

A CONFERENCE BY THE INTEGRATED
CENTER FOR GROUP MEDICAL VISITS



Together, We Heal!

**Resiliency & Adaptations of Group
Medical Visits in a Pandemic World**



VIRTUAL INAUGURAL CONFERENCE

September 17, 2021

icgmv.org/2021-event



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Welcome to ICGMV's Inaugural Group Medical Visit Conference!

In light of the changes brought to the medical field and beyond, we chose our inaugural theme to highlight the power of connection and the future for group visits.

Together, We Heal! sets out to explore the resiliency and adaptations of Group Medical Visits in a pandemic world. With over 25 presentations and over 40 presenters representing organizations throughout our global community, we are excited to bring you an incredible program covering just about all aspects of group medical visits!

To meet the diversity of topics being presented, the three overarching conference tracks: Implementation, Health Support, and Research, aim to provide valuable information for increasing access to integrative health care through the group medical visit model.

Many presentations will assist with virtual visit protocols, curriculum, and utilizing research to improve current methods. The program also provides multiple opportunities to connect with each other in our Town Halls and Summit Meetings.

We are thrilled that you are here and are able to join us as our diverse community comes together to share their experiences, practices, and perspectives! We are grateful to our sponsors and our circle of friends, who have allowed this event to be affordable and accessible to all.

Thank you for being a part of what we expect will be the first of many conferences and promoting the power of group visits!

Be Well,
The ICGMV Team

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE



Shephanie Cheng, MD
Conference Planning Committee



Fasih Hameed, MD
Conference Planning Committee



Paula Gardiner, MD, MPH
Conference Planning Committee



Ariana Thompson-Lastad, PhD
Conference Planning Committee



Jeffrey Geller, MD
*ICGMV President;
Conference Planning Activity Director*



Alexandra Wuopio, MPH
*ICGMV Conference Planner;
Training Coordinator*



Andrea Gordon, MD
Conference Planning Committee

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Glavielins Cruz, PsyD

Member at Large

Glavielins Cruz is a behavioral health clinician at Lynn Community Health Center (LCHC) and is part of their Behavior Health Response Team. As the lead clinician and site manager, she oversees and facilitates the effective integration of behavioral health services into the LCHC team and within the Lynn Public School community. Dr. Cruz performs comprehensive diagnostic evaluations and creates patient centered treatment plans, provides ongoing treatment, engages in case management and case consultation, and assesses patients' needs and progress within an integrated team as a clinician herself.



Matthew Daniel, JD

Board Secretary

Matt Daniel is the Corporate Senior Vice President, Legal Compliance & Deputy General Counsel at a NYSE-listed life science company, Charles River Laboratories International, Inc. Previously, Matt was a corporate attorney at Goodwin Procter LLP in Boston, and prior to that he practiced with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP in New York City. He holds a B.A. from Cornell University and a J.D. from New York University School of Law.



Scott Early, MD

Board Treasurer

Scott Early is a Co-Founder of On Belay Health Solutions as well as the Co-Founder and CEO of Kronos Health. He served for 17 years as the founding director the Lawrence Family Medicine Residency Program - a nationally recognized program for innovation - followed by 5 years as chief medical officer at a federally-funded community health center. In 2015, he founded Kronos Health, a Lawrence, Massachusetts-based medical practice delivering patient-centered care.



Paula Gardiner, MD, MPH

Board Vice-President

Dr. Gardiner is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. She is also the Associate Director of Research and the director of the Group Visits Program in the Center for Integrated Primary Care. Recently, she has joined the Center for Mindfulness and Compassion at Cambridge Health Alliance as their Director of Primary Care Implementation Research.



Jeffrey Geller, MD

Board President

Jeffrey Geller has been practicing and innovating health care in Lawrence, MA since 1996. He is particularly known for innovating group medical visits as a treatment for loneliness that could be used to provide healthcare to the poor. He has numerous awards and publications. He was running the largest group medical visit program in the country not only reducing loneliness but providing services to overcome barriers to health and to provide integrative medicine. He helped found and was president of the non-profit Integrative Medicine for the Underserved (IM4US).



Andrea Gordon, MD

Member at Large

Andrea Gordon is an Associate Professor of Family Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine, and serves as core faculty and Director of Integrative Medicine at the Tufts University Family Medicine Residency Program at Cambridge Health Alliance. In addition to seeing her own panel of patients, Dr. Gordon does Integrative Medicine consultations for the department and teaches residents and medical students during these visits.



PROGRAM OUTLINE

11:00 AM

WELCOME & OPENING CEREMONY

Who's in the room & why are we here?

11:20 AM

KEYNOTE

11:40 AM

SESSION 1

12:35 PM

SESSION 2

1:20 PM

GROUP VISIT & TOWN HALL

2:00 - 2:50 PM

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

2:55 PM

SESSION 3

3:40 PM

GROUP VISIT NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

3:55 PM

SESSION 4

4:45 PM

GMV SUMMIT MEETING

5:25 PM

CLOSING CEREMONY

TOGETHER, WE HEAL!

Resiliency & Adaptations of Group Medical Visits in a Pandemic World

Program Schedule | Friday, September 17, 2021

All Times in Eastern Daylight Time



11:00 AM WELCOME & OPENING CEREMONY
Who's in the room & why are we here?

11:20 AM KEYNOTE

The Power of Connection

Wayne B. Jonas, MD



This opening session exemplifies the primary focus of the ICGMV Inaugural Conference, highlighting the power of connection and how this relates to group medical visits!

Dr. Jonas is a practicing family physician, an expert in integrative health and health care delivery, and a widely published scientific investigator. Dr. Jonas is the Executive Director of Integrative Health Programs at Samuelli Foundation (samuelli.org), an effort supported by Henry and Susan Samuelli to increase awareness of and access to integrative health. Additionally, Dr. Jonas is a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the Medical Corps of the United States Army. From 2001-2016, he was President and Chief Executive Officer of the Samuelli Institute, a non-profit medical research organization supporting the scientific investigation of healing processes in the areas of stress, pain and resilience.

