



# GW Medicine Notes

A Monthly Publication of the GW Department of Medicine

Volume 24, Issue 3

March 2020

## USMLE POLICY CHANGES

We now have information about the decision made by USMLE's parent organizations, the Federation of State Medical Boards and the National Board of Medical Examiners, concerning changes to USMLE score reporting. In addition, two other policy decisions are being announced at this time.

**Step 1 scoring** – Beginning no sooner than **January 1, 2022**, Step 1 score reporting will transition from a 3-digit score to a pass/fail outcome.

**Attempt limits** - Beginning no sooner than **January 1, 2021**, an examinee who has made four or more prior attempts to pass a Step or Step Component, including incomplete attempts, will be ineligible to take that exam.

**Prerequisite for taking Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS)** – Beginning no sooner than **March 1, 2021**, an examinee must have passed Step 1 before taking Step 2 CS.

The 2021 Match should be very interesting given the limited evaluation criteria programs we will have to choose from.

**SAVE THE DATE  
FACULTY/HOUSESTAFF  
END-OF-THE-YEAR  
CELEBRATION  
FRIDAY JUNE 5, 2020  
RITZ-CARLTON DC**

## *From the Chairman*

I am sure I don't have to tell anyone that health care issues have dominated the news in the last few months, but you may not realize the most significant story to develop. I continue to wonder if the only reason that some of the leading Presidential candidates are touting "Medicare for All" is that they know it will never happen? If it did, how would this country pay for it in its present form? It is one thing to advocate for Universal Health Care, which I do, and another to tout a plan like Medicare with very little limitations on the delivery of care (except regarding physician payments.) The sound bites must be working which points to the fact that people remain worried about their ability to afford health care. Still no politician has the guts to say that for this country to really afford universal care some amount of rationing or limitations need to be imposed. Emphasize wellness and preventive medicine and at least require going through a primary care provider to get a referral to see a specialist which Medicare doesn't require.

But that's not the major issue I was referring to. Nor is it the spreading virus from China that at the time of this writing is growing significantly in South Korea, Japan and other Asian countries. Was the massive quarantine in China not effective, was it too late or have we just been given wrong information? The only reassuring news is the "reported" death toll is low but somehow that doesn't compute with the pictures of thousands and thousands of hospital beds in China overflowing with patients. If the people in those beds aren't sick enough to be worried about their outcome, why are they in the hospital since there is no treatment available other than hydration? Warm weather can't come soon enough since no anti-viral or vaccine seems to be close.

The most significant story, which I am sure everyone is aware of, is the approval by the FDA of another non-statin oral medication for high cholesterol. Bempedoic acid is a prodrug that is activated by the enzyme SLC27A2 in the liver. The activated substance inhibits ATP citrate lyase, which is involved in the liver's biosynthesis of cholesterol upstream of HMG-CoA reductase, the enzyme that is blocked by statins. By itself, bempedoic acid would have a very small cholesterol lowering effect, but like ezetimibe, it boosts the cholesterol lowering capability of a statin by 18-28% and may be most effective in patients who cannot tolerate high dose statins. Side effects were no different from placebo in clinical trials. (But trial numbers are limited so we will have to wait until there is more widespread use to be sure.)

As it acts by a different mechanism than ezetimibe, they can be given together and give an even greater reduction up to 40% in combination with a statin. A combination pill, bempedoic/ezetimibe, is under consideration by the FDA. The only negative may be cost. Statins and ezetimibe are generic and cheap. It is estimated that bempedoic acid may cost as much as \$10 a day which would limit its use as insurance companies will be reluctant to approve.

There you have it. Three leading issues in the news regarding health care. The Good (bempedoic acid), the Bad (lies about Medicare for All), the Ugly (Coronavirus). We really need the Caps to start winning again to be thinking about something else.

