

medicine minute

September 16, 2025

transitions



A Message from Dr. Burstein

As I step into the role of Interim Chair, I want to pause and express our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Thomas Wang for his remarkable leadership over the past five years. With his steady guidance, our Department has grown in strength, reputation, and impact – always grounded in the spirit of excellence and innovation that defines Internal Medicine at UT Southwestern. Although Dr. Wang is stepping down as Chair, I'm delighted that he will remain a valued member of our community through his appointment as Adjunct Professor. We look forward to welcoming him back to campus from time to time and continuing to learn from his wisdom and experience.

Looking ahead, I feel a genuine sense of excitement about the opportunities before us. The talent and dedication of our faculty, staff, trainees, and students make me confident that we will build on our strong foundation and reach new heights together. As this academic year unfolds, I know it will be filled with meaningful accomplishments and shared successes. I look forward to connecting with each of you, hearing your ideas, and working side by side as we carry our mission forward.

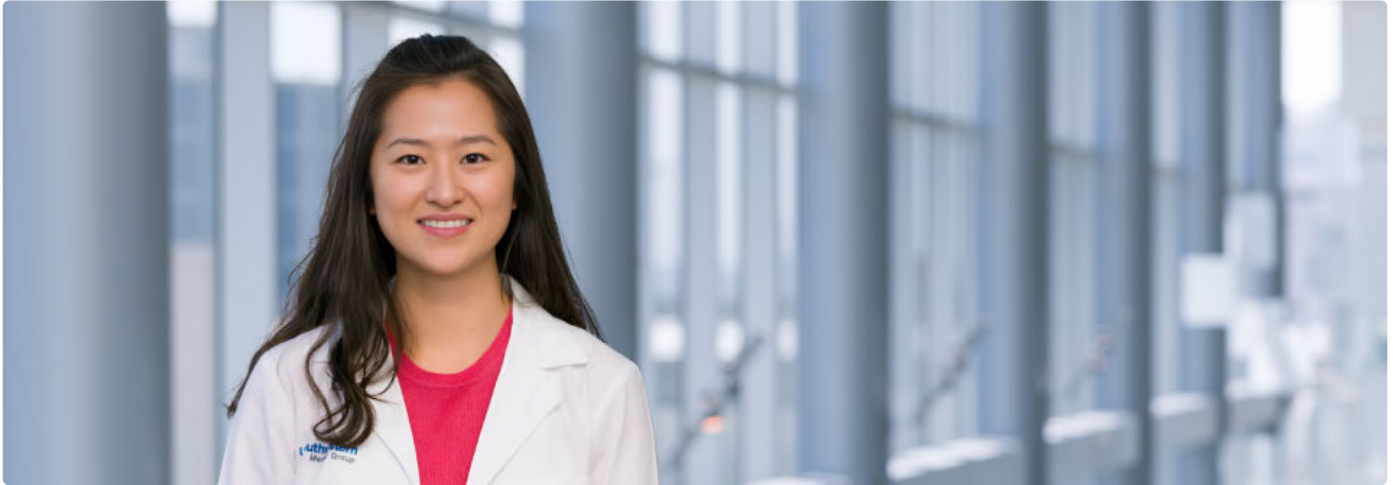
Sincerely,

Ezra Burstein, M.D., Ph.D.

Interim Chair, Department of Internal Medicine ■

Dr. Burstein holds the Berta M. and Dr. Cecil O. Patterson Chair in Gastroenterology.

announcements



Wang Named Section Chief of Palliative Care

Winnie Wang, M.D., an Associate Professor in the William T. and Gay F. Solomon Division of General Internal Medicine, has been appointed Section Chief of Palliative Care, effective Oct. 1. She will lead a team of more than 20 physicians and a multidisciplinary group that includes advanced practice providers, nurses, social workers, chaplains, child life specialists, and pharmacists. The section provides care across multiple sites, including William P. Clements University Hospital and Parkland Health, and serves a diverse and complex patient population.

In her new role, Dr. Wang will oversee the section's clinical programs, education, and research initiatives, while shaping a strategic vision to expand the reach of palliative care across UT Southwestern and its partner institutions. She brings a strong commitment to advancing the field both locally and nationally, having co-founded and chaired the Dallas–Fort Worth Palliative Medicine Interest Group. She is also an active member of professional organizations such as the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and the American College of Physicians, and has published extensively on integrating palliative care with stem cell transplantation.

