



DoIM news

Information Exchange from the Division of Internal Medicine • Winter 2006

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD ANDERSON
CANCER CENTER
Making Cancer History®

Pulmonary Medicine on the Move

There has been a renaissance in the Department of Pulmonary Medicine! The last three years have brought a

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

flowering of new programs, building on traditional strengths in managing pulmonary disease and interventional

pulmonology. What is most remarkable is the rapid-fire sequence in which faculty members have innovatively created needed programs for our cancer patients.

The first program in this series was developed by Vickie Shannon, MD, Associate Professor, Pulmonary Medicine. Dr. Shannon recognized that cancer patients, already weakened by cancer, frequently have compromised pulmonary function. She developed a Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program that focuses on improving muscle strength and lung function. Dr. Shannon worked closely with Thoracic Surgery, Thoracic Medical Oncology, and Rehabilitation Services to develop a Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program that proactively addresses the need for improved lung function rather than responding to it after it becomes a problem. Some patients with compromised lung function are routinely enrolled in this program in anticipation of surgery. Others who have survived cancer therapy but are left with poor functional status are referred to the program and are restored to an improved quality of life.

A second program created to meet our patients' needs is the Pleural Diseases Program. Accumulation of fluid in the pleural space is a

common and difficult to treat problem associated with many types of cancer. Recognizing the complexity of this problem, Carlos Jimenez, MD, Assistant Professor, Pulmonary Medicine, worked with Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery and Interventional Radiology to develop a clinical and research program focused on the development of techniques to prevent the threat of pleural fluid accumulation. Perhaps the most interesting feature of this program is the goal of turning a frequently lethal cancer complication into a manageable problem. Dr. Jimenez and his collaborators have proposed clinical investigations that will examine, not only the best techniques for removal of fluid as well as strategies to prevent re-accumulation.

Fatigue is the most common complaint of cancer patients and lack of sleep is a contributing factor of this problem. Recognizing sleep problems as a significant issue for our patients, researchers and clinicians from across M. D. Anderson, including Pulmonary Medicine, General Internal Medicine, Symptom Research, Behavioral Science, Surgical Oncology, and Cancer Medicine, have come together to develop a multi-disciplinary Sleep Program. The Sleep Program is being led by Dave Balachandran, MD, Assistant Professor, Pulmonary Medicine, who received training in this field at Harvard and has established two other sleep programs in the Texas Medical Center. The Sleep Program will provide patient evaluation and treatment and will be a resource for research investigators.

Burton Dickey, MD, Clifton D. Howe Distinguished Professor and Chair, is thrilled by the creativity and energy of his faculty over these past three years and looks forward to seeing what additional innovative programs are developed to meet our patient needs. You can learn more about Pulmonary Medicine's activities by visiting their intranet site at <http://inside.mdanderson.org/departments/pulmonary>.

A Few Words from Dr. Gagel



We all share the common goal of improving patient care. One successful strategy is the

development of metrics that measure components of care delivery including quality, efficiency, and patient satisfaction. The Department of Pulmonary Medicine has committed itself to the development of a quality improvement process that will make it possible for them to track a broad spectrum of clinical quality indicators with the goal of improving patient care. We applaud their efforts and look forward to the improvements that will flow from this new initiative!

The Internal Medicine Center is in the midst of a second type of quality improvement process. Physicians, nurses and other employees of the Center recently joined together to streamline the process for patient care in the Center. Through a systematic process of identifying and streamlining each step in the process of moving a patient through the Center, they were successful in substantially reducing the amount of time required for patient management, and established a process for establishing future appointments before the patient left the Center. Our THANKS go out to the many employees who participated (with enthusiasm) in this process. Efforts such as this "LEAN" team process will be needed to keep our Centers running on time. Congratulations and keep up the great work!



DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

EC Lab Turnaround Project Team – January’s Patient Safety Champs



Employees from the Emergency Center and Laboratory Medicine joined forces in January 2004 to improve patient safety. Under the direction of Margaret Row, MD, and Benjamin Lichtiger, MD, the Emergency Center Lab Turnaround Project Team took on a process improvement initiative to change the way laboratory tests are ordered and processed for EC patients. The team developed symptom-based laboratory order sets tailored to a patient’s condition; the order sets are initiated immediately upon triage in the EC. The process change has allowed the EC to decrease the time between patient arrival and lab order by 50 percent (from 80 minutes to 41 minutes). Members of the EC Group include Margaret Row, MD, Cecil Brewer, Sally Fernandez, Debra Ruiz, Cecilia Verdejo, Danielle Butler, Jasmina Bozovic, Emmy Lou Sadsad, Sherry Preston, Veledia Nichols, Leslie McMahon, and Kathy VanFossen. Members of the Laboratory Medicine Group include Benjamin Lichtiger, MD, Mike Andrade, David Bevins, Ron Phipps, Catherine Price, Sandra Thompson, and Estelle Woodard.

Heart Awareness Month

February was Heart Awareness Month and the Department of Cardiology celebrated it in a big way by hosting a variety of educational events throughout M. D. Anderson. Facilitated by Anecita Fadol, RN, MSN, FNP and Jean-Bernard Durand, MD, and assisted by Kimberly Roe, a collaborative effort of weekly talks was presented by a multidisciplinary team of clinical staff and social workers. While most of the presentations provided sound scientific information for healthcare professionals to improve patient care, other talks addressed personal heart disease prevention. Presenters from the Department of Cardiology included: Courtney Bickford, PharmD, Chris Champion, MD, Jean-Bernard Durand, MD, Anecita Fadol, RN, MSN, FNP, Daniel Lenihan, MD, Joseph Swafford, MD, Myrshia Woods, PA, and S. Wamique Yusuf, MD.

Skin Cancer Screening

The Department of Dermatology will be participating in the Houston Dermatological Society Skin Cancer Screening scheduled for Saturday, May 13, 2006, from 10am - 1pm. Screening will take place at the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center Cancer Prevention Building and at other various locations in Houston and the surrounding community. For additional information, please contact the Department of Dermatology at (713) 745-1113.

Oncologic Emergencies Conference

The Oncologic Emergencies Conference (chaired by Ellen Manzullo MD, FACP and hosted by the Department of General Internal Medicine, AT, and EC) took place on Jan 20-21, 2006 at M. D. Anderson. The conference was attended by over 250 physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers in the fields of Oncology, Internal Medicine, and Emergency Medicine. Overall, the conference was rated very highly by those who attended and definite interest was expressed for future conferences.



Conference Committee: Jennifer Anderson, Ellen Manzullo, MD, Nerissa Maldonado, Rosalie Valdres, Menchu Mante, Debbie James, Sally Fernandez, Vi Ho, Leslie McMahon, Anna Giocondo, and Ashley Watson

There are over ten million cancer survivors in the United States. Most cancer survivor’s health needs are ongoing, yet remain unmet by a healthcare system that is not prepared or sure of how to help with the side effects of cancer treatment, some of which may not occur until decades later. A **Survivorship Task Force**, commissioned by M. D. Anderson Senior Management, has been given the challenge of identifying the needs and problems faced by this growing population and developing a plan that will encompass the complex issues cancer survivors face from the time of their diagnosis throughout their lifespan. This plan will include M. D. Anderson’s goals for the next 10 years with respect to the care of cancer survivors, as well as milestones to evaluate progress, as we transition into the future. The Survivorship Task Force is chaired by Rena Sellin, MD and is comprised of Robert Gagel, MD, Rosemary Scarfia, Therese Bevers, MD, Charles Cleeland, PhD, Joyce Dains, DrPH, RN, FNP, Carmen Escalante, MD, Lewis Foxhall, MD, Sergio Giralt, MD, Karin Hahn, MD, Martin Raber, MD, Christopher McKee, and Lynda Nguyen.