11:40 AM BREAKOUT SESSION 1

IMPLEMENTATION

Operationalizing and Scaling up Telehealth Group Medical Visits

Erica Mintzer, MD, Medical Director
Emily Benedetto, MSW, LCSW, Program Manager
Shante Cruz-Delaney, Primary Care Group Visit Coordinator

HEALTH SUPPORT

Cleveland Clinic Lifestyle Essentials: Lifestyle Medicine- Focused Shared Medical Appointments

Mladen Golubic, MD, PhD, FACLM

RESEARCH

Research on Group Visits: Methods, Questions, Contexts

Ariana Thompson-Lastad, PhD
Maria Chao, DrPH, MPA
Paula Gardiner, MD, MPH
Inger Burnett-Zeigler, PhD
A. Udaya Thomas, MSN, MPH, APRN, PhD-C
Ben Emmert-Aronson, PhD

12:35 PM BREAKOUT SESSION 2

Virtual Mind-Body Skill Groups for Pandemic Relief

Chanel Heermann, MD
Matt Erb, PT
Rita Anita Linger, PhD, CPC, CMBP

A Closer Look into Functioning for Life (R): A Functional Medicine-based Shared Medical Appointment Program to Address Chronic Conditions

Michelle Beidelschies, PhD

CenteringParenting Research Network: Advancing Child Health Equity Through Community Engagement and Research Collaboration

Clare Viglione, MPH, RD

Shared Medical Visits at an Integrative Medicine Practice in an Academic Center

Michelle Loy, MD, FAAP



1:20 PM **GROUP VISIT & TOWN HALL**
 Led by Paula Gardiner, MD

2:00 PM **VIRTUAL POSTER PRESENTATIONS**

IMPLEMENTATION

Adapting an Integrative Medical Group Visit Program for People with Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID

Jessica Barnhill, MD, MPH

HEALTH SUPPORT

Using Virtual Group Visits to Integrate Nutrition and Culinary Medicine into Clinical Practice

Helen Delichatsios, MD, SM
 Olivia Weinstein, MS, RD, LDN

RESEARCH

Ana and Fay's Journey to Optimal Wellness: A Story Illustration of a Retrospective Quantitative Study

A. Udaya Thomas, MSN, MPH, APRN, PhD-C

2:10 PM

The Role of a Medical Student Intern in Integrative Medical Group Visits for Chronic Pain Patients

Bethany Kavalakatt, MS2

Lessons Learned from Adapting Prevention and Wellness Group Medical Visits to the Virtual World

Ted Wissink, MD
 Katie Sharpe, MD
 Amy Pearl, RN

Naturopathic Medicine for Endometriosis (NatME) Program: Encompassing Clinical Care, Education and Peer Support. A Pilot Feasibility Study

Sophia Gerontakos, ND, BHSc (Hons), PhD.Candidate

2:20 PM

Transitioning to a Virtual Teaching Kitchen Within the Shared Medical Appointment Model Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Theresa A Stone, MD, FACP
 Eleanor Belilos, MS4
 Sarah Marie Schumacher, MS4
 Varsha Kottamasu, MHA

Interprofessional Group Visits for Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder: Caring for a Vulnerable Population During the Pandemic

Carol Squires, LCSW, LADC

Predictors of Obesity in Patients Enrolled in a Lifestyle Medicine Program with Virtual Shared Medical Appointments and the Role of Adverse Childhood Experiences

Mia Casciani, BA, MPH Candidate

2:30 PM

Poster Q&A Session

Poster Q&A Session

Bringing Telehealth Group Medical Visits to Cancer Care: Interim Analysis of an Innovative Collaboration Between Palliative Care and Psycho-oncology

Neha Goyal, PhD
 Stephanie Cheng, MD

2:40 PM

BREAK

Poster Q&A Session

2:55 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 3

IMPLEMENTATION

Main Room

A Novel Transition: Lessons Learned During the Rapid Implementation and Evolution of Telehealth-Group Based Opioid Treatment (t-GBOT) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Randi Sokol, MD, MPH, MMedEd

HEALTH SUPPORT

Love as the Central Therapeutic Element for Personal Transformation in a Lifestyle Group Visit

Scarlet Soriano, MD, ABOIM

IMPLEMENTATION

Track 3 Room

FUN, FULL, and EASY: Leveraging Clinic-Community Integration to Create Thriving GMV's

Elizabeth Markle, PhD
Ben Emmert-Aronson, PhD

3:40 PM

GROUP VISIT NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

Led by Jeffrey Geller, MD

3:55 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 4

IMPLEMENTATION

Main Room

MiMedico Group Visits: Planning and Implementation of Group Visits Among Latinx Adolescents

Kryztal Pena, Group Visit Coordinator

Adapting Diabetes Group Medical Visits in an Urban Family Medicine Residency Program Serving Low-Income Primary Care Patients During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Bonnie Kwok, MD, MPH

HEALTH SUPPORT

The Supervised Lifestyle Integrative Medicine (SLIM) Program: Implementing an Innovative Service for Patients with Obesity

Deepa Sannidhi, MD

Using Cooking Matters Programming as a Group Visit to Improve Health Outcomes in a Primary Care Setting

Rachel Moyer, MS4
Holly Russell, MD

IMPLEMENTATION

Track 3 Room

Virtual Group Visits Sourced from a National Network of Integrative Providers

Shilpa Saxena, MD, IFMCP

4:45 PM

GROUP MEDICAL VISIT SUMMIT MEETING

Led by Jeffrey Geller, MD

5:25 PM

CLOSING CEREMONY

ICGMV's 2021 Inaugural Conference

IMPLEMENTATION TRACK



Operationalizing and Scaling up Telehealth Group Medical Visits

11:40 AM

Cambridge Health Alliance, a safety-net healthcare system north of Boston, was embarking on a process to standardize operations to support Primary Care Group Medical Visits (GMVs) when the COVID pandemic began. Instead of abandoning the effort, CHA rapidly pivoted to adapting existing GMVs to telehealth (T-GMVs). Once we identified the staffing resources and technological protocols necessary, we created a Business Plan to increase the number and type of T-GMVs offered. In this presentation, we will share lessons learned during our expansion process so that other institutions can rapidly expand their own T-GMV program on a population scale.



Erica Mintzer, MD

Dr. Mintzer is the Medical Director for Malden Family Medicine Center, which is Cambridge Health Alliance's largest primary care site and home of the Tufts Family Medicine Residency. Her clinical interests include Group Medical Visits and Perinatal Care. Dr. Mintzer received a BA in Latin American Literature from Dartmouth College and then worked for three years at Tellus Institute, an environmental consulting firm. She graduated from Yale School of Medicine and Boston University Family Medicine Residency. From 2012- 2019, she practiced primary care at Codman Square Health Center and labor and delivery at Boston Medical Center. At Codman, she was Perinatal Provider Champion and Family Medicine Department Director.