*Alan G. Wasserman, M.D.*

## **Department of Medicine March 2020 Grand Rounds**

- MAR 5**     **James K. Min MD, FACC**  
Professor of Radiology and Medicine Weill Cornell Medical College  
**AI/Machine Learning in CVD**
- MAR 12**    **Michael Knight, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Medicine  
George Washington University  
**Wellness Grand Rounds**
- MAR 19**    **Antonia Sepulveda, MD**  
Professor of Pathology  
Chair, Department of Pathology  
George Washington University  
**Leveraging Genomics and Digital Pathology in Gastrointestinal Pre-Cancer and Cancer**
- MAR 26**    **Jonathan Sherman, MD**  
Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery  
**New innovations in the management of metastatic disease to the brain and spine**

## **Cardiology Grand Rounds**

5:00 PM, Ross Hall, Room # 227

- MAR 4**     **James K. Min, MD, FACC**  
Professor of Radiology, Medicine  
Weill Cornell Medical College  
**CT Coronary Imaging**
- MAR 11**    **M&M**
- MAR 18**    **Gaby Weismann, MD**  
Assistant Professor of Medicine  
Georgetown University School of Medicine  
**ACC Educational meeting**
- MAR 25**    **TBD**



## **Resident Lecture Series March 2020 Noon Conference**

- MAR 2**     **Dr. Mbuyi - Gout**
- MAR 3**     **Journal Club—Drs. Elshikh & Adhatamsoontra**
- MAR 4**     **GME Core Lecture**
- MAR 5**     **Medicine Grand Rounds**
- MAR 6**     **Chairman's Rounds - Drs. Arendt & Kochhar**
- MAR 9**     **Social**
- MAR 10**    **PSC - Drs. Ismail & Wong**
- MAR 11**    **Dr. Schockett - Hospice**
- MAR 12**    **Medicine Grand Rounds**
- MAR 13**    **Chairman's Rounds - Drs. Engskow & Doran**
- MAR 16**    **TBD**
- MAR 17**    **CPC - Drs. DelPrete & Garland**
- MAR 18**    **Dr. Quintana - Transfusion & Resuscitation**
- MAR 19**    **Medicine Grand Rounds**
- MAR 20**    **Chairman's Rounds - Drs. Khan & Imasuen**
- MAR 23**    **Dr. Catalanotti - Common Breast Complaints**
- MAR 24**    **Dr. Gomberg - Pulmonary Hypertension**
- MAR 25**    **Robin Latham EMED**
- MAR 26**    **Medicine Grand Rounds**
- MAR 27**    **Match Day**
- Mar 30**    **Dr. Roberts - Opportunistic Infections**
- MAR 31**    **Dr. Ehrhardt - Type 1 DM & LADA**

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](http://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 Deborah Corvalan at [dcorvalan@mfa.gwu.edu](mailto:dcorvalan@mfa.gwu.edu).

## Nehal Mehta, MD Tenured by NIH

Nehal Mehta, MD, Clinical Professor of Medicine, GWU, was awarded Tenure based on his remarkable work on the role of systemic inflammation on atherosclerosis using both clinical and preclinical approaches. This work focused on the impact of systemic inflammation associate with psoriasis on vascular biology. His work has had a major impact in both Cardiology and Dermatology based on the outstanding letters of support NIH received to support his tenure. He has created a broad and important field in vascular biology.

Nehal is the first Lasker investigator tenured in the NHLBI. He demonstrated that tenure track investigator initiated clinical research programs can be successful nearly starting from scratch and not dependent on existing programs outside of basic clinical research support. Indeed, no significant program on vascular inflammation existed in before Nehal arrived.

Congratulations to Nehal on his outstanding work!

## NBME Committee

Dr. Bass received a letter commending those who served on a committee of the NBME:

### Monica Lypson, Professor of Medicine

- \* Strategic Educator Enhancement Fund (SEEF) Oversight Committee
- \* Strategic Educators Enhancement Fund (SEEF) Medical Education Research Fellowship Task Force
- \* Public Stakeholders Committee

### Caitlin Mingey, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine

- \* USMLE Medical Student and Resident Advisory Panel

### Jillian S. Catalanotti, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine

- \* USMLE Biostatistics and Epidemiology TMDC
- \* USMLE Test Material Development Committees

### Michael J. Czarnecki, DO, Associate Professor of Medicine

- \* USMLE Interdisciplinary Review Committee
- \* USMLE Forms Reviews

### Rhonda M. Goldberg, MA, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Medicine

- \* Executive Chief Proctor

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

**Ivana Milojevic, MD** joins the Division of Pulmonary/Critical Care Medicine as an Assistant Professor of Medicine.

Dr. Milojevic earned her Medical Degree at the Belgrade University School of Medicine, Serbia in 2010. She completed Internal Medicine Residency at the Johns Hopkins University/Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, where she also served as Chief Resident. She trained in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at the George Washington University, Washington, DC. Dr. Milojevic is board certified in Internal Medicine and Pulmonary Medicine.