PEOPLE SPOTLIGHT



Belinda Weatherly, RN, Clinical Administrative Director, Cardiopulmonary Center and Internal Medicine Centers, retired this past January after 30 years of service. Belinda exemplified the very best of M.D. Anderson! She is caring, respectful, and empathetic and managed the clinics efficiently. Belinda and her husband have spent the last several years planning and constructing a new home in the rolling hills northwest of Houston. We hope they will have many happy years in their new home. We want to take this opportunity to thank Belinda for her excellent leadership and also to let her know that she will be missed!

Also recently retired are Cora Roasa, Cardiopulmonary Center (21 years) and Linda McCrory, RN, BSN, Symptom Research (17 years).

Jessica Hwang, MD, MPH, GIM, AT and EC was promoted to tenure-track Assistant Professor in September 2005.



Congratulations to Regina Sherrod, Senior Administrative Assistant, GI Medicine and Nutrition, who earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Education from the University of Houston in December. Regina participated in the Discover U program that M. D. Anderson offers in collaboration with the University of Houston.

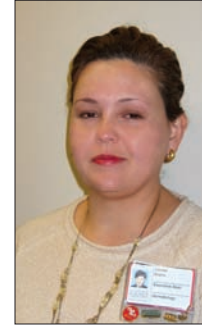
Daniel Babu, Research Assistant I, Dermatology, was accepted to UT Southwestern Medical School and Janice John, Data Entry Operator, National Alopecia Areata Registry, Dermatology, was accepted to Texas A&M System Health Science Center College of Medicine.



Passion Sparrow, Clinical Research Program Coordinator, GI Medicine and Nutrition, recently passed her qualifying examination and is now a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Epidemiology and Disease Control at the UT School of Public Health. Congratulations, Passion!

I am M. D. Anderson-Caring

How does your Department or Center exemplify M. D. Anderson's Core Value of "Caring"?



Louise Dupre, Executive Assistant, Dermatology

My department exemplifies M. D. Anderson's Core Value of Caring by going the extra mile to ensure patient, customer, and coworker needs are met. This may mean taking the time needed to clarify directions or personally escorting a patient and their family, or researching the status and aiding with a pending payment for a small business owner, or taking the time to mentor, support and encourage those we work with and manage.



Ruth Reitzel, Research Assistant I, Department of Infectious Diseases, Infection Control and Employee Health

I work as a team with the other lab personnel to enhance ID research in order to better the well-being of our patients.



The DoIM Holiday Party was great fun!

This year's party will be on Sunday, December 3, 4:30-7:30pm (location to be announced). Mark your calendars!

RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



Ann O'Mara, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N.
Community Oncology and Prevention
Trials Research Group, NCI, NIH
Guest Speaker for the 2006 DoIM Research Retreat

The **2006 Division of Internal Medicine Research Retreat** will be held on May 2, 2006, from 11:45 am - 6:00 pm (includes lunch and a post-Retreat reception) in the CPB 8th floor conference area. The Retreat will highlight the research efforts of the Division's faculty, fellows, and research staff through oral and poster presentations and interactive workshops. Ann O'Mara, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N. (Community Oncology and Prevention Trials Research Group, NCI, NIH) is the guest speaker and will discuss NIH funding mechanisms relevant to the internal medicine specialties and tips for successful submissions. Preferred abstracts will be selected for poster and oral presentations as well as for entry in an Abstract Competition for the Division's fellows and junior faculty. The Competition will be judged by M. D. Anderson's senior leadership and culminate in the awarding of two \$5,000 prizes for outstanding clinical/translational and basic research. Further information and the "Call for Abstracts" are posted on the Web sites of the Division of Internal Medicine and CME/Conference Services. The deadline for on-line submission of DoIM abstracts is March 15, 2006.



Roberto Adachi, MD, Pulmonary Medicine, was recently awarded a \$15,000 grant by the Mike Hogg Fund in support of his project titled "Role of allergic inflammation in post-stem cell transplantation constrictive bronchiolitis."