Dr. Wang earned her bachelor's degree in neurobiology from Stanford University and her medical degree from UT Southwestern. She then completed internal medicine residency training at the University of California, San Diego, followed by fellowship training in hospice and palliative medicine at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. ■

research roundup



Pandey Secures \$2.2 M Grant to Study Polypill Strategy in ACS

Ambarish Pandey, M.D., an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiology, has been awarded a \$2.2 million R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health to lead a study investigating a polypill strategy for patients recovering from acute coronary syndromes (ACS).

ACS is typically caused by sudden blockage in the coronary artery due to a blood clot. Treatment often involves opening the artery and placing a stent, followed by a regimen of medications such as statins to lower cholesterol and antiplatelet therapy to prevent future clots.

Despite the proven effectiveness of these medications, adherence remains a significant challenge, especially in the crucial 12 months following a heart attack.

"Failure to consistently take these medications can lead to recurrent heart attacks or even death," Dr. Pandey says. "This issue is particularly pronounced among individuals from low-income backgrounds or racial or ethnic minorities, who face higher rates of non-adherence and adverse outcomes."

To address this, Dr. Pandey and his team are launching a multisite, randomized trial to evaluate whether a once-daily "polypill," which combines a high-intensity statin, aspirin, and a P2Y12 inhibitor, can improve medication adherence and reduce clinical risks. The study will not only assess the effectiveness of the polypill in preventing mortality, ischemic events, and bleeding over a 12-month period, but also explore its acceptability, cost-effectiveness, and implementation feasibility among patients and healthcare providers.

"This type 1 hybrid effectiveness-implementation trial is a novel approach to post-ACS care, aiming to simplify treatment regimens and enhance outcomes during a highly vulnerable period for patients," Dr. Pandey says. ■



UT Southwestern Awarded National SPORE Grant for Liver Cancer Research

UT Southwestern has been selected by the National Cancer Institute as a Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) for liver cancer, making it the university's third SPORE. Led by **Amit Singal, M.D., M.S.**, pictured left, and **Yujin Hoshida, M.D., Ph.D.**, both Professors in the Division of Digestive and Liver Diseases, the new liver cancer SPORE will receive \$12 million over five years to focus on hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), which makes up the majority of liver cancer cases nationwide and is especially prevalent in Texas.

"Our selection speaks to the quality of science and the potential for discovery and advances in clinical care at UT Southwestern," says Dr. Singal, Medical Director of the Liver Tumor Program and Chief of Hepatology at UTSW.

The grant will support three major research projects: testing a chemoprevention strategy using EGFR inhibitors in high-risk patients; exploring polyploidy induction to prevent HCC recurrence; and enhancing immunotherapy effectiveness through a combination with TERT inhibitors. Additional funding will support early-career researchers, high-risk exploratory studies, and core facilities for biospecimen management, data science, and administration.

"Our goal is to significantly improve liver cancer survival rates by refining the prevention and treatment of this disease through various new approaches," says Dr. Hoshida, Director of Liver Tumor Translational Research.

The SPORE initiative, funded by the National Cancer Institute, supports collaborative research aimed at translating scientific discoveries into clinical advances. UT Southwestern is currently home to two SPOREs, focused on kidney and lung cancers. **James Brugarolas, M.D., Ph.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology, leads the Kidney Cancer Program, and **John Minna, M.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology and Director of the Hamon Center for Therapeutic Oncology Research, leads the joint lung cancer program in collaboration with the MD Anderson Cancer Center. ■

Dr. Singal, a Dedman Family Scholar in Clinical Care, holds the Willis C. Maddrey, M.D. Distinguished Chair in Liver Disease.

Dr. Hoshida holds the H. Ray and Paula Calvert Chair in Gastroenterology Oncology in Honor of Udit Verma, M.D.

Dr. Brugarolas holds The Sherry Wigley Crow Cancer Research Endowed Chair in Honor of Robert Lewis Kirby, M.D.

Dr. Minna holds the Max L. Thomas Distinguished Chair in Molecular Pulmonary Oncology and the Sarah M. and Charles E. Seay Distinguished Chair in Cancer Research.



Xie Receives KCP Pilot Award

Bingqing Xie, Ph.D., an Assistant Professor in the Division of Cardiology and a member of the Kidney Cancer Program, has received a Career Enhancement Award from the Kidney Cancer Program SPORE Grant for her project: "Characterization of Intratumor Microbiome in Clear Cell Renal Cell Carcinoma."