**Deepak Pandit** is the new Practice Manager for specialty groups, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, and Pulmonary Medicine. departments.

Before joining GWMFA, Deepak held Practice Manager Position for Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery at Lifebridge Health-Sinai hospital. Prior to that Deepak was part of GW Hospital for 9 years.

Deepak received his Master's Degree in Healthcare Administration from Washington Adventist University and is a certified Six Sigma Green Belt.

**Alison Conforto, PA-C** is a certified Physician Assistant at The GW Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) in the Department of Medicine, Division of Hematology/Oncology.

Alison received her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from The George Washington University in 2008, and started her career in the public health setting at the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) at the US Department of State. She later received her Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree from James Madison University in 2018, and is board certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and licensed to practice in the District of Columbia. Prior to joining MFA, Alison worked as a Physician Assistant at the Washington Hospital Center in the Department of Surgery, where she worked in The Burn Center. She is thrilled to have joined the breast oncology team.

## Never Too Young To Learn



### Chairman's Rounds

GWU Hospital Auditorium, 12:00

All Faculty Invited to Attend

**Mar 6**      **Drs. Arendt & Kochhar**

**Mar 13**     **Drs. Engskow & Doran**

**Mar 20**     **Drs. Khan & Imasuen**

**Rheumatology Academic Conference Schedule March 2020**

2300 M Street, N.W., Suite 3-332  
8AM—11:30 AM  
Questions: Call (202) 741-2488

Mar 5: 8:00 AM	Dr. Kathleen Brindle Radiology Rounds—GWUH Radiology
Mar 5: 9:30—11:30 AM	All faculty and Fellows Joint Injection Workshop (Class Ctr. 4th Floor, Ross Hall)
Mar 12: 8:30 AM	Dr. Gomberg-Maitland Pulmonary Hypertension
Mar 12: 9:30 AM	Drs. Chand and Almackenzie Clinical Case Conference and Sign-out
Mar 12:10:30 AM	Delphine McDowell and Gay Hyde Billing update—one on one with faculty
Mar 19: 8:30 AM	Dean Bass all faculty and Fellows Rheumatology Vision and Mission
Mar 19: 9:30 AM	Drs. Chand and Almackenzie Journal Club
Mar 19: 10:30 AM	Drs. Chand and Almackenzie Clinical Case Conference and Sign-out
Mar 19: 11:00 AM	Drs. Chand and Almackenzie ACGME Survey (TBC)
Mar 26: 8:00 AM	WHC Intracity Grand Rounds—WHC
Mar 26: 10:30 AM	Meeting with Ben Riestra, COO—MFA All faculty and Fellows Rheumatology Vision and Mission
Mar 26: 11:00 AM	Drs. Chand & Almackenzie Clinical Cases Conference and Sign-out

**Kudos, Congratulations, Commiserations & Goodbyes**

**Kudos....**GW student volunteer at DCVAMC 2020 Winterhaven—**Christian Hendrix**, GWU Class of 2020 volunteered her Saturday at the VA Medical Center on January 25th and trained to perform HIV screening, and helped in rapid oral testing for veterans.

**Kudos....Allen Solomon, MD**, for providing patient centered care. His patient said of him and his team *“He is a great guy. They all answered all of our questions and we never felt rushed. They did not run in and out. They were really attentive.”*

**Kudos.... Holly Dushkin, MD**, the ACGME Review Committee for Internal Medicine granted Continued Accreditation for the Hematology and Medical Oncology Program.

**Kudos....Chris Lawrence, MD**, from an appreciative patient.....*“really, really nice guy, very thoughtful”*.

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