his training and career in this month's Editor Page of JACC Heart Failure.

Read more: <https://heartfailure.onlinejacc.org/content/8/9/780>

Condolences

Our deepest sympathies to Dr. Gary Simon and Vicki Simon for the passing of their mother **Dorothy Simon**.

Our deepest sympathies for the family of Dr. **Nilda Salaman** from Anesthesia, who passed away on September 18, 2020. Nilda trained at GW and has been a faculty member since returning from private practice in 2005. She was a true professional, and one of our most personally requested physicians.

Our deepest sympathies for the family of **Ms. Wendy Burton**, a member of the GW MFA staff, and a friend and colleague to many. Ms. Burton joined the Department of Dermatology in 2017 and was the cornerstone of the patient services team. Her camaraderie and her passion for cosmetic dermatology will be missed.

Kudos & Congratulations

Kudos...to **Dr. Alan Wasserman** on a donation made in honor of the department by one of his patients to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Kudos...to the entire **Renal Division** for the comments from DaVita leadership, "Thank you for your efforts to provide our patients with a caring experience during COVID-19. DaVita has collected feedback from patients on their experience spanning from June 15th - August 9th. Your clinic (K Street DaVita unit) was 1% percentile on overall patient experience."

Kudos...to **Dr. Nedda Dastmalchi (PGY3)**, on her article with ABC News, "Battling the 'Quarantine 15': Experts fear COVID-19 weight gain could lead to health complications, weak immune systems." Read more: <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/battling-quarantine-15-experts-fear-covid-19-weight/story?id=72572592>.

Kudos...to **Dr. Hana Akselrod (Infectious Diseases) and Harleen Marwah (MS4)** on their recent publication in the Special Edition of the JGIM, "Assessing Needs and Addressing Climate Change At Grand Rounds: Knowledge, Attitudes, And Engagement." Read more: <https://link.springer-com.proxygw.wrlc.org/content/pdf/10.1007/s11606-020-05890-3.pdf>

Kudos...to **Dr. Monica Lypson (General Internal Medicine)** for being selected as the Associate Editor for Academic Medicine with the Journal of the AAMC.

Kudos...to **Dr. Jillian Catalanotti (General Internal Medicine)** for her interview with the Medicine Mentors Podcast. **Listen to it:** <https://themedicinementors.libsyn.com/loving-your-patients-with-dr-jillian-catalanotti>.

Congratulations to the members of Cohort 3 of the SMHS Fundamentals of Leadership Program, Drs **Anjeni Keswani (Allergy)** and **Saby Sen (Endocrinology)**.

Congratulations for the Spring/Summer 2020 Master of Arts in Education and Human Development graduate, **Dr. Chavon Onumah (General Internal Medicine)**.

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