Emily Benedetto, MSW, LCSW

Emily Benedetto is Program Manager for the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) Primary Care Behavioral Health Integration program (PCBHI), where she has facilitated the implementation of the program across 13 primary care practices over seven years. This has included creating a shared governance structure, implementing evidence-based screening and follow-up workflows, co-creating an EMR and reporting infrastructure, coordinating training of primary care teams and integrating behavioral health staff, including supervising 16 behavioral care managers. With Emily's leadership, CHA Primary Care patients experienced a significant reduction in depression symptoms and primary care providers reported significant improvement in knowledge and confidence in mental health services. The PCBHI program is currently piloting new initiatives to include mental health integration for pediatric and adolescent patients and programming for safe opioid prescribing and chronic pain.



Shante Cruz- Delaney

Shante Cruz Delaney is Group Visit Coordinator for Cambridge Health Alliance Primary Care sites, where she has aided in the implementation of telehealth groups and the scaling up of group visits across primary care practices over the past year. This includes streamlining clinic workflows, co-collaboration of defining new positions, increasing access to primary care groups, coordinating and training of group champions, being actively involved with interdisciplinary projects, and championing innovative data collection. The Group Medical Visits program here at CHA is currently focused on increasing, improving, and pioneering group visits and models while sparking patient engagement and satisfaction.

ICGMV's 2021 Inaugural Conference

IMPLEMENTATION TRACK



Virtual Mind-Body Skill Groups for Pandemic Relief

12:35 PM

The pandemic required rapid shifts to virtual group services, but virtual groups already had a significant evidence base. The Center for Mind-Body Medicine (CMBM) successfully introduced online small-groups for mind-body skills training in 2019, laying the groundwork for a dramatic expansion of virtual services in 2020. This presentation will discuss the nature and impact of this program, and will review best practices and lessons learned for virtual groups, especially mind-body group models.



Chanel Heermann, MD

Chanel Heermann, MD, is an integrative psychiatrist who helps people create a holistic recovery plan for their unique emotional challenges using the best of conventional and alternative medicine. She proudly serves the veterans of Eastern Colorado at the Rocky Mountain VA Medical Center, as well as offering private integrative psychiatry services via telemedicine across Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Nebraska.



Matt Erb, PT

Matt Erb is a physiotherapist with Simons Physical Therapy, Tucson; Associate Clinical Director for The Center for Mind-Body Medicine, Washington DC; instructor for Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine, University of Arizona. Matt is also Founder of Embody Your Mind, focused on writing, teaching, and consulting in the areas of mind-body medicine and integrative health.



Rita Anita Linger, PhD, CPC, CMBP

Dr. Rita Anita Linger, is a Human Scientist, Psycho-physiologist, University Professor at UNC Integrative Medicine and Rehabilitation Dept. with a background and practice in, contemporary neuroscience, integrative medicine and health, MBSR, Mind-Body skills and organizational effectiveness for non profits and for profit institutions. She is the Executive Director of Recovery Communities of North Carolina, Raleigh, North Carolina (a statewide organizations that provides holistic direct recovery services and training programs/technical support, mentoring to those struggling with substance use disorders, trauma, chronic illness, mental illness, their families, allies and providers of services). Principal at Mindfully Human Center for Personal and Professional Development.

A Novel Transition: Lessons Learned During the Rapid Implementation and Evolution of Telehealth-Group Based Opioid Treatment (t-GBOT) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

2:55 PM

Opioid use disorder (OUD) has been deemed a public health emergency across the U.S. Before March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic began, our health system provided in-person group-based opioid treatment (GBOT) as the standard of care to treat OUD, coupling pharmacological treatment with peer support and behavioral counseling. When COVID emerged, we were forced to move all our patient care to individual telehealth visits. After adjusting to new technology and workflows, both providers and patients desired renewing the group-based care delivery model, through telehealth-GBOT (t-GBOT).



Randi Sokol, MD, MPH, MMedEd

Randi Sokol is Assistant Professor at the Tufts Family Medicine Residency Program where she is the Director of the Pain and Addiction curriculum and Director of Faculty Development. She also leads Cambridge Health Alliance's Pain and Addiction Support Services (PASS) Interdisciplinary consultation service and has created STFM's National Addiction Curriculum. Randi has special interest around group-based opioid treatment (GBOT) and has lead efforts to implement this model of treatment across her health system, coaches others sites around GBOT implementation, and has published widely on it. She also has particular interest around medical education, publishing peer-reviewed articles around information mastery and serving on STFM's Graduate Medical Education committee and her residency's clinical competency committee.

ICGMV's 2021 Inaugural Conference

IMPLEMENTATION TRACK



FUN, FULL, and EASY: Leveraging Clinic-Community Integration to Create Thriving GMV's

2:55 PM

Frequently, champions for group medical visits get tired and disheartened after trying to single-handedly create a GMV program. Lacking institutional support and community partners, designing and implementing GMV's can be a heavy lift! The good news is that you don't have to reinvent the wheel, and you don't have to do it alone!

This interactive session focuses on:

1. **FUN:** Interactive techniques for creating lively, vulnerable, and supportive group cultures in both virtual and in-person contexts.
2. **FULL:** How to design and run full, and thus financially sustainable, transdiagnostic groups.
3. **EASY:** How to engage community partners to make your GMV's fun, engaging, and easy.



Elizabeth Markle, PhD

Dr. Elizabeth Markle is a licensed psychologist, speaker, writer, researcher, and Professor of Community Mental Health at California Institute of Integral Studies. She is the co-founder and Executive Director of Open Source Wellness, an Oakland-based nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming health care and health outcomes via "Community As Medicine."



Benjamin Emmert-Aronson, PhD

Benjamin Emmert-Aronson, Ph.D., is a psychologist, researcher, and advocate. He earned his M.S. in Statistics from Columbia University and his Ph.D. in Psychology from Boston University. He co-founded Open Source Wellness, a non-profit nationally recognized for innovation in health.

MiMedico Group Visits: Planning and Implementation of Group Visits Among Latinx Adolescents

3:55 PM

Group visits historically have been used to manage chronic diseases and have been viewed as a promising approach, given that it allows providers to provide better quality care and quality of life. However, considering it is a newly established approach there are many existing gaps in the literature. Group visits lack minority participants and are rarely used to address other issues like depression or obesity. Group visits managed by MiMedico Clinic target Latinx patients in the area. We also have various group visits established at our clinic that address anxiety/depression, obesity among adolescents, and education on the COVID vaccine. This presentation will discuss the planning and implementation of the Group Visits managed by MiMedico Clinic.



