Dear friends and colleagues,

The 2013-2014 academic year was highly productive for the Department of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research in terms of developments in scholarship and innovations in teaching. The spring semester saw several new grants and publications and the arrival of a new faculty member. I anticipate that this upward trajectory will continue in the new academic year. I look forward to hearing from our alumni and friends regarding their suggestions for how we can continue to move the department forward in our desire to be the "go-to place" for pharmaceutical health services research and pharmaceutical policy and a "top place to work."

Wishing you all the best this summer,

Sincerely,

C. Daniel Mullins, PhD
Professor and Chair
Department of Pharmaceutical Health Services Research

New PHSR Study Finds Link Between Hurricane Destruction and Stillbirths

PHSR postdoctoral fellow Ian Breunig, PhD, was part of a team of researchers who recently found that Hurricanes Katrina and Rita may have contributed to up to half of recorded stillbirths in the areas hit hardest by the storms. Published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, the study aimed to uncover information about how fetal health is influenced by the stress imposed on expectant mothers affected by natural disasters, specifically Hurricane Katrina, which struck the state of
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Louisiana on August 29, 2005, and Hurricane Rita, which hit one month later on September 24. The researchers estimate that approximately half of the 410 recorded stillbirths in damaged parishes during this time can be attributed to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the subsequent devastation. This number is between 20-30 percent of the number of human deaths attributed to the hurricanes. However, they also note that the true fetal death toll could be much higher, due to the displacement of residents whose homes and livelihoods were swept away with the storms. Read more here...

PHSR Graduate Students Host First Campus-wide Interdisciplinary Seminar

More than 75 faculty, staff, and students from across the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) attended an inaugural interdisciplinary seminar on pharmacoepidemiology hosted by members of the International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) student chapter at the School of Pharmacy on April 16. Titled "Not Quite What They Were Planning: Evaluating Unintended Consequences of Prescription Medications," the seminar was presented by William Cooper, MD, MPH, the Cornelius Vanderbilt Professor of Pediatrics and Health Policy at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. Throughout the seminar, Dr. Cooper highlighted several case studies that led him and his team to refocus their research endeavors to better answer questions about the unintended consequences of medications on different patient populations. I am proud of the graduate students in PHSR who took the lead in organizing this seminar with the goal of raising awareness about pharmacoepidemiology and fostering interdisciplinary learning and research across the University's six professional schools and graduate school. Read more here...

SOP Colloquium Honors Peter Lamy - A Pharmacy Pioneer and Beloved Faculty Member

On April 9, the Peter Lamy Center on Drug Therapy and Aging in PHSR hosted a colloquium titled "Challenges in Medication Management in Older Adults with Dementia: How Have Research and Policy Impacted Clinical Practice?" to honor the 20th anniversary of the death of Peter Lamy, MSc, PhD, former Parke-Davis Chair in Geriatric Pharmacotherapy at the School and internationally renowned pioneer in geriatric pharmacotherapy. The colloquium was attended by more than 150 participants, including faculty, staff, and students from the School, as well as many practicing pharmacists and policy makers. The colloquium began with a panel presentation that featured a summary of recent research on appropriate and inappropriate medication use in dementia care. It also addressed how Medicare policy has influenced dementia management, as well as how research and policy have influenced the care of persons with dementia in long-term care settings. Afterwards, attendees gathered for a special reception, where family and friends shared their memories of Dr. Lamy. Read more here...

SOP Researcher Reviews Tamiflu for The BMJ

Tamiflu (the antiviral drug oseltamivir) shortens symptoms of influenza by half a day, but there is no
good evidence to support claims that it reduces admissions to hospital or complications of influenza, according to an international review of clinical trial evidence co-authored by Peter Doshi, PhD, a new assistant professor in PHSR. The Cochrane Evidence Review was published in April by The Cochrane Collaboration— an independent, global healthcare research network -- and The British Medical Journal (BMJ). Dr. Doshi also is an associate editor at The BMJ. Evidence from treatment trials confirms an increased risk of suffering from nausea and vomiting. And when Tamiflu was used in prevention trials there was an increased risk of headaches, psychiatric disturbances, and renal events. Although when used as a preventative treatment, the drug can reduce the risk of people suffering symptomatic influenza, it is unproven that it can stop people from carrying the influenza virus and spreading that virus to others. Read more here...