Transplantation of hematopoietic stem cells is widely used in cancer therapy, and as a result, there are an increasing number of patients suffering from chronic graft-versus-host disease (cGVHD). One of the worst manifestations of cGVHD is post-transplantation constrictive bronchiolitis, a progressive, debilitating, and sometimes lethal disease

that affects between 10-20% of transplant survivors with enormous consequences to their quality of life. Dr. Adachi's project proposes to study the role of airway allergic inflammation in the progression of PTCH using the powerful murine models of allergic asthma and cGVHD and a variety of genetically modified mice.



Shumei Song, MD, PhD, Instructor, GI Medicine and Nutrition, was awarded a 2006 AGA Research Scholar Award by the American Gastroenterology Association. Dr. Song received the three year \$65,000 per year award for her project entitled, "The Role of Bile Acides and Benzo(a)pyrene Diol Epoxide in the Development of Esophageal Adenocarcinoma."



Congratulations to **Lori Williams, RN, DSN, OCN, AOCN, Symptom Research,** who was recently awarded a 2005 Oncology Nursing Society Foundation Symptom Management Research Grant for her research proposal, "Development of a Chronic Graft Versus Host Disease (cGVHD) Symptom Inventory." The 2-year, \$50,000 award is funded by the ONS Foundation through an unrestricted grant from Bristol-Myers Squibb

Oncology. Dr. Williams will collaborate with Charles Cleeland, PhD and Tito Mendoza, PhD, Department of Symptom Research and Dan Couriel, MD and Joyce Neumann, RN, Department of Blood & Marrow Transplantation to design a cGVHD module for the M. D. Anderson Symptom Inventory, a multiple-symptom assessment tool validated for use with cancer patients.

Division of Internal Medicine Welcomes...

Cardiology

Jianhu Zhang, Research Assistant II
Pedro Prado, Operations Manager
Suzie Cao, Research Technician III

Endocrine, Neoplasia and HD

Amber Owens, Administrative Assistant
Suzie Bradie-Muller, RN
Senior Research Nurse
Rini Shung, Physician Assistant

GI Medicine and Nutrition

Jerry Sun, Physician Assistant

General Internal Medicine, AT and EC

Carol Murphy, Administrative Assistant

Infectious Diseases, Infection Control and Employee Health

Jennifer Nguyen, Financial Analyst
Lisa Hafemeister,
Medicine Department Administrator
Roy Borchardt, Physician Assistant

Pulmonary Medicine

Sharon Schaeffer, RN, Research Nurse

Cardiopulmonary Center

Betty Arnold, RN, Outpatient Clinical Nurse
Leslie Harper, RN, Outpatient Clinical Nurse
Louretta Burrell, Patient Service Coordinator

Emergency Center

Guillermo Macias, RN, Clinical Nurse
Laura McBee, RN, Clinical Nurse
Melissa Salazar, RN, Clinical Nurse

Division of DoIM Administrative Office

Sabrina Cornett-Henry
Senior Secretary

Promotions

Betty Spears
Senior Administrative Assistant
Dermatology

Victor Castaneda

Unit Services Coordinator
Emergency Center

INFECTIONS IN CANCER SYMPOSIUM: An Astonishing Achievement

On November 10-11, 2005, the Department of Infectious Diseases, Infection Control and Employee Health hosted with great success the first Infections in Cancer Symposium. The symposium was organized by Issam I. Raad, MD, along with the participation of the entire department. There were over 30 expert speakers from 40 of the leading medical and cancer centers, and more than 200 people were in attendance.

The symposium provided healthcare professionals from various specialties a better understanding of novel methods regarding the early diagnosis, effective prevention, and management of infections in the immunocompromised cancer population. Leading experts highlighted innovative techniques and technologies used for the diagnosis and treatment of fungal, viral, and resistant bacterial infections. The role of intravascular devices and gastrointestinal flora in the development of bloodstream infections and the current improvements in immune enhancement were reviewed extensively. Gerald P. Bodey, MD, and Donald Armstrong, MD, clinician scientists who are considered to be the “fathers” of infections in cancer, led the “Meet the Expert Sessions” on the historical background of infections in cancer.

