

medicine minute

April 15, 2025

kudos



ACHIEVEMENTS

Antimicrobial Stewardship Program Receives Center of Excellence Renewal

Clements University Hospital has again been designated an Antimicrobial Center of Excellence by the Infectious Diseases Society of America, recognizing its continuing commitment to reducing infections caused by antimicrobial resistance.

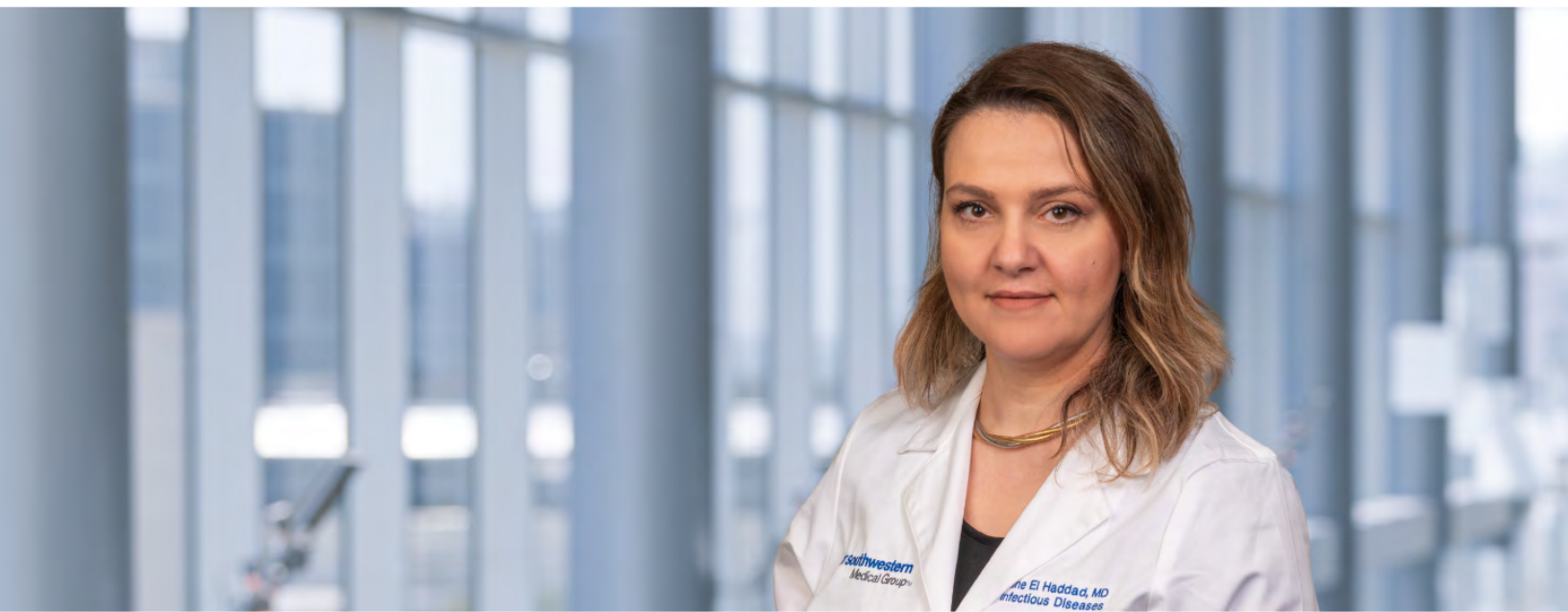
"It is truly an honor for our stewardship program to be recognized as a Center of Excellence by the IDSA, and it reflects the amazing team that we have," says **James "Brad" Cutrell, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine. "This renewal effort was led by our Associate Director Dr. Joslyn Strebe with help from the rest of our team, including **Drs. Esther Golnabi** and **Mark Harrington**, and our nurse coordinator, **Tyla Carettini**."

Antimicrobial resistance remains an urgent global public health threat. In the U.S., more than 2.8 million antibiotic resistant infections occur every year, resulting in over 35,000 deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While antimicrobial resistance can occur naturally, the significant rise in resistance over recent decades is largely due to the improper use of antibiotics.

Recent data highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation, leading to increased antibiotic use and a surge in resistant infections. For instance, hospital-onset infections from six bacterial pathogens increased by 20 percent during the pandemic. Additionally, the number of clinical cases of *Candida auris*, a yeast often resistant to antifungal medications, increased nearly five-fold from 2019 to 2022.

Efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance include improving antibiotic use, enhancing infection prevention, and promoting good hygiene practices

According to the IDSA, its core criteria for the Center of Excellence program place emphasis on an institution's ability to implement stewardship protocols by integrating best practices to slow the emergence of resistance, optimize the treatment of infections, reduce adverse events associated with antibiotic use, and address other challenging areas related to antimicrobial stewardship. A panel of IDSA member experts in antimicrobial stewardship, including infectious disease-trained physicians and pharmacists, evaluate Center of Excellence applications against high-level criteria established by the IDSA leadership for determining merit. ■



INFLUENCERS

El Haddad Selected for NCCN Cancer-Related Infections Guidelines Group

Hanine El Haddad, M.D., an Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine and Medical Director of Infection Prevention, has been selected by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) to serve on its Prevention and Treatment of Cancer-Related Infections guidelines group.

The NCCN provides prevention and treatment of cancer-related infections guidelines, which offer evidence-based recommendations to manage infections in patients with cancer. These guidelines are part of the NCCN's supportive care resources and are periodically updated to reflect advancements in medical knowledge. They cover various aspects of infection management, including strategies for prevention, identification, and treatment of infections that may occur during cancer treatment. Additionally, the guidelines address the management of concurrent conditions, such as the co-occurrence of COVID-19 and cancer in patients. Healthcare professionals utilize these guidelines to enhance patient care and outcomes by mitigating infection risks associated with cancer therapies.

Dr. El Haddad holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Lebanese University in Fanar, Lebanon, where she also earned her medical degree. She completed internal medicine residency training at Staten Island University Hospital and then received advanced training in infectious diseases through a joint fellowship program at Baylor College of Medicine and MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Dr. El Haddad joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2023. ■



SERVICE

Garry Chosen for Sarnoff Foundation's Scientific Committee

Glynnis Garry, M.D., an Assistant Professor in the Division of Cardiology, has been appointed to the Sarnoff Cardiovascular Research Foundation's Board of Directors Scientific Committee.

Dr. Garry holds a bachelor's degree in pre-medicine and American studies from the University of Notre Dame. She earned her medical degree at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she was awarded a Sarnoff Fellowship. This enabled her to conduct research under **Eric Olson, Ph.D.**, Professor and founding Chair of UT Southwestern's Department of Molecular Biology. In the Olson lab, she investigated the protein PHF7, an epigenetic factor, and its ability to reprogram adult cardiac fibroblasts into myocytes, an important step toward remuscularizing injured hearts.

As a member of the Sarnoff Foundation's Scientific Committee, Dr. Garry will help cultivate medical students into future leaders in cardiovascular innovation, research, and medicine by offering similar mentored research experiences.



CLINICAL CARE

Tavakkoli Named Director of Advanced Endoscopy Program

Anna Tavakkoli, M.D., M.Sc., an Associate Professor in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, has been named Medical Director of the Advanced Endoscopy Program.

Originally from Lansing, Michigan, Dr. Tavakkoli holds a bachelor's degree in cellular and molecular biology from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She earned her medical degree at the University of Florida in Gainesville and completed internal medicine residency training at Columbia University. She then returned to the University of Michigan for fellowship training in gastroenterology and advanced endoscopy, while also obtaining a master's degree in health and healthcare delivery.

Dr. Tavakkoli joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2018.



NOTEWORTHY PUBLICATIONS

JAMA CARDIOLOGY

Pandey, Colleagues Evaluate Metabolic Accelerator for Obesity-Related HFpEF

Results of [a recent clinical trial](#), reported by Ambarish Pandey, M.D., M.S.C.S., an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiology, and colleagues has highlighted the potential of HU6, a novel metabolic accelerator, in addressing obesity-related heart failure with preserved ejection fraction (HFpEF). The HuMAIN-HFpEF trial, a multicenter, double-blind, placebo-controlled study, evaluated the efficacy and safety of HU6 in reducing body weight and improving body composition among patients with chronic stable HFpEF and obesity.

The trial involved HU6 treatment for 19 weeks, starting at 150 milligrams per day and potentially increasing to 450 milligrams per day based on safety and tolerability. The primary outcome was a change in body weight.

Results showed that HU6 led to modest but statistically significant weight loss without significant changes in peak oxygen consumption (VO₂). Researchers suggest that larger, longer-term trials are needed to determine if HU6 can improve exercise function, quality of life, and cardiovascular outcomes in patients with obesity-related HFpEF.

THE LANCET

Kuppalli, Omer Discuss 'Urgent Need' for Measles Immunization

The global rise in measles cases highlights the urgency of international cooperation in disease prevention, write Saad Omer, M.B.B.S., Ph.D., M.P.H., Dean of the O'Donnell School of Public Health, and Krutika Kuppalli, M.D., an Associate Professor in the Division of Infectious Disease and Geographic Medicine. In a recent commentary, [published in *The Lancet*](#), they argue that robust surveillance and vaccination programs are key to controlling measles outbreaks.