Kryztal Pena

Kryztal Pena currently works at MiMedico Clinic, located in Chicago, as a Group Visit Coordinator and Medical Assistant. She is also a recent graduate of the University of Illinois where she received her Bachelors degree in Public Health. Kryztal has received various awards for her research on cancer disparities and since then has continued her research on other disparities within the Latinx community. While continuing her research Kryztal hopes to pursue a career as a future physician scientist.

Virtual Group Visits Sourced from a National Network of Integrative Providers

3:55 PM

The synergistic combination of the group medical appointment format with the convenience of telemedicine was utilized to address the growing mental health needs of a national network of functional medicine patients during the COVID era. We educate patients on brain biochemistry, the connection between a healthy functioning microbiome to neurotransmitter supplies to the brain, and common clinical symptoms associated with low neurotransmitter levels. This presentation will discuss how shifting from the original 4 individual visit format (i.e. 2 provider and 2 health coach) to 4 visit (1 individual followed by 3 group) created a shorter time to initial symptom reduction, less dosing errors, and improved patient compliance.



Shilpa Saxena, MD, IFMCP

Shilpa P. Saxena, MD, IFMCP is a Board-Certified family physician who serves as Chief Medical Officer at Forum Health, a nationwide provider of personalized health services. She is internationally known for her contributions in functional and integrative medicine through her teaching roles with The Institute for Functional Medicine, The Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine, George Washington University's Department of Integrative Medicine, and more. As a firm believer in models that promote clinical, financial and operational success, she created Group Visit Toolkits- the most widely used lifestyle-based group visit resources.

Adapting Diabetes Group Medical Visits in an Urban Family Medicine Residency Program Serving Low-Income Primary Care Patients During the COVID-19 Pandemic

4:15 PM

The objective of this field report is to describe adaptations made to a diabetes GMV involving family medicine residents in an urban, low-income primary care setting due to the COVID-19 pandemic when shelter-in-place (SIP) began in Contra Costa County on March 16, 2020. This report highlights October 2019 - March 2020 (5 months prior to SIP) and May 2020 - October 2020 (5 months after the start of SIP). Next steps include seeking Internal Review Board approval to conduct a formal study and evaluate clinical outcomes.



Bonnie Kwok, MD, MPH

Bonnie Kwok, MD, MPH is a family physician and diabetes group medical visits facilitator at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Clinical Teaching Faculty at Contra Costa Family Medicine Residency Program where she completed her residency training. She currently serves as the Group Medical Visits Site Lead and Resident Group Facilitation Training Lead. Her medical training commenced at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health where she facilitated diabetes groups with an interdisciplinary team for low-income patients in Milwaukee as part of the program Chronic Illness Management in Teams of Urban Multidisciplinary Scholars (CIMTUMS). Her passion for the care of underserved communities dealing with chronic medical conditions particularly Type 2 Diabetes stems from the love of her grandfather who had diabetes and whose resiliency was immeasurable. Dr. Kwok has special interest in narrative medicine and poetry.

IMPLEMENTATION TRACK POSTERS



Adapting an Integrative Medical Group Visit Program for Patients with Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID

As transmission rates of COVID-19 decline across the United States, a new wave of illness and dysfunction is coming to the forefront. Post-acute sequelae of COVID (PASC) refers to a wide collection of signs and symptoms experienced by patients with a history of COVID-19 infection. Patients with PASC have varied symptomatology; however, common complaints include fatigue, cognitive impairment (often called “brain fog”), shortness of breath, and headache. Sleep disturbances, decreased physical activity, anxiety and depression are common. Early estimates are that up to a third of patients who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 experience some PASC symptoms. Therefore, effective therapies and clinical strategies for managing this population are needed.



Jessica Barnhill, MD, MPH

Jessica Barnhill, MD, MPH co-facilitates and researches Integrative Medical Group Visits at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. They are currently adapting the Our Whole Lives curriculum, designed for people with chronic pain, to support people with Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID.

The Role of a Medical Student Intern in Integrative Medical Group Visits for Chronic Pain Patients

Through this presentation, providers can get a better understanding of how a medical student intern can contribute to a group medical visit. Chronic pain patients can also learn helpful information from medical students throughout the sessions. Although this reports only one medical student's experience, it demonstrates how medical students can grow greatly from being a student intern and how it contributes to their professional development.



Bethany Kavalakatt, MS2

Bethany Kavalakatt is a second-year medical student at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Bradenton, Florida. She completed her Bachelors of Science degree in biological sciences at California State University, Fullerton. She is currently the group visit coordinator for the integrative medical group visits run by the University of North Carolina Integrative Medicine Clinic.

Transitioning to a Virtual Teaching Kitchen within the Shared Medical Appointment Model Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2017, MedStar Health launched Fresh and Savory, a Culinary and Lifestyle Medicine Teaching Kitchen (TK) program, which proved to be feasible in the format of a Shared Medical Appointment (SMA). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, MedStar Health transitioned the in-person TK to a novel virtual model, while maintaining the same curriculum and SMA structure.



Theresa A Stone MD, FACP

Terri Stone is Co-founder and Medical Director of Fresh & Savory Culinary and Lifestyle Medicine Shared Medical Appointment Virtual Teaching Kitchen at MedStar Health in Washington DC. Fresh & Savory is a Medstar Institute for Innovation initiative designed to introduce patients, students, employees to culinary and living skills that promote longevity and wellbeing. As a member of the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative, American College of Lifestyle Medicine Board of Directors and co-chair of ACLM HEAL initiative (Health Equity Achieved through Lifestyle), Terri is committed to empowering and engaging URM communities with tools to build health equity.



Eleanor Belilos, MS4

Ellie Belilos is a current 4th year medical student at Georgetown University School of Medicine in Washington, DC, and is currently pursuing a residency in Internal Medicine. She is passionate about empowering patients with healthy lifestyle skills, and volunteered regularly at MedStar Health's Fresh & Savory Culinary and Lifestyle Medicine Shared Medical Appointments throughout the past year. She hopes to someday incorporate culinary medicine and shared medical appointments into her practice.



Sarah Marie Schumacher, MS4

Sarah is a 4th year medical student at Georgetown University School of Medicine in Washington, DC. She has enjoyed volunteering over the past year with MedStar Health's Fresh & Savory Culinary and Lifestyle Medicine Shared Medical Appointments. She has discovered a passion for counseling patients on healthy lifestyle skills, and looks forward to incorporating these principals and the teaching kitchen model in her future practice.