PATIENTS Program Engages Patients at Local Health Fair

The Patient-Centered Involvement in Evaluating the Effectiveness of Treatments (PATIENTS) program at the School of Pharmacy partnered with Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church to host a community health fair on March 22 where members of the PATIENTS program offered free blood pressure screenings and counseling for hypertension, diabetes, HIV, mental health, and fitness and nutrition to all attendees. Events such as this health fair give community members a unique opportunity to work together to find answers to important health-related questions and make better decisions about their care. Through our participation in this event, the PATIENTS program was not only supporting the needs of one of its community partners, but was also actively working to connect and communicate with community members in an honest and open fashion, building meaningful and sustainable relationships that will allow us to continue to engage with these individuals in the future. Read more here...

PHSR Partners with PhRMA to Publish New Medication Adherence Chartbook

Bruce Stuart, PhD, professor in PHSR and director of the Peter Lamy Center on Drug Therapy and Aging, partnered with Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) to publish Medication Utilization Patterns and Outcomes Among Medicare Part D Enrollees with Common Chronic Conditions, a chartbook that analyzes trends in medication adherence among Medicare beneficiaries diagnosed with at least one of three chronic illnesses - diabetes, heart failure, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) - who were enrolled in a stand-alone Part D prescription drug plan from 2006 to 2008. Read more here...

SOP Researcher Awarded $421,000 from NIA

Linda Simoni-Wastila, BSPharm, MSPH, PhD, professor and vice chair of research in PHSR, has been awarded a $421,000 grant from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) for a new project titled "Transforming Outcomes Through Defining and Structuring Precedent Underlying Patient-Centered Outcomes Research (TOP-UP): "Read more here...
Institute on Aging to study chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) treatment in older adults with depression. The study will examine whether older adults with depression and COPD who adhere to -- or take as prescribed -- their antidepressant medications demonstrate improved adherence to their COPD medications and better health outcomes compared to patients who do not adhere to their antidepressant medications. Because there is no cure for COPD, and the condition worsens over time, individuals with this disease are also often diagnosed with depression. According to recent research, approximately 42 to 57 percent of individuals diagnosed with COPD also suffer from depression. Although the benefits associated with certain prescription medications designed to treat depression and COPD have been clearly illustrated in previous research, those medications continue to be underutilized in older adults. For older adults who are prescribed these medications, adherence remains low. Read more here...

SOP Researcher Receives Nearly $1 Million from PCORI

Susan dosReis, BSPharm, PhD, associate professor in PHSR, has been approved for a research award of $937,812 by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to support her study titled "Methods for Prioritizing Surrogate Desired Health Outcomes for Patients." The study will investigate what outcomes are most important to caregivers when managing aggression in children with developmental disabilities and a co-existing psychiatric illness, helping them choose the best treatment option for their child's unique circumstances. The study will include caregivers of children with developmental disabilities and a co-existing emotional or behavioral problem from across the United States. Researchers will collect caregivers’ feedback through small focus groups and innovative surveys designed to measure the value of benefit-risk trade-offs in treatment decisions. This information could provide improved evidence that supports which treatments work best to achieve the outcomes that matter most to caregivers and their patients. Read more here...

New Executive Director for Pharmaceutical Research Computing

Ebere Onukwugha, MS, PhD, assistant professor in PHSR, has been named executive director of the School’s Pharmaceutical Research Computing (PRC) center. This announcement follows the retirement in December of the center's previous director, Ilene Zuckerman, PharmD, PhD, former professor and chair of PHSR. Dr. Zuckerman and her colleagues first saw a need in the 1990s for a dedicated computing center that could meet the increased data warehousing, project management, and statistical analysis needs of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and other researchers at the University. After receiving approval from the School, Dr. Zuckerman established PRC in 1998, to support innovative projects with a demonstrated impact on national health policy. I am
confident that Dr. Onukwugha will work just as diligently to build upon the center's previous achievements and ensure that it remains innovative, competitive, and responsive to the ever-changing needs of researchers at the University of Maryland, Baltimore and beyond. Read more here...