"In 2019, both DR Congo and New York City experienced measles outbreaks," they write. "In DR Congo, delayed immunization and weak health-care infrastructure contributed to more than 6,000 deaths. In contrast, swift vaccination efforts in New York City contained the outbreak quickly from Sept. 30, 2018, to July 15, 2019, with no fatalities. As measles resurges globally, closing immunity gaps, securing vaccine funding, and strengthening health-care systems are imperative. Without sustained investment, outbreaks will escalate, endangering millions of people. Global solidarity is essential · policy makers, health-care professionals, and public health agencies must work together with communities to expand immunization and enhance engagement. Engaging communities is

essential for rebuilding trust and curbing hesitancy. The Texas outbreak is a stark reminder that proactive public health measures are not optional; they are imperative to prevent future crises.” ■

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY

Levine, Shafer Join Colleagues in Reviewing Cardiovascular Care of Pediatric Athletes

The cardiovascular care of pediatric athletes presents unique challenges, write **Benjamin Levine, M.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Cardiology and Director of the Institute for Exercise and Environmental Medicine at Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, **Keri Shafer, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiology and Director of the Adult Congenital Heart Disease Program, and colleagues in a [review published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*](#).

Many principles of adult sports cardiology do not fully apply to children, and the lack of evidence-based guidelines for pediatric athletes, coupled with their unique epidemiology, presentation, and progression of cardiovascular diseases, requiring evaluation and management tailored to this patient population.

Dr. Levine holds the Distinguished Professorship in Exercise Sciences at UT Southwestern and the S. Finley Ewing Chair for Wellness and the Harry S. Moss Heart Chair for Cardiovascular Research at Texas Health Presbyterian Dallas.

personnel updates



LEADERSHIP

Davis Promoted to Division Administrator for Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine

Stephanie Davis, M.B.A., has been appointed Division Operations Administrator for the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine, after progressing from Senior Administrative Assistant to Administrative Associate since 2016.

Ms. Davis holds a bachelor's degree in communication studies from Texas State University in San Marcos and a master's degree in health services management from DeVry University's Keller Graduate School of Management, which she received with distinction. She

Internal Medicine News Portal

in case you missed it

News and Digital Media Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [Scientists Think They Know What Animal Carries mPox. It's not a Monkey](#) (via *The Telegraph*, with Krutika Kuppalli, M.D.)
- [UT Southwestern Leaders Offer Inspiration in Celebration of Women's History Month](#) (via *CenterTimes Plus*, with Melanie Sulistio, M.D.)

this week



UAB's Anupam Agarwal to Discuss Acute Kidney Injury on April 18

Anupam Agarwal, M.D., Senior Vice President for Medicine and Dean of the Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, will present the [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds](#) lecture on **Friday, April 18, at 8 a.m. in D1.502**. His topic: the latest on acute kidney injury.

Dr. Agarwal received his medical degree with honors from Kasturba Medical College in Mangalore, India. He completed his residency at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh and then moved to the University of Minnesota, where he obtained fellowship training in nephrology. Following fellowship, he joined the Division of Nephrology at the University of Florida, rising from Instructor to Associate Professor, before relocating to the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Dr. Agarwal's research interest involves the molecular regulation of the heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1) gene in renal disease, atherosclerosis and mucosal inflammation. His laboratory has contributed significantly to our understanding of how stimuli such as heme, cytokines (IL-10 and TGF- β), nitric oxide and lipids induce the HO-1 gene, the product of which participates in the adaptive response to the injury. He also is investigating HO-1 gene delivery in animal models of injury and inflammation.



Hong to Lecture on the Health System as Research Lab

Arthur Hong, M.D., an Assistant Professor and Director of Research and Scholarship in the William T. and Gay F. Solomon Division of General Internal Medicine, will present the [Internal Medicine Research Conference](#) on **Friday, April 18, at noon in D1.502**. His topic: "The Health System as Research Lab."

Originally from Seoul, South Korea, Dr. Hong holds a bachelor's degree with honors in economics from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he also earned his medical degree. He completed internal medicine residency training at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and then obtained advanced training through a fellowship in general internal medicine at the Harvard Medical School Department of Population Medicine. He also holds a master's degree in public health from the Harvard School of Public Health.

Dr. Hong joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2017.

His research interests include understanding how patients and clinicians interact within the health care system – specifically including care delivery innovation, improving the value and quality of care, and evaluating health policy. ■



MOSS HEART CENTER SEMINAR

UCSD's Farah Sheikh to Highlight Research in Arrhythmogenic Cardiomyopathy

Farah Sheikh, Ph.D., a Professor of Medicine at the University of California San Diego, will present the [Moss Heart Center Seminar](#) on Friday, April 16, at noon in NA6.212. Her topic: "Landscape of Arrhythmogenic Cardiomyopathy: From Mechanism to New Therapeutic Interventions."