Varsha Kottamasu, MHA

Varsha's involvement with group medical visits began during her administrative residency at MedStar Health, where she served as the Interim Project Manager for Fresh & Savory, a culinary and lifestyle medicine-based Shared Medical Appointment program. In this role, Varsha supported the transition of Fresh & Savory onto a virtual platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic, standardization of virtual workflows, and research activities focused on program scalability and sustainability. Varsha has a background in public health and health administration, and she currently is a Project Manager for the Translational Innovation team at the MedStar Institute for Innovation.

ICGMV's 2021 Inaugural Conference

HEALTH SUPPORT TRACK



Cleveland Clinic Lifestyle Essentials: Lifestyle Medicine- Focused Shared Medical Appointments

11:40 AM

Poor lifestyle choices are the root causes of major risk factors for cardiovascular disease, including hypertension, hyperlipidemia and type 2 diabetes. Although well-established chronic disease management guidelines uniformly call for lifestyle change as first-line therapy, there is a gap between recommended self-care practices and their implementation. To bridge that gap, implement recommendations, and to improve accessibility in healthcare, we developed a program to promote optimal health through lifestyle modifications covered by most third-party payers.



Mladen Golubic, MD, PhD, FACLM

Since January 2021, Dr. Golubic is Medical Director at the Center for Integrative Health and Wellness and Professor of Clinical Family and Community Medicine, University of Cincinnati. During the past 3 decades, Dr. Golubic has been at the Cleveland Clinic both as scientist and physician. Dr. Golubic is a graduate of the University of Zagreb School of Medicine, Croatia and earned his doctorate at the same University after 5 years of post-doctoral fellowship at the Max-Planck Institute for Biology, Germany in the field of immunogenetics. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and the American Board of Lifestyle Medicine. He is also Fellow of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine.

A Closer Look into Functioning for Life (R): A Functional Medicine-based Shared Medical Appointment Program to Address Chronic Conditions

12:35 PM

Shared medical appointments (SMAs) offer a promising solution to mitigate the impact of chronic disease. To improve access, efficiency and chronic disease management, a functional medicine-based SMA called Functioning For Life® (FFL) was developed. This 10-week SMA program focuses on nutrition and lifestyle to address chronic disease. It is associated with improved patient-reported and biometric outcomes, and can be delivered at a lower cost compared to individual appointments. This presentation will explore the operational implementation and outcomes associated with FFL.



Michelle Beidelschies, PhD

Michelle Beidelschies, PhD is Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine and Staff in the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine where she is the Research and Education Director. As Education Director, Dr. Beidelschies is responsible for developing medical school and residency elective programming that offer online curricula to complement experiential learning for those interested in pursuing Functional Medicine. She also designs in-person and online curricula for the Center's shared medical appointment program offerings. As Research Director, Dr. Beidelschies is responsible for developing the evidence base for the Functional Medicine model of care as well as other innovative delivery models developed at the Center. Current research involves understanding the impact of the Functional Medicine model on value-based care - specifically, can it improve health-related quality of life (HRQoL) or biometrics while reducing cost.

Shared Medical Visits at an Integrative Medicine Practice in an Academic Center

12:35 PM

At the Integrative Health and Well Being Center or Weill Cornell Medicine/New York Presbyterian Hospital, a number of shared medical appointments (SMA)/group visits are offered. I run the Lifestyle Change SMA, Oncology SMA, Prenatal SMA, and Yoga Oncology SMA. In addition, we also have SMA's that cover chronic pain, gut health, anxiety, meditation/mindfulness, and meditation retreats. These SMA are a way to introduce and educate patients on the various integrative services we provide (physician consultation, medical acupuncture, nutrition consultation, psychotherapy, mind-body instruction, massage therapy, TCM & Ayurvedic medicine, medical yoga, pastoral care/spiritual support/narrative medicine). Patients enjoy the access to physicians and group support and physicians are able to see multiple patients at a time and bill for the visits. All of the SMAs have been converted to an on-line format successfully. Practical obstacles will be covered as well as future thoughts concerning SMAs.



Michelle Loy, MD, FAAP

Dr. Michelle Loy, MD, FAAP is a nationally recognized double board-certified physician who received her undergraduate degree from Harvard College, her doctorate in medicine from Weill Cornell Medical College, her pediatrics residency training from New York Presbyterian Hospital-Cornell, and her integrative medicine fellowship training from Columbia University/Stamford Hospital. Dr. Loy utilizes evidence-based interventions from both modern medicine and time-tested traditional modalities including nutrition, movement, acupuncture, botanicals, and mind-body medicine to prevent and manage chronic medical conditions across all age groups at Integrative Health and Well-Being-Weill Cornell Medicine. As an assistant professor with joint appointments in Medicine and Pediatrics, she presents to physicians, patients, and the community on her clinical and research interests which include nutrition, culinary medicine, botanical medicine, cancer prevention, mental health, women's health, and children's health. Dr. Loy has achieved recognition in integrative medicine at national academic conferences and other peer-reviewed training opportunities. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, an elected executive board member of the AAP Section of Integrative Medicine, and a member of the Society of Integrative Oncology.

Love as the Central Therapeutic Element for Personal Transformation in a Lifestyle Group Visit

2:55 PM

In this presentation we will discuss a lifestyle group visit model serving an underserved, primarily ethnic minority population at Boston Medical Center. The longitudinal, 6-week, wellness-based group visit, Stronger Together, which focused on an integrative approach to chronic pain, was built on a platform of positive psychology, with love as a foundational concept to be explored and utilized as a tool for sustained lifestyle change and personal transformation. The overall group visit design and share unpublished, quality improvement data, collected from a small sample of participants that begins to capture the impact of the group visit experience on the lives and health of the participants will also be discussed. Our experience with this group visit model supports the positive impact that a focus on self-love and self-empowerment can have in catalyzing and sustaining transformation towards better health.



