Imagine this scenario; a patient’s employer decides to switch to another health plan because of cost. The plan is in the same family of plans but has slightly different benefits to lower costs. The patient has been on an automatic prescription renewal program, so every 90 days he receives his medication. Suddenly the 90 day limit has passed, and he needs his medication but they are not being delivered. He goes online and can no longer log into one of the few National Rx sites for mail orders that exist and the same one he has been using for years. He calls the company and is told because his employer has made this switch he no longer is on any renewal plan and his prescriptions don’t exist in any program. He asked why no one notified him that he wouldn’t be receiving his medication and was told “they don’t care.”

Why should they? If they notify they will have to pay a portion of the medication. If they don’t, he might forget. Wouldn’t you think that they have an interest in keeping him healthy to avoid future medical problems? Why? If his employer switches plans even every few years they wouldn’t get the benefit of his being healthier but would absorb the cost.

This is one of the many problems of our current health care system. Everyone talked about preventive medicine but no plan did anything about it until mandated by Obamacare. So now they have to cover preventive care, but they don’t have to publicize it. That is up to us. Once more the burden is shifted to the docs. Now we have the burden of not only trying to know what every health plan covers, what is their formulary and which plans require pre-authorization for what, but we are also responsible for reminding patients to keep up with their preventive care.

In most cases, pre-authorization is a sham for giving the health plan a chance to deny coverage. Formularies are a way to limit patient choice and treatment. Don’t make a mistake and send the patient to the wrong lab or radiology unit because then the patient will be responsible for the cost as the health plan won’t pay.

We are probably further away now from having a single payer plan than ever, but that is the only answer to what ails the health care system. Medicare may not be perfect but it runs pretty well and most people are very satisfied. One set of paper work, one formulary, go to any lab or radiology unit that is Medicare certified and no referrals to take up more physician time.

According to the World Health Organization, the U. S. health system spends a higher portion of its gross domestic product than any other country but ranks 37 out of 191 countries according to its performance. The United Kingdom, which spends just six percent of gross domestic product on health services, ranks 18th. Several small countries – San Marino, Andorra, Malta and Singapore are rated close behind first-placed France and second-placed Italy. The only thing we should come in second to France and Italy for is cuisine.

Abolish Obamacare is the Republican mantra. And replace it with what? Maybe something more expensive and less effective?

Alan G. Wasserman, M.D.
**Department of Medicine**

**January 2016 Grand Rounds**

JAN 7 “Gastro-Renal Communication: Role in Hypertension”
**Pedro Jose, MD, PhD**
Professor of Medicine  
Division of Kidney Disease & Hypertension  
Department of Medicine  
GW Medical Faculty Associates

JAN 14 “TBD”
**Pedro “Joe” Greer, MD**
Laboratory of Clinical Infectious Diseases  
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases  
National Institutes of Health

JAN 21 “TBD”
**Mark Gladwin, MD**
Professor of Medicine  
Director, Vascular Medicine Institute  
Chair, Department of Medicine  
Division of Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Medicine  
UPMC Montefiore Hospital  
Pittsburgh, PA

JAN 28 “Epilepsy”
**Anumeha Sharma, MD**
Assistant Professor of Neurology  
Department of Neurology  
GW Medical Faculty Associates

**Cardiology Grand Rounds**

5:00 PM, Ross Hall, Room # 104

JAN 6  
Mortality & Morbidity Conference

JAN 13  
Dominic Raj, MD  
Professor of Medicine  
Director, Division of Renal Diseases & Hypertension  
Department of Medicine  
GW Medical Faculty Associates  
**SPRINT to a new target?**

JAN 20  
Allen Solomon, MD  
Professor of Medicine  
Division of Cardiology  
Department of Medicine  
**NOAC’S, Bleeding and Reversal Agents**

JAN 27  
Allen Solomon, MD  
Professor of Medicine  
Division of Cardiology  
Department of Medicine  
**Cardio-Rheumatology**

**Resident Lecture Series**

**January 2016 Noon Conference**

JAN 1  
Holiday– No Conference
JAN 4  
Recruitment
JAN 5  
Journal Club
JAN 6  
GME Core Lecture
JAN 7  
Medicine Grand Rounds
JAN 8  
Recruitment
JAN 11  
Recruitment
JAN 12  
Clinicopathologic Conference-  
Drs. Sara Pike and Lei Lynn
JAN 13  
Recruitment
JAN 14  
Medicine Grand Rounds
JAN 15  
Recruitment
JAN 18  
Holiday– No conference
JAN 19  
Mortality & Morbidity-  
Drs. Sheldon Steiner and Veeshal Modi
JAN 20  
Recruitment
JAN 21  
Medicine Grand Rounds
JAN 22  
“Infectious Diseases”– Dr. Angelike Liappis
JAN 25  
Recruitment
JAN 26  
“Teletracking for the Medicine Resident”-  
Matt Merrifield, Hospital Administrator
JAN 27  
Recruitment
JAN 28  
Medicine Grand Rounds
JAN 29  
Recruitment

The George Washington University Medical Center (GWUMC) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians. GWUMC designates this continuing medical education activity on an hour-for-hour basis in Category I of the Physician’s Recognition Award of the American Medical Association (AMA).