Dr. Sheikh holds a bachelor's degree in biology from McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada. She earned her doctoral degree in physiology from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg and completed postdoctoral fellowship training in molecular cardiology at the University of California San Diego.

Dr. Sheikh's research focuses on understanding the pathways driving biomechanical stress responses in cardiac muscle as they are major triggers for human genetic-based cardiac diseases. More recently, her investigations have centralized on complexes at the cardiac muscle cell-cell junction as genetic mutations/deficiencies in components associated with this complex drive, arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy (ARVC), that results in sudden death.

Through collaborations with prominent investigators in the bioengineering/nanoengineering departments, her lab has exploited *in vitro* model systems that have uncovered early mechanisms and unconventional roles for cell-cell junction proteins in cardiac muscle, conduction, maturity and human cardiac disease. In this manner, she is developing a comprehensive understanding of the complex role for the cell-cell junction network and its requirement for optimal cardiac function both *in vitro* and *in vivo*.

Other Noteworthy Lectures & Conferences This Week

- Wednesday, April 16, 8 a.m.: [Geriatrics Grand Rounds](#) with Drs. Debbie Freeland (Geriatric Medicine) and Zachary Freeland (Baylor Scott & White Hospital Dallas) – "Old Habits are Hard to Break: Opioid Use Disorder in Older Adults"

- **Wednesday, April 16, Noon:** [Excellence in Immunology Lecture](#) with Dr. Stacey Schultz-Cherry (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital) – “Influenza in Vulnerable Populations”
- **Wednesday, April 16, Noon:** [Health Disparities Research Lecture](#) with Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo (University of California San Francisco) – “The Role of Academic Publishing in Reducing Health Disparities”
- **Thursday, April 17, 9:30 a.m.:** [Women's Health Research Initiative Spring Forum](#) with Drs. Christina Herrera (Obstetrics & Gynecology), Katherine Wert (Ophthalmology), and Raksha Jain (Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine)
- **Thursday, April 17, Noon:** [Nephrology Works in Progress](#) with Joshua Miles and Dr. Lenette Lu (Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine)
- **Friday, April 18, 1 p.m.:** [Endocrine Grand Rounds](#) with Dr. Naveed Khanjee (Endocrinology) – “Chronic Kidney Disease in Diabetes: A Refresher”

upcoming events

Update in Internal Medicine



CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

Update in Internal Medicine to be Held on May 3

The annual Update in Internal Medicine CME Conference is scheduled for **Saturday, May 3, from 7:45 a.m. to 3 p.m., in the T. Boone Pickens Auditorium**. The course, under the direction of **Brad Cutrell, M.D.**, and **Vlad Zaha, M.D., Ph.D.**, will offer practical advice on issues identified as frequent items for consultation and second opinions, as well as advances in applying new scientific techniques and technologies in translational medicine.

The one-day live event will again be offered as a hybrid learning experience, with synchronous in-person and online presentations in addition to pre-recorded on-demand content. The presentations will be available for up to one year after the conference, totaling 15 units of CME credit and the opportunity to apply for MOC within the timing requirements of the ABIM rules.



Heart Failure Symposium

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

Heart Failure Symposium Scheduled for May 10

The Heart Failure Symposium is scheduled for **Saturday, May 10, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Clements University Hospital Education and Conference Center.**

Under the direction of **Maryjane Farr, M.D., M.Sc.**, Professor and Section Chief of Heart Failure, Mechanical Circulatory Support, and Heart Transplantation, and **Justin Grodin, M.D., M.P.H.**, Associate Professor and Medical Director of the Internal Medicine Clinical Trials Unit, the one-day event will offer state-of-the-art lectures and panel discussions on guideline-directed medical therapy, exercise testing, pulmonary hypertension in patients with heart failure, cardiogenic shock temporary and durable mechanical support device therapy, heart and multi-organ transplantation, cardiac amyloidosis, sarcoidosis, myocarditis, and adult congenital heart disease.

Attendees who successfully complete the course will receive 5 units of CME credit.

Dr. Farr holds the Jackie and Charles Solomon Distinguished Chair in Clinical Excellence.

To learn more or to register for the event, click [here](#).

Event Registration

Other Upcoming Events Featuring Internal Medicine Faculty

- **Friday, June 6:** [Faculty and APP Wellness Retreat](#) with Drs. Susan Matulevicius and Melanie Sulistio (Cardiology), and Dr Bonnie Prokesch (Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine)

Internal Medicine Events

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, April 22, 2025.**

Share feedback and news items with us at IMNews@UTSouthwestern.edu

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