Dear Colleagues,

I hope you are having a happy and healthy summer. This past academic year, the Public Health/Preventive Medicine Residency (PH/PMR) Program offered new learning opportunities to residents and faculty. We established a collaboration with the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. We conducted our first faculty development training with physicians from the New York City (NYC) Health Department’s Sexual Health Clinics. In this training, we reviewed residents’ and preceptors’ clinic roles and responsibilities and discussed issues in clinical practice, including burnout prevention and wellness. We also conducted our first area board review with preventive medicine residency programs in New York City and New Jersey.

Our residents continue to work on projects – many focused on health equity – and have begun sharing related conference presentations, reports and manuscripts.

This year, we plan to develop more partnerships with local institutions and create both online trainings for Health Department preceptors and a new health equity seminar series for residents.

We love to hear from our alumni and hope this newsletter helps you connect with past graduates and friends of the PH/PMR Program.

Please stay in touch!

Anita Geevarughese, M.D., MPH
On February 22, the residents and fellow attended the 2019 NYC Epidemiology Forum, where epidemiologists, students and researchers presented their work. The PH/PMR Program's Dr. Sarah Johnson presented her work with the Clinical Directors Network (see page 3).

On May 3, we hosted a Family-Feud-style board exam review session with the Mount Sinai and Rutgers preventive medicine residency programs. Mount Sinai’s Chief Resident, Dr. James Stewart and our Fellow in Public Health, Dr. Tina Singh organized the session and created review questions focused on the major categories tested on the board exam. Residents reviewed key material, networked and shared their knowledge.

On May 28, our Epi Grand Rounds showcased the work of the PH/PMR Program’s graduating residents and fellow. Presentations included Dr. Sarah Johnson’s “Using a Mixed Methods Approach to Examine Factors Associated with Persistence of Self-Reported Depressive Symptoms,” Dr. Sheri Kardooni’s “Patient Dumping in New York City” and Dr. Tina Singh’s “Applying a Population Health Management Approach to Asthma.”

Residency Advisory Committee

The Residency Advisory Committee (RAC) met on June 7 to discuss general residency activities, residents’ achievements and recent changes to residency program requirements. In the 2019-2020 academic year, the RAC will be restructured, with a new focus on resident career development and networking opportunities. Details will be shared in the coming months.
Dr. Johnson worked on several projects focused on behavioral health, health informatics and management of patients with complex health care needs. She completed her MPH at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Public Health with a capstone on a clinical algorithm to improve detection of deaths due to reportable conditions in NYC. Dr. Johnson’s other practicum work included the development of data-driven technical assistance for the Mental Health Service Corps, a City Health Information issue on disaster preparedness in primary care, and the use of natural language processing to identify factors associated with depression persistence. She will join Managed Care at IPRO as a Medical Director.

She will join the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer.

During her fellowship year, Dr. Singh worked closely with PH/PMR Program Director Dr. Anita Geevarughese to implement new Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education requirements for residency programs. Dr. Singh participated in two practicum projects with Ana Gallego, the Health Department’s Director of Policy and Health Systems Analysis. Dr. Singh’s primary project focused on integrated pest management (IPM) services for children on Medicaid with asthma. She investigated an affordable housing intervention for children hospitalized with asthma that could decrease costs for managed care organizations. The team received funding from an outside housing agency to pilot the intervention and is now in the planning and implementation phases. Dr. Singh recently interviewed hospitals to determine how to identify and link children and families to IPM services upon hospital discharge. She also helped plan the “Million Dollar Blocks” project to identify high health care utilization areas (i.e., city blocks). The project also explores how the Health Department and community-based organizations can partner with the health care sector to reduce utilization and improve health. Dr. Singh will join Johns Hopkins Healthcare, LCC, a health insurance organization, as a Medical Director.

Dr. Kardooni completed a practicum focused on hazard vulnerability analysis with the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response’s (OEPR) Bureau of Health Care System Readiness. She prepared the final report for the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response. With the Bureau of Vital Statistics, Dr. Kardooni revisited the idea of deaths of despair through an equity lens. She conducted research with the Office of the Commissioner on patient dumping and completed a health promotion guide for the NYC Department of Homeless Services. Dr. Kardooni also completed courses at CUNY and SAS Institute.
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: AMBER FEATHERSTONE

What brought you to the New York City Health Department?
I considered combined Family Practice (FP) and Preventive Medicine (PM) residencies because I had just discovered public health and knew it was where I might have the most impact. I decided to complete FP training first. During training in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, I had many friends working as social workers in refugee resettlement. I found this population to be amazing and resilient, so I looked for public health training in the area of refugee medicine. The Health Department’s PH/PMR works with Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health, which has a program focusing primarily on this group. I knew it was the program for me.

Can you tell us about some highlights during your residency? I was offered the opportunity to work in the tuberculosis (TB) and HIV bureaus, where I enjoyed writing the first draft of the Ryan White Care Coordination Protocol. The work entailed hours and hours of phone interviews, literature reviews, getting input from the people in the field, and managing many revisions to the document. After graduating, I worked as a consultant, presenting the work to providers in the community. It was wonderful to watch our work roll out into tangible services.

What new skills do you now have? I’ve learned what goes into data collection, analysis and presentation. I have the skills to generate a journal article with some level of confidence. I can create a hypothesis, design a study to address the question, gather and clean the data and come up with conclusions that will guide further programming.