In total, five grants were awarded for developmental research and career enhancement pilot projects. Other recipients are **Weibo Luo, Ph.D.**, an Associate Professor of Pathology, for his project, "Screen Novel Therapies Targeting Fumarate Hydratase Mutant Renal Cancer"; **Srinivas**

Malladi, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Pathology, for his project, "Patient Derived Organoid Models of metastatic Kidney Cancer"; Keri Drake, M.D., an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, for her project, "Uncovering Defects in Nephron Progenitor Differentiation Underlying Wilms Tumorigenesis"; and Erdal Toprak, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Pharmacology, for his project, "A Novel and Non-Invasive Platelet-Based Assay for Early Detection of Kidney Cancer." ■

Internal Medicine News Portal

in case you missed it

News and Digital Media Featuring Internal Medicine Colleagues

- [Ebola Outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo is a Warning](#) (via *Stat*, with Krutika Kuppalli, M.D.)
- [What is Colorectal Cancer? Why Regular Screening is Essential](#) (via *USA Today*, with Ernesto Llano, M.D.)
- [GERD Symptoms that Women Over 50 Need to Know](#) (via *Woman's World*, with Kerry Dunbar, M.D., Ph.D.)
- [Higher Dose of Semaglutide Increases Weight Loss, Metabolic Benefits](#) (via *UTSW Newsroom*, with Ildiko Lingvay, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.C.S.)

need to know

ABIM Launches New Pathway for Internal Medicine Certification Eligibility

In a move to broaden access to board certification, the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) has announced a new pilot pathway for Internal Medicine Certification eligibility. The new pathway is designed specifically for internationally trained physicians who have successfully completed an internal medicine subspecialty fellowship accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Eligible candidates include those recognized as "exceptionally qualified" or graduates of ACGME-International programs.

Physicians approved through this pathway will be eligible to register for the next Internal Medicine Certification Exam administration, with [registration opening on December 1](#). Full details—including application requirements and supporting documentation—are available on the [ABIM website](#). ■

Nominations Open for 2025 Physician Assistant of the Year

In observance of National Physician Assistant (PA) Week (Oct. 6-12), UT Southwestern is accepting nominations for the 2025 Physician Assistant of the Year Award through **Friday, Sept. 26**. This honor recognizes a PA who exemplifies the institution's core values of excellence, innovation, teamwork, and compassion. Nominations are welcome from colleagues, patients, administrators, and coworkers. PAs may also nominate themselves. Nominees should:

- Demonstrate excellence as a PA and serve as a role model for peers and the profession.
- Make significant contributions to improving care for individuals, families, or communities.
- Exhibit effective communication and deliver high-quality care.
- Apply best practices and evidence-based approaches.
- Be licensed and in good standing to practice in Texas.

[Nominate a Physician Assistant](#)

New Coaching Program Aims to Boost Career Clarity

If you are an early to mid-career faculty member looking to clarify your career direction or communicate your goals more effectively with mentors, a new small group coaching pilot may be just what you need.

Funded by the Thrive and Flourish Wellness Development Grant from the Office of Faculty Wellness, the “Coaching as Compass” program is designed to introduce Assistant and Associate Professors to foundational coaching concepts through a series of small group sessions. Participants will engage in three 1-hour coaching sessions, beginning in January, focused on reflection, goal-setting, and peer support. ■

Questions? Contact [Dr. Madeline Rodriguez](#).

[Participate in the Coaching as Compass Program](#)

Faculty, Trainees at Parkland Health Asked to Help Improve Clinical Trial Conversations

Glenda Delgado, M.D., an Assistant Professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology, is conducting a brief survey (less than 10 minutes) to better understand the perspectives of primary care providers when discussing cancer clinical trials with patients at Parkland Health. It seeks to identify key facilitators and barriers to clinical trial conversations and enrollment, with the goal of strengthening collaboration between primary care and oncology teams and improving patient access to trials.

The survey is intended for all faculty and trainees in primary care and medical oncology specialties who currently have clinic responsibilities at Parkland, whether in direct patient care or supervising trainees. ■

To participate in the survey, contact [Dr. Glenda Delgado](#).

Internal Medicine Service Request System Updated

The Internal Medicine Service Request (IMSR) system has been expanded to include a new request type: Facilities Requests. This addition allows users to submit requests related to furniture, signage inserts, lab or personnel moves, and minor renovations.