Scarlet Soriano, MD, ABOIM

Dr. Soriano is an Integrative Medicine leader, educator, speaker and consultant. She is passionate about re-imagining health-related paradigms and bringing to life new healthcare structures that support greater equity and deeper healing and wellbeing among individuals and collectives. She is co-founder of a widely successful Mindfulness Initiative at Boston Medical Center that has embedded mindfulness into the organization. Dr. Soriano has focused her clinical practice on wellness-based group visits and has designed and led innovative group visit models that increase access to integrative health services for underserved populations. Dr. Soriano is the former Director of Group Visits and Wellness-Based Healthcare Transformation at Boston Medical Center, and former Medical Director of the Cleveland Clinic's Tanya I Edwards MD Center for Integrative and Lifestyle Medicine. She currently serves as Medical Director for Hopespring Holistic Health Institute in Maine.



The Supervised Lifestyle Integrative Medicine (SLIM) Program: Implementing an Innovative Service for Patients with Obesity

3:55 PM

In obesity management, shared medical appointments (SMAs) empower patients to take control of health and behavior. It also encourages community support through peer interaction and increases patients' trust in a variety of healthcare professionals. Clinicians and researchers at UCSD embarked on a novel pilot project to evaluate the acceptability, feasibility, and preliminary clinical efficacy of a virtual SMA program focused on lifestyle and behavioral treatment of obesity in conjunction with traditional clinical-based obesity treatment. Attendees will learn about the role of intensive lifestyle therapy in the obesity treatment, how shared medical appointments can be leveraged to provide intensive lifestyle treatment, and about common pitfalls and challenges that may be encountered in the implementation of lifestyle medicine group visits in the academic medical center setting. The SLIM program was created in partnership with the UCSD Weight Management Clinic, Integrative Medicine Center, and the Center of Excellence in Integrative Health.



Deepa Sannidhi, MD

Dr. Deepa Sannidhi MD is a Associate Clinical Professor at the UC San Diego Department of Family Medicine. Dr. Sannidhi teaches and mentors Family and Preventive Medicine residents, medical students and public health students in the principles and practice of Lifestyle Medicine and Obesity Medicine. She runs a program for the treatment of Obesity called the Supervised Lifestyle and Integrative Medicine (SLIM) Program for the Treatment of Obesity. She is Chair of the Research Committee at the American College of Lifestyle Medicine.

Using Cooking Matters Programming as a Group Visit to Improve Health Outcomes in a Primary Care Setting

3:55 PM

The quality of food consumed is an important risk factor for chronic diseases, but patients experience many barriers to consuming healthy food. Cooking Matters is a nation-wide program which teaches individuals how to make healthy choices and cook healthy, budget-friendly meals. In an effort to provide patients with the skills needed to follow a healthier diet and improve health outcomes, Highland Family Medicine in Rochester, NY and Foodlink have partnered to bring Cooking Matters into a primary care setting. This session will discuss program implementation and the impact of Cooking Matters in a primary care setting.



Rachel Moyer

Rachel Moyer is a fourth year medical student at University of Rochester School of Medicine. In medical school, she has worked alongside Dr. Holly Russell at the Highland Family Medicine - FoodLink Cooking Matters partnership. She became involved in this project to continue exploring the role of food insecurity in healthcare, and interest which began as an AmeriCorps VISTA member at Good Shepherd Foodbank in Maine.



Holly Russell, MD, MS

Dr. Russell earned a B.S. in Biochemistry from Boston College, and went on to serve in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps for a year in Oakland, California working as a counselor and nursing assistant at a residential treatment center for adolescents with substance abuse disorders. She obtained her M.D. degree with a Distinction in Community Service from the University of Rochester in 2007, and completed internship and residency in Family Medicine with an Area of Concentration in Research at Lancaster General Hospital in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In 2010, she returned to the University of Rochester and completed a faculty development fellowship and a Master's of Clinical Investigation.



Using Virtual Group Visits to Integrate Nutrition and Culinary Medicine into Clinical Practice

Dietary factors are a significant risk factor for morbidity and mortality in the US. Pre-pandemic, Shared Medical Appointments (SMAs) offered a unique opportunity to teach Nutrition and Culinary skills to patients. Many groups across the country developed various models including Teaching Kitchens to increase access to these important life skills. The act of demonstrating how simple, healthy, appealing, delicious dishes can be prepared is fodder for patients to prepare these meals at home for themselves and their families. In our necessary transition to Virtual care in 2020, we have taken our amassed knowledge and skills and transitioned to Virtual Group Visits from our kitchens. For this poster presentation, we share tips and photos of how to harness Technology from our Kitchens to continue to reach our patients. We have learned that the Virtual world offers advantages for Culinary instruction, and in the future, we envision a Hybrid model of virtual and in-person Nutrition and Culinary Medicine education for patients.



Helen Delichatsios, MD, SM

Helen Delichatsios, MD, SM is a clinician-educator at Massachusetts General Hospital. A graduate of Cornell University Medical College, Helen completed her Internal Medicine residency at Cornell New York Hospital and earned a Masters of Science degree in Epidemiology at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. Helen has an active Primary Care practice, teaches students and residents, and her research interests and publications concern effective nutrition and obesity counseling methods in the Primary Care Office.



Olivia Weinstein, MS, RD, LDN

Olivia Weinstein, MS, RD, LDN, is the culinary nutrition director in the Teaching Kitchen at Boston Medical Center (BMC), Boston, MA where she teaches patients how to apply nutrition recommendations to real food and how to better utilize the food receive from the BMC food pantry. Through her work in the award-winning BMC Teaching Kitchen, which earned the Future Practice's award for "Innovations in Dietetics Practice" at FNCE 2016, Olivia is helping to bring to fruition BMC's mission of "exceptional care, without exception".

Lessons Learned from Adapting Prevention and Wellness Group Medical Visits to the Virtual World

This poster presentation will summarize our experience transitioning from in-person Group Medical Visits (GMVs) at a Family Medicine residency program to virtual GMVs in 2020. We will discuss the structure of our Prevention and Wellness GMVs offered for patients to address chronic health issues (including metabolic syndrome, obesity, chronic lung and heart disease, diabetes, and mental health issues) through lifestyle changes. Our model has consistently changed based on experience with the patient population we work with. We had to completely restructure our offerings to a virtual platform and curriculum. The platform and curriculum continue to evolve with each group and have included exploring lifestyle apps and remote patient monitoring. The challenges, successes and upcoming opportunities for these components will be discussed.



Ted Wissink, MD

Ted completed residency training in Family Medicine at Maine Medical Center and after residency went on to do a fellowship in Integrative Medicine through Andrew Weil's Center for Integrative Medicine at University of Arizona. He serves as both a primary care provider and an Integrative Medicine consultant at MMP. His clinical interests are focused on health promotion and addressing health problems with both lifestyle behaviors and other integrative approaches based on a patient's individual values. He started doing Wellness and Prevention Group Visits several years ago as these allow a deeper focus with more time for patients who desire to make lifestyle changes.