Kudos

Our department's faculty, staff, and students are regularly recognized at the local and national level for their expertise. Here is a short list of recent accomplishments.

- The following graduate students received second place in the Center for Excellence in Regulatory Science and Innovation's "America's Got Regulatory Science Talent" Competition for their presentation on enhancing the FDA's website for consumer information on medication safety/efficacy: Bilal Khokhar, Melissa Ross, Xian Shen, Elisabeth Oehrlein, and Priyanka Gaitonde.
- Abdalla Aly, graduate student, won Best Oral Presentation for Session A and the Gerontology and Geriatrics Education and Research Program Award at UMB's Graduate Research Conference.
- Robert Beardsley, PhD, professor, received a 2014 Icons of Pharmacy Award from Oregon State University College of Pharmacy.
- Peter Doshi, PhD, assistant professor, has been named an associate editor of *The BMJ*.
- Bilal Khokhar, graduate student, won Best Poster for Session B and the Gerontology and Geriatrics Education and Research Program Award at UMB's Graduate Research Conference.
- Ebere Onukwugha, PhD, assistant professor, received the Dr. Patricia Sokolove Outstanding Mentor Award from the University of Maryland, Baltimore's Graduate Student Association.
- Michelle Suit, research coordinator, was named a UMB Employee of the Month.

Grants

- Susan dosReis, PhD, associate professor, received a one year $83,736 contract from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for "CMS CHIPRA Year Five Quality Demonstration Grant-Care Management Entities: A Multi-State Collaborative to Improve Children's Mental Health." She also received a nine-month $94,092 contract from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for "Community Alternatives to Psychiatric and Residential Treatment Facilities Demonstration."
- Eleanor Perfetto, PhD, professor, received a $250,000 two-year contract from the PhRMA Foundation for "Patient-Centered Research for Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Measurement (PROEM)" and a one-year $210,000 contract from the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy for "Comparative Effectiveness Research Certificate Program."
- Linda Simoni-Wastila, PhD, professor, received a $119,163 five-year contract from Impaq International for "Medicare Part D Claims Analysis."
- Bruce Stuart, PhD, professor and director of the Peter Lamy
Center on Drug Therapy and Aging, received a $153,205 one-year contract for "Proximal Predictors and Cost Consequences of Discontinuance with Oral Hypoglycemic Agents in the Elderly."

- **Joseph Vandigo**, graduate student, received a $38,117 one-year grant from the National Institute on Aging for "Impact of Medicare Contracting Reform on Colon Cancer Treatment and Outcomes."

**Publications**

- **Shaya FT**, Breunig IM, Mehra MR. Disease modifying therapy and the risk of hospitalization in patients with heart failure. *American Journal of Managed Care*. 2014 Apr; Accepted
- **Chirikov VV**, Shaya FT, Howell CD. Association Between Interferon Use And Reduced Metabolic And Vascular Complications Among Patients With Hepatitis C . Poster. ISPOR 19th Annual International Meeting, Montreal, CD, June, 2014
- **Yu-Jung Wei**, Francis B. Palumbo, Linda Simoni-Wastila, Lisa


- Khanna N, Shaya FT, Chirikov VV, Steffen B, Sharp D. Dissemination and Adoption of the Advanced Primary Care Model in the Maryland Multi-Payer Patient Centered Medical Home Program. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*. Volume 25 Number 1 Suppl. February 2014


- Breunig IM, Shaya FT, McPherson, Snitker S. Development of Heart Failure in Medicaid Patients with Type-2 Diabetes Treated with Pioglitazone, Rosiglitazone, or Metformin. *Journal of Managed Care Pharmacy*. Accepted January 2104.