Additional information, including policies and procedures, can be found on the [Facilities Management page](#) on MEDpoint. ■

[Submit an IMSR Ticket](#)



Spotlight on Women in Medicine: Celebrating Leadership, Innovation, and Impact

As part of our annual observance of **Women in Medicine Month**, the SWAG (Supporting Women Achieving Greatness) Committee will host special lectures and discussions led by distinguished women colleagues:

- **Tuesday, Sept. 16, Noon:** [Lecture](#) by Dr. Indy Bhavsar-Burke (Digestive & Liver Diseases) – “Finding Your Voice: Practical Lessons in Clinician Educator Development”
- **Wednesday, Sept. 17, Noon:** [Discussion](#) by Drs. Hetal Patel (Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine) and Rachel Bonnema (General Internal Medicine) – “Does Patient Gender Change Patient Care?”
- **Thursday, Sept. 18, Noon:** [Lecture](#) by Dr. Ann Lutich (Obstetrics and Gynecology) – “Perimenopause and Menopause Management”
- **Friday, Sept. 19, 8 a.m.:** [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds](#) with Dr. Jada Bussey-Jones (Emory University) – “Promotion of Women in Academic Medicine: A Unique Pathway to Achieve Health Equity”



Emory's Jada Bussey-Jones to Discuss Promotion of Women in Academic Medicine on Sept. 19

Jada Bussey-Jones, M.D., a Professor of Medicine and Chief of General Medicine at Emory University, will deliver the [Internal Medicine Grand Rounds](#) lecture on **Friday, Sept. 19, at 8 a.m. in D1.502**. Her topic: "Promotion of Women in Academic Medicine: A Unique Pathway to Achieve Health Equity."

Dr. Bussey-Jones holds a bachelor's degree in biology and sociology from Emory University, where she also received her medical degree. She obtained clinical training at the University of Maryland before completing a research apprenticeship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where she worked on issues involving health care disparities. Additionally, she completed a fellowship in General Internal Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Her academic work centers on interventions to mitigate health disparities and understand and address social determinants of health. She founded the Social Medicine Work Group in the Division of General Internal Medicine. This group of faculty members devotes itself to educational projects, research, and community service-related issues in caring for underserved populations. She is an active member on several community boards. In addition to her local work, Dr. Bussey-Jones is involved with several regional and national organizations, including serving as Chair of the National Disparities Education Task Force for the Society of General Internal Medicine where she led work on an award-winning curriculum and pre-course on disparities education and a national effort to develop and implement a "train-the-trainer" disparities curriculum. ■



Hill to Discuss Meta-Inflammation in Heart Failure on Sept. 19

Joseph Hill, M.D., Ph.D., a Professor in the Division of Cardiology and Director of the Moss Heart Center, will present the [Internal Medicine Research Conference](#) on **Friday, Sept. 19, at noon in D1. 502**. His topic: "HFpEF: Malady, Model, Meta-Inflammatory Mechanisms."

Dr. Hill earned his medical and doctoral (pharmacology) degrees at Duke University, where he conducted his dissertation research in cardiac ion-channel biophysics. He then completed a five-year postdoctoral fellowship in molecular neurobiology at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, where he studied central and peripheral nicotinic receptors. He next completed an internal medicine residency, as well as a clinical cardiology fellowship, at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

His research focuses on molecular mechanisms of structural, functional, metabolic, and electrophysiological remodeling in cardiac hypertrophy and heart failure.

Dr. Hill joined the UT Southwestern faculty in 2002. ■

Dr. Hill holds the Frank M. Ryburn Jr. Chair in Heart Research and the James T. Willerson, M.D., Distinguished Chair in Cardiovascular Diseases.

Other Upcoming Lectures & Conferences of Note

- Wednesday, Sept. 17, 8 a.m.: [GI Grand Rounds](#) with Dr. Ashwin Rao (Baylor College of Medicine) – “Generative Artificial Intelligence in Gastroenterology Clinical Decision Support: Challenges and Opportunities”
- Wednesday, Sept. 17, 8 a.m.: [Geriatrics Grand Rounds](#) with Dr. George Taffet (Baylor College of Medicine) – “Two Thoughts in Geriatrics: Geroscience and Deprescribing”
- Thursday, Sept. 18, Noon: [Renal Grand Rounds](#) with Dr. Denis Wakeham (Nephrology) – “The Pulse of Exercise: A Complex Interplay Between Pressure, Flow and the Aorta”
- Thursday, Sept. 18, Noon: [Infectious Diseases Works in Progress](#) with Drs. Jeremy Chow and Nicole Naiman (Infectious Diseases & Geographic Medicine) – “New Innovative Programs from the Community Prevention & Intervention Unit: Doulas, an STI Mobile Unit, and Beyond” and “Examination of the Association of Liver Biomarkers with COVID-19 Outcome”
- Monday, Sept. 22, 4 p.m.: [Physiology Seminar](#) with Dr. Denise Marciano (Nephrology) – “Role of Claudin-10 in Kidney Function and Cellular Architecture”

on the horizon

Weight Wellness Day



Weight Wellness Day Scheduled for Sept. 27

The Nutrition and Obesity Research Center will host its annual [Weight Wellness Day](#) on Saturday, Sept. 27, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in D1.600.