Katie Sharpe, MD

Katie completed her residency training in Internal Medicine at Maine Medical Center. She is currently a Leadership in Preventive Medicine Fellow at Maine Medical Center. She is completing her Masters in Public Health at the University of New England. She has an interest in public health, primary care, nutrition, lifestyle medicine, group medical visits and wellness. She is also interested in food insecurity and expanding access to healthy foods. She is looking forward to combining public health, lifestyle group medical visits and primary care in the future.



Amy Pearl, RN

Amy's background is in social work and nursing, along with additional training in holistic nursing care. She pursued a master's degree in Health and Wellness Coaching from Maryland University of Integrative Health. She serves as a registered nurse and health coach at Maine Medical Partners. Her focus is to help support patients make health behavior changes leading to better health outcomes.

HEALTH SUPPORT TRACK POSTERS



Interprofessional Group Visits for Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder: Caring for a Vulnerable Population During the Pandemic

The Integrated Medication Assisted Treatment (IMAT) Program works with individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD) referred by their primary care provider. Individuals first meet with a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) for an intake assessment to determine if they meet criteria for OUD and what level of care is recommended. If accepted into the program, the individual meets with the addiction medicine physician and starts on buprenorphine/naloxone. Following these individual visits, participants are treated in a group model. Our group medical visits are interprofessional and are co-led by the LCSW, physician and our peer support specialist. Our peer is a person in long-term recovery who provides the perspective of someone with the shared life experience of the group members. Prior to the COVID epidemic, our weekly group visits lasted 90 minutes and were in person. We transitioned to a virtual format in March 2000 and have been holding our groups for 60 minutes utilizing Zoom. This poster will discuss the advantages and disadvantages encountered during the transition.



Carol Squires, LCSW, LADC

Carol Squires, LCSW, LADC works for Maine Behavioral Health Care on the Integrated Medication Assisted Treatment Team providing recovery treatment for individuals with Opioid Use Disorder who often time experience co-occurring mental health disorders. Carol also provides individual counseling at Westbrook Primary Care as part of the Behavioral Health Integration Model.

ICGMV's 2021 Inaugural Conference

RESEARCH TRACK



ICGMV

Research on Group Visits: Methods, Questions, Contexts

11:40 AM

Many safety-net clinics are spearheading GMV clinical innovation but unable to conduct research on their programs. Existing research does not reflect the diversity of safety-net GMV programs. This interactive workshop for researchers and clinical staff will introduce frameworks and methods for GMV research. Expanding collaboration between researchers and clinical staff will allow for better understanding of how GMVs may benefit patients and staff.



Ariana Thompson-Lastad, PhD

Ariana Thompson-Lastad, PhD is a faculty member at the UC San Francisco Osher Center for Integrative Medicine and Department of Family and Community Medicine. She is a medical sociologist whose research focuses on group medical visits, with a focus on integrative healthcare in community health centers. Dr. Thompson-Lastad is a board member of Integrative Medicine for the Underserved and a member of the ICGMV conference planning committee.



Maria Chao, DrPH, MPA

Maria Chao, DrPH, MPA, is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of California San Francisco and the Associate Director of Research and the Associate Director for Health Equity and Diversity at the UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine. Dr. Chao's overarching research goal is to investigate how complementary and integrative medicine can advance health equity. She has conducted clinical trials of group-based integrative approaches for prenatal care, stress management among young adults, chronic pain conditions, and diabetes self-management.



Paula Gardiner, MD, MPH

Paula Gardiner, MD, MPH is an Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. She is also the Associate Director of Research and the director of the Group Visits Program in the Center for Integrated Primary Care. Recently, Dr Gardiner has joined the Center for Mindfulness and Compassion at Cambridge Health Alliance as their Director of Primary Care Implementation Research.



Inger Burnett-Zeigler, PhD

Inger Burnett-Zeigler, PhD is a licensed clinical psychologist and an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, in the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. She is also a mindfulness trainer and certified yoga instructor. Inger has over 15 years of experience providing psychological interventions to help clients with mood and anxiety disorders, trauma, and stress. Her research focuses on examining the factors associated with access and engagement in mental health service utilization and using this data to develop, test and implement acceptable and accessible evidence based interventions in community based settings. Inger is an advocate for eliminating mental illness stigma and assuring that all individuals have access to high-quality, evidence based mental health care



A. Udaya Thomas, MSN, MPH, APRN, PhD-C

Udaya is a Primary Care Nurse Practitioner in an FQHC in Southeastern Florida, a recent SAMHSA Fellow from ANA Minority Fellowship Program and in her final term of her PhD in Nursing program at Walden University. She is also the Board President of IM4US. She created this video as a therapeutic outlet to symbolize the voices from her anonymous data and share the key results of her quantitative research on Integrative Group Medical Visits in a creative and simple format.



Benjamin Emmert-Aronson, PhD

Benjamin Emmert-Aronson, Ph.D., is a psychologist, researcher, and advocate. He earned his M.S. in Statistics from Columbia University and his Ph.D. in Psychology from Boston University. He co-founded Open Source Wellness, a non-profit nationally recognized for innovation in health.

Centering Parenting Research Network: Advancing Child Health Equity through Community Engagement and Research Collaboration

12:35 PM

Practice-based research networks can support research, innovation, and practice interventions that can reduce racial/ethnic and socioeconomic inequities in preventive care utilization. We know from our research studying innovative models of pediatric clinical care such as the Centering Parenting model of group well child-care, effective group care models already exist that provide families with tools and social support to buffer children from adversity, ameliorate the effect of ACEs, and prevent poor life course outcomes to improve health equity.

The Centering Parenting Research Network (CPRN) is a national practice-based research network with 10 member sites and launched in January 2020 with the explicit goals to 1) work across pediatric clinical sites to promote collaboration among researchers, clinicians, patients, and community members; 2) facilitate practice-based research; and 3) increase the use of shared assessment measures and protocols. To date, the CPRN has engaged in a 10-month co-design process with a leadership and steering committee to identify priorities and develop the operational infrastructure. The CPRN is a research initiative of the CRADLE (Childhood Research to Advance Developmental-Health Learning and Equity) Research Lab, the research and evaluation arm of the Vital Village Networks organization at Boston Medical Center. Vital Village Networks develops community-based strategies to promote child wellbeing and advance health and educational equity through research, data sharing, and collective action. Developing networks such as the CPRN and cross-sector collaborations where community residents co-lead and co-design is a central strategy of our work.



