Dear ,

As you may already know, health services research (HSR) answers questions about how people access health care and health care services, how much health care costs, and what happens to patients as a result of health care. Our department faculty, staff, and trainees were extremely busy answering and disseminating information to HSR questions in 2015. Our department also received several new awards and engaged new partners who are key stakeholders in assuring that everything we do helps patients, pharmacists, and health care providers improve health and quality of life. With the momentum that we have built, 2016 is sure to be a year when patients' and stakeholders' voices and researchers' skills are combined to achieve the department's mission "to improve health among diverse populations through health services and other drug-related research, education, service and community outreach."

Here's to a productive 2016!

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

New Recommendations Offer Guidance to Curb Prescription Opioid Epidemic

Linda Simoni-Wastila, BSPharm, MSPH, PhD, professor and vice chair of research, recently participated in an interdisciplinary task force to publish recommendations aimed at curtailing the prescription opioid abuse epidemic in the United States. Sponsored by the Clinton Foundation, the report - titled "The Prescription Opioid Epidemic: An Evidence-Based Approach" - offers a number of measures that can be implemented across health
care providers and settings to ensure opioids are correctly prescribed and used only as intended. who joined the task force to provide her expertise on prescription drug policy as related to prescription drug abuse and diversion - a topic on which she has conducted research for more than 15 years. The report developed by Dr. Simoni-Wastila and her colleagues on the interdisciplinary task force, which included representatives from the fields of medicine, pharmacy, injury prevention, and law, as well as patient representatives, insurers, and drug manufacturers, divides its recommendations into seven categories. In addition to calling for more stringent oversight of clinical prescribing, mandatory use of prescription drug monitoring programs, and expanding the availability of naloxone - which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose if administered correctly - the experts advocated for expanding the role of pharmacies and pharmacy benefits managers to help curb the prescription opioid epidemic. Read more here...

SOP Hosts UMB's First CER-PCOR Summer Institute

The School of Pharmacy welcomed researchers, clinicians, policymakers, patient advocates, and students from across the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and beyond to the University's first CER-PCOR Summer Institute in August. Organized by UMB's Patient-Centered Research for Outcomes, Effectiveness, and Measurement (PROEM) Center of Excellence in Comparative Effectiveness and Patient-Centered Outcomes Research, this week-long event offered advanced training to help participants design effective comparative effectiveness research (CER) and patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) studies, conduct appropriate statistical analyses for those studies, and appropriately interpret and implement the findings from those studies. Led by Eleanor Perfetto, PhD, MS, professor in PHSR, UMB is one of only five institutions to receive funding from the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) Foundation to establish a Center of Excellence in CER-PCOR. The CER-PCOR Summer Institute offered a unique opportunity for us to showcase UMB faculty members' expertise in these emerging areas of research. It helped us to further position the University as a leader in these fields and highlighted our ability to serve as a crucial resource for others as they endeavor to incorporate these important areas into their own work. Read more here...

New Graduate Program Director in PHSR

PHSR has named Frank Palumbo, PhD, JD, professor in PHSR, as the new director of its graduate program. Dr. Palumbo succeeds Ebere Onukwugha, MS, PhD, associate professor in PHSR, who led the program since 2013, as part of a
planned transition to allow Dr. Onukwugha to focus on her responsibilities as executive director of the department's Pharmaceutical Research Computing (PRC) center. As the graduate program's new director, Dr. Palumbo will be tasked with not only maintaining the exceptional coursework and research opportunities available to the program's current students - upholding the program's ranking as 'one of the best' of its kind in the nation - but also contributing to its continued growth by personally overseeing the launch of its new master's degree in Fall 2016. Read more here...

Francoise Pradel, PhD, Retires

After 16 years on faculty at the School of Pharmacy, Francoise Pradel, PhD, professor, retired at the end of December. In her retirement, she will spend more time with her husband and family. I remember meeting Dr. Pradel when she was a graduate student at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and have always been impressed by both her excellence in research and teaching and her exemplary academic citizenship. I was thrilled when she joined our faculty and was honored to serve as a mentor to her in her early years. It was clear to everyone that she was a "keeper" as her peers voted to promote her to associate professor with tenure in 2005 and then to full professor in 2013. In PHSR, Dr. Pradel served as the director of graduate studies for several years and helped to bring national prominence to our PhD program. PHSR will certainly miss her friendly smile as well as her public health research, training, and outreach. 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.

- **Susan dosReis**, PhD, associate professor, has been elected to the 2015-2016 Advisory Committee for the Child Health Services Research Interest Group.
- **Ting-Ying Huang**, graduate student, received a Poster Award at the 31st Annual International Conference on Pharmacoepidemiology and Therapeutic Risk Management.
- **C. Daniel Mullins**, PhD, professor and chair, has been named a member of the BD4P Steering Committee of the Reagan-Udall Foundation for the Food and Drug Administration.
- **Melissa Ross**, graduate student, won the Lee B. Lusted Student Prize for her presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for Medical Decision Making in St. Louis.
- **Fadia Shaya**, PhD, professor, has been appointed chair-elect of the Public Health Section of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.
Grants and Contracts

- Susan dosReis, PhD, associate professor, received a 16-month $89,675 contract from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for "Maryland State Foster Care Psychotropic Monitoring."
- C. Daniel Mullins, PhD, professor and chair, received a one-year $178,251 contract from the National Pharmaceutical Council for "Publication of Studies on Real-World Evidence: Journal Editor Perceptions and Approaches."
- Elisabeth Oehrlein, graduate student, received a two-year $50,000 fellowship from Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America for "Gender Disparities in Atrial Fibrillation Treatment."
- Francoise Pradel, PhD, professor, received a one-year $190,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for "Strategic Prevention Framework--Partnerships for Success."
- Linda Simoni-Wastila, PhD, professor, received a two-year $213,719 contract from Novartis for "Novartis Postdoctoral Health Outcomes Research Fellowship: Launching the Next Generation of Leaders."
- Julia Slejko, PhD, assistant professor, received a two-year $437,631 contract from Takeda Global Research and Development Center for "SEER-Medicare Study of Health Outcomes and Economics: Multiple Myeloma."
- Bruce Stuart, PhD, professor and director of the Peter Lamy Center for Drug Therapy and Aging, received a six-month contract from Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America for "Common Mistakes in Adherence Research and How to Avoid Them."

Publications

- Aly A, Onukwugha E, Woods C, Mullins CD, Kwok Y, Qian Y,
Arellano J, Balakumaran A and Hussain A. Measurement of Skeletal Related Events in SEER-Medicare: A Comparison of Claims-Based Methods in Men with Metastatic Prostate Cancer. BMC Medical Research Methodology (Accepted)