What are you up to now? I’ve had some amazing opportunities to work with Doctors Without Borders in Uganda as a TB doctor for an HIV project, serving as the only provider of multidrug-resistant TB treatment in the country. In Malawi, I was an epidemiologist for one of the largest measles outbreaks in Africa. Then I worked as a medical provider and medical director for multiple community health centers in NYC, including as the founding medical director for two nonprofit/church-based start-up health centers. I moved with my husband and 2- and 4-year-old boys to Austin two years ago to be closer to family. I am now a family medicine provider for a local community health center, building my network locally to get more involved in public health and global health initiatives based in Austin.

Any wisdom for future PH/PMR residents? Graduate school is a place for networking, especially if you are looking for an academic position or a position in a specialized field. Networking with my classmates has been immensely valuable; I feel comfortable calling on them to edit my grant proposals and advise me on salary for a consulting position. But I do wish I had networked more with the professors who were experts in their fields; it may have helped me easily slip into a position in refugee health.

Final thoughts? Enjoy the vast opportunities available to you as a clinician and public health specialist. We are practically unrecognized as a medical specialty, but we have so much to offer in a variety of settings. Know that your preventive medicine and public health skills will not often be recognized, but they will always be appreciated!
**First-Year Resident Updates**

**Dr. Emma Ruderman** completed two courses – Epidemiology Methods and the next level of biostatistics – toward her MPH at CUNY this past spring. She continues to work on a suicidality project with the Bureau of Mental Health, using her new SPSS skills on a basic descriptive analysis of the physical comorbidities data. Dr. Ruderman is also working with the Health Access Equity Unit and the Bureau of Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health on a trauma-informed care and resilience project, which will adapt trainings created by San Francisco’s Trauma Transformed by adding a lens on equity and racial bias. Dr. Ruderman helped develop the program’s curriculum and evaluation metrics. In mid-May and June, the team began deploying the training in 28 hospital maternity departments in their quality improvement network. Dr. Ruderman plans to develop supplementary training tools over the summer. She has also been working with the Health + Hospitals’ (H+H) Office of Population Health on diabetes in primary care settings. Early last year, the team surveyed all 17 H+H primary care facilities and asked them to rate themselves on various office policies before and after improvements. They then determined if each facility’s survey responses and self-reported improvements correlated with their hemoglobin A1C metrics.

**Dr. Rebecca Florsheim** is continuing her MPH coursework at Johns Hopkins University, pursuing a certificate in epidemiology. She is also conducting a research project on the patterns of toxin accumulation in the body. Dr. Florsheim has engaged in four short-term residency projects. The first was with OEPR, assessing hospital fidelity to planned evacuation protocols; she used her new data visualization skills to create reports for all 55 partner hospitals. For her second project Dr. Florsheim is assisting with data analysis and writing an assessment of the health impact of Local Law 55. Local Law 55 requires landlords of multiple dwelling units to annually inspect apartments for mold and pests, request IPM if necessary, and determine if any children in the dwelling are reported to have minor to severe asthma. With the Cancer Prevention Program, Dr. Florsheim is examining why NYC colon cancer screening rates have levelled off in the past 15 years. The team is surveying 200 community leaders to assess their perceptions and knowledge of colon cancer screening. For her final short-term project, Dr. Florsheim is working with the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, Care and Treatment on the city’s response to the opioid epidemic. She is exploring how the bureau can enhance access to medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders and is determining if the NYC mobile health units offer medication-assisted therapy. Finally, Dr. Florsheim is identifying barriers to offering these services and lessons learned that can be incorporated into policy recommendations.

**Dr. Scherly Leon** completed her fall coursework at CUNY, including classes in biostatistics, epidemiology, and health policy and management. She has enjoyed serving as the 2018-2019 Resident Member of the Health Department’s Institutional Review Board, where she learned about current projects and how they are reviewed. She has an interest in informatics, is taking a SQL course online and is beginning work with the Primary Care Information Project. Dr. Leon is also further developing project opportunities with the Center for Health Equity. Her experience as a nephrologist inspired her primary research interests related to increasing awareness and prevention of chronic kidney disease.
MEET OUR NEW RESIDENTS

Dr. Valerie Vassor completed her BA at Swarthmore College, her MD and MA at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University, and her primary care residency at Yale University. She recently served as a Yale/Stanford Johnson & Johnson Global Health Scholar in Tugela Ferry, South Africa, where she provided hospital- and home-based clinical care. Dr. Vassor’s interests include health equity, violence prevention and reduction, nutrition and obesity medicine.

Dr. Irfan Azam completed his BS at Stony Brook University, his MD at State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate College of Medicine, and his internal medicine and primary care residencies at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. He was recently a clinical instructor at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. Dr. Azam is our American Cancer Society track resident and is open to the full scope of research opportunities at the agency.

Dr. Yetunde Abisola (Abi) Pinheiro completed her BS at New York University, her MD, PhD and MSH at Johns Hopkins University and her MPA at Columbia University. She trained in a family medicine residency program at the Institute for Family Health/Mount Sinai Hospital. Dr. Pinheiro also completed postdoctoral fellowships in Ghana and Namibia and has worked in the United States, Africa, Asia and Europe. Most recently, she was a public health research consultant focusing on gender and health. Her interests center on a multidisciplinary approach to improving the health of vulnerable populations.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
42-09 28th Street, CN-65
Long Island City, NY 11101-4132
healthrp@health.nyc.gov

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