Clare Viglione, MPH, RD

Ms. Clare Viglione is the Research Manager at the CRADLE Lab (Childhood Research to Advance Developmental-Health Learning and Equity) at Vital Village Networks, Boston Medical Center. She graduated from Columbia University in 2015 with an MPH and studied nutrition at Brooklyn College. Clare has held research positions at NYU Langone and Boston University in addition to health education roles with Harlem Children's Zone and the New York City Department of Health.

Ana and Fay's Journey to Optimal Wellness: A Story Illustration of a Retrospective Quantitative Study

This video is a story illustration that represents low-income adult patients with an anxiety diagnosis from a retrospective quantitative comparative analysis study of two groups that occurred over the course of a year in a health system that conducted integrative behavioral health in primary care (IBH-PC). The first group participated in integrative group medical visits (IGMV) as an option for realizing their mental health care in addition to usual IBH-PC services while the other group were managed by their primary care provider and had access to usual care IBH-PC services only. Non-emergent ED utilization, BZD use and anxiety symptom severity were all measured before and after a one year time frame for both types of groups and statistical analysis to compare their outcomes. The characters represented give a snapshot of the results of the study. The study also created a framework for looking at these groups in the context of the US healthcare system and quadruple aim priorities.



A. Udaya Thomas, MSN, MPH, APRN, PhD-C

Udaya is a Primary Care Nurse Practitioner in an FQHC in Southeastern Florida, a recent SAMHSA Fellow from ANA Minority Fellowship Program and in her final term of her PhD in Nursing program at Walden University. She is also the Board President of IM4US. She created this video as a therapeutic outlet to symbolize the voices from her anonymous data and share the key results of her quantitative research on Integrative Group Medical Visits in a creative and simple format.

Naturopathic Medicine for Endometriosis (NatME) Program: Encompassing clinical care, education and peer support. A pilot feasibility study.

Naturopathic service utilization is high, particularly among women and those with chronic conditions and menstrual disorders. Despite this, there remain some barriers (e.g. financial and social) to accessing naturopathic services in the broader population. Shared medical appointments (SMAs) (also known as integrative group medical visits (IGMVs) where integrative medicine is included in the care) are a medical model of care developed to mitigate such barriers and improve patient outcomes. SMAs appear to be a promising approach to managing chronic disease and may be a suitable model for naturopaths seeking to improve service accessibility and patient outcomes. Further research is needed to determine the suitability of the model within the scope of naturopathic medicine. The aim of this research is to co-design, and examine the feasibility of, a novel approach (SMA model) to delivering naturopathic care to people with a chronic reproductive condition (endometriosis) that is not currently well managed with conventional medical services alone.



Sophia Gerontakos, ND, BHSc, PhD Candidate

Sophia Gerontakos is an Australian naturopath and PhD candidate with the National Centre for Naturopathic Medicine, Southern Cross University. Sophia's research is investigating a new model of delivering naturopathic consultations to women and gender-diverse people with endometriosis, using group visits, to address issues of access and integration of naturopathy. Sophia has been involved in establishing an inner-city free naturopathic community clinic in Brisbane, Australia and co-ordinating local professional development events with the community chapters of the Naturopaths and Herbalists Association of Australia. Sophia holds an Honours degree in Naturopathy and has authored several peer-reviewed articles on naturopathy and herbal medicine.

Predictors of Obesity in Patients enrolled in a Lifestyle Medicine Program with Virtual Shared Medical Appointments and the role of Adverse Childhood Experiences

Little is known about the relationship between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and obesity among adults in the United States. The objective of this study was to examine whether ACE scores are associated with obesity in patients enrolling in the SLIM Program, a lifestyle medicine program delivered as shared medical appointments (SMAs) virtually at UC San Diego Health.



Mia Casciani, BA, MPH Candidate

Mia Casciani is a MPH student at UC San Diego concentrating in Epidemiology. As a Research Assistant for UC San Diego Health's SLIM Program, she has gained experience working with virtual group medical visits during the pandemic. Her research interests include predictors of obesity and modalities of care for treating obesity.

Bringing Telehealth Group Medical Visits to Cancer Care: Interim Analysis of an Innovative Collaboration between Palliative Care and Psycho-oncology

Patients with advanced cancer face significant physical and emotional distress, complex medical decisions, and the threat of their own mortality. Palliative care implemented early in the disease trajectory improves quality of life (QOL), reduces physical symptoms and depression, improves care satisfaction, reduces hospital costs, and even improves mortality in some cancers. Psycho-oncology improves QOL, distress, and the management of physical symptoms using non-pharmacological, mind-body interventions. Integrative therapies are on the rise and have been utilized for symptom management and improve QOL for patients with cancer. While these supportive care services improve patient outcomes and health care utilization, there is limited access to them at cancer centers nationally. Group medical visits (GMVs), which combine medical care, health education, and peer support, have been offered in a number of clinical settings, and have been shown to improve patients' access to care, increase patient empowerment, and improve health outcomes. Additionally, in this time of COVID-19, telehealth is increasingly utilized and is improving access to care for many patient populations. However, to our knowledge, GMVs have not been studied in those with advanced cancer. Therefore, the aim of this study was to develop a 4-session integrative palliative care and psycho-oncology GMV using telehealth among patients with advanced cancer.



Neha Goyal, PhD

Dr. Goyal is a psychologist who cares for patients with cancer at the UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center. She uses cognitive behavioral and mindfulness-based approaches to help patients and their family members cope with the emotional and physical challenges of a cancer diagnosis. She provides care at all stages, from active treatment to survivorship and end of life.



Stephanie Cheng, MD

Dr. Stephanie Cheng is a palliative care physician who provides supportive care for patients with terminal or life-altering illnesses. She devotes most of her practice to outpatient care in the UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center's Symptom Management Service. Dr. Cheng has special interests in integrative medicine, mindfulness, group medical visits, forest therapy, and self-compassion practices. She serves as one of the principal investigators for a pilot study evaluating innovative medical visits pairing psycho-oncology and integrative palliative care for patients with advanced cancer. With colleagues at the UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, she also studies integrative approaches to treating common cancer-related symptoms.



With gratitude to all 2021 Inaugural Presenters

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Michelle Beidelschies, PhD

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Shante Cruz-Delaney, Group Visit Coordinator

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