Forty-five outstanding research studies (basic, translational and clinical research, including infection control) were presented as posters, after selection by Amar Safdar, MD, Committee Chair, and a group of leading professors including Drs. Bodey and Armstrong. The four best posters in translational and clinical research were selected for awards in excellence in research in immunocompromised cancer patients.

The poster entitled “Influenza infections in adult patients with leukemia: The impact of neuraminidase inhibitors,” presented by Harry A. Torres, MD, Clinical Infectious Diseases Fellow, under the mentorship of Roy F. Chemaly, MD, received one of these awards.

This outstanding conference was the first symposium organized by the “Infections in Cancer” group. The “Infections in Cancer” group, established and currently led by Dr. Raad, is a consortium of infec-

tious diseases and infection control experts from leading U.S. cancer centers (M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and John Hopkins among others), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and was recognized in 2004 as a special group by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA).

The consortium’s mission is to establish multi-institutional programs and close collaborations in the fields of basic, translational, and clinical research, as well as educational programs devoted to the exchange and dissemination of knowledge. Memorial Sloan

Kettering Cancer Center was selected as the site for the 2007 Biannual Infections in Cancer Symposium.



Speakers and Steering Committee Members



M. D. Anderson Grand Rounds



John Mendelsohn, MD gives award to Harry A. Torres, MD and his mentor, Roy F. Chemaly, MD.

DoIM Diversity Awareness Project Update

A big thank you to all DoIM faculty and staff for participating in last year's Diversity Awareness Project, which is a multi-year project. Because of your participation, we achieved our FY05 Anderson!

The Division's FY06 Anderson Award also will be based on our Diversity Awareness Project. We will achieve this year's Anderson Award if "at least 75% of all faculty and staff participate in at least one of this year's diversity events, which include participating in a focus group (to further clarify and address issues identified in the needs assessment survey), completing a M. D. Anderson diversity education course or attending our Diversity Celebration."

FOCUS GROUPS

Based on last year's needs assessment survey, we will be conducting focus groups with DoIM management, faculty and classified staff on the following topics: culture and ethnicity, work/life balance, managing diversity and interpersonal treatment. Each focus group will consist of approximately 10 - 20 people from across the DoIM and will last 1.5 hours.

The focus groups will take place this Spring/Summer. Everyone in the DoIM will be invited to attend one focus group. If you are invited to attend a focus group, please do attend. We need your input and feedback to help us focus our diversity awareness activities.

EDUCATION

The second goal for 2006 is to encourage all DoIM faculty and staff to take part in diversity education. DoIM managers and supervisors will be attending a special "Managing Across Difference" course (two separate sessions will be offered April 19 and May 17). For faculty, Harry Gibbs, MD, VP Institutional Diversity, will give a special diversity presentation during the DoIM CME Monday, May 8 at 8am. Classified staff can sign-up for a diversity course offered through M. D. Anderson (Through the Lens of Diversity, Older Adult Sensitivity or Healing and Dying Across Cultures). New sessions start this spring. For more information on Diversity classes, visit the Education Center, the organization's new institution-wide online training information and registration system.



CELEBRATION

During last year's Employee Recognition Week, we had a lot of fun at our "Celebrating Our Diversity" event. This year's event will take place on Tuesday, May 23, from 11-3pm. Please mark your calendars!

If you have any questions regarding this year's Diversity Awareness Project, please talk to your supervisor or one of the Diversity Awareness Project Subcommittee Members (Lisa Welsh-Skiffington, Rosemary Scarfia, Roberto Reyes, Wamique Yusuf, MD, Christine Reid, Myrshia Woods, Kirby Bonier, Trang Pham-Williams, Peter Lee, Philip Abraham, Elsa Acevedo, Bill Evans, Susan Chon, MD, Loy Deloney, Beth Johnson, Cecil Brewer, Amanda Peakes, Allison Blazek, Sandra Cunningham, Cathy Pugh, Velma Washington, Nydia A. Gonzalez, Diana Anderson, and Courtney Holladay).

DoIMnews

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