The free community event will include presentations by **Jaclyn Albin, M.D.**, an Associate Professor in the Division of Combined Internal Medicine and Pediatrics; **Jaime Almandoz, M.D., M.B.A.**, a Professor in the Division of Endocrinology; **Melissa Shoemaker, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Endocrinology; **Tonia Vinton, M.D.**, an Assistant Professor in the Division of Endocrinology; and **Jeffrey Zigman, M.D., Ph.D.**, a Professor in the Division of Endocrinology.

Attendees will be able to speak informally with experts at information stations about recent advancements related to anti-obesity drugs, popular weight-loss strategies, lifestyle interventions, nutrition and exercise. An interactive cooking demonstration will include practical tips for choosing and preparing food to help maintain a healthy weight.

Lunch will be provided. ■

[Register for Weight Wellness Day](#)

upcoming events



American Heart Association®
Heart Walk

Heart & Vascular Team to Support AHA Heart Walk on Oct. 18

The American Heart Association (AHA) Heart Walk is scheduled for **Saturday, Oct. 18, at Levy Event Plaza**, 501 East Las Colinas Boulevard, in Irving. Members of the Heart & Vascular Service Line team invites all faculty, staff, and trainees to join them in supporting this important event.

A nationwide initiative, AHA Heart Walks raise awareness of cardiovascular disease, celebrate heart health, and honor those whose lives have been affected by heart-related conditions. By participating, the Heart & Vascular team seeks to fulfill its mission of improving cardiovascular health. ■

[Register to Join the Heart & Vascular Team](#)



NATIONAL KIDNEY
FOUNDATION®

KIDNEY
WALK

Team UTSW to Raise Awareness of Kidney Disease at Annual Event on Oct. 18

On **Saturday, Oct. 18**, Team UTSW will take part in the National Kidney Foundation's (NKF) Kidney Walk to raise awareness of and support for those affected by kidney disease.

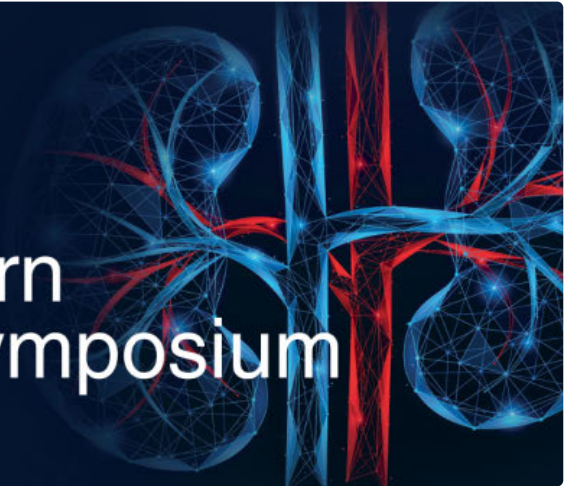
The Dallas-Fort Worth event, which starts at **8 a.m. at Lone Star Park**, serves as a meaningful opportunity to honor the lives of individuals who live with the daily challenges of kidney disease, as well as remember those who died from this chronic illness.

Team UTSW's participation affirms its commitment to advancing the NKF mission of ensuring that patients and families have access to essential resources and promotes innovation in transplantation to reduce wait times and improve outcomes.

The team invites you to join in this important effort. ■

[Join Team UTSW or Support a Team Member](#)

save the date



2025 UT Southwestern Kidney Transplant Symposium

Thursday, Nov. 6

Annual Symposium to Include Updates on Kidney Transplant Care

UT Southwestern will host its seventh annual Kidney Transplant Symposium on **Thursday, Nov. 6, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. via Zoom**. The virtual event, designed for nurses, social workers, and other care team members involved in pre- and post-transplant care, will bring together leading experts to share the latest insights and innovations in kidney transplantation, including emerging trends, surgical advancements, and educational resources that support patient outcomes. Attendees will benefit from the expertise of UT Southwestern's nationally recognized transplant team, whose work continues to shape the future of kidney care through leading research and clinical excellence. ■

[Register for the Kidney Transplant Symposium](#)



Jon Garinn
Medicine Minute Editor

Look for the next *Medicine Minute* on **Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2025.**

Want to access an item in a previous edition of the newsletter? [Check our *Medicine Minute* archive.](#)

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

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