**Medicine Team Contacts**

**WHITE TEAM**  
(202) 715-5669

**YELLOW TEAM**  
(202) 715-6041

**GREEN TEAM**  
(202) 715-6062

**RED TEAM**  
(202) 715-6839

**BLUE TEAM**  
(202) 715-6156

**SILVER TEAM**  
(202) 715-6040

**PURPLE TEAM**  
(202) 715-6042

**GOLD TEAM**  
(202) 715-6044

**ADMITTING RESIDENT** 741-0161 pager
Please Join Us In Welcoming Our Newest Addition to the Medicine Faculty

Farzana L. Walcott, MD, MPH will join the Division of General Internal Medicine on January 4, 2016 at the M Street location.

Dr. Walcott earned a Master in Public Health Degree from The University of Texas School of Public Health in 2000. She immediately embarked on her medical degree, which she complete at Texas A&M College of Medicine in 2004.

Dr. Walcott completed the first two years of Residency in Internal Medicine (PGY-1) and Anesthesiology (PGY-2) at the University of Texas Health Science Center and concluded her last two years at The University of Texas Medical Branch in Internal Medicine and General Preventive Medicine in 2010.

Dr. Walcott is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and is board eligible by the American Board of Preventive Medicine. She is licensed in the state of Texas and the District of Columbia.

For the past four years, Dr. Walcott has been enrolled in the Cancer Prevention Fellowship Program as a Post-doctoral research fellow at the National Cancer Institute, Division of Cancer Prevention. She participated in a number of projects including the Phase 1 Pilot study of Metformin in Li-Fraumeni Syndrome, Serous Ovarian Cancer Trends using NAACR Data and a number of other protocols.

Her scholarly activity is impressive with two manuscripts under review, four manuscripts in preparation, more than ten published manuscripts and a number of posters and presentations under her belt.

As a visiting Preventive Medicine Resident, a number of opportunities were presented, both nationally and internationally. Her international exposure took her to Cape Town, South Africa, with the International Agency for Cancer Research and the Kenya Medical Research Institute in Nairobi, Kenya.

Dr. Walcott has been the recipient of a number of awards and accolades; in 2013 she was presented with the “2013 NCIC Director’s Innovation Award/Career Development Award”; in 2010, she was presented with the “Fogarty international Research Fellowship Award” and in 2008 she was presented with the American Cancer Society General Preventive Medicine Physician Awardee for Cancer Prevention.

GW Frontiers in Medicine Lecture

The GWU Frontiers in Medicine panel discussion took place on December 1st. A panel of GW medical experts from the new GW Cancer Center revealed the innovative ways cancer is being targeted and treated.

The panelists included:

- Eduardo M. Sotomayor, MD
  Director, GW Cancer Center
  Professor of Medicine

- Edward Seto, PhD
  Associate Director for Basic Sciences, GW Cancer Center
  Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Medicine

- Alan Wasserman, MD, Professor and Chairman, Department of Medicine, moderated the discussion.

Dr. Sotomayor spoke on how harnessing the power of the immune system is providing major breakthroughs in cancer treatment and also discussed using engineered microorganisms as potential therapies; Dr. Seto discussed how the new understanding of tumor cells through genetic and epigenetics is leading to more potent and more selective anticancer treatments.

Fellowship Match Results

We are proud to announce that we had a great match this year! Congratulations to all of our PGY3s, and thank you to the faculty and staff who have supported and guided them along the way to this success!

Our residents matched with the following fellowship programs:

- Allergy/Immunology
  Tyler Basen– Los Angeles VA Medical Center
  Charlie Lee – Wake Forest University

- Cardiology
  Mortada (Heda) Shams – GW
  Talal Alzahrani – GW

- Critical Care
  Nihanka Tipirmeni - Stanford

- Endocrinology
  Amair Alameer - GW

- Gastroenterology
  Jessica Davis – University of Virginia
  Aung Myint - GW
  Brandon Rieders - GW

- Hematology & Oncology
  Jacob Elkon – GW
  Adam Kittai – Oregon Health Sciences University
  Nathan Punwani – University of Southern California

- Infectious Diseases
  Paul Blair – Johns Hopkins University

- Nephrology
  Yasir Ali – GW
  Nathan Calabro – Brown University

- Palliative Care
  Margaret Gloria - GW

- Rheumatology
  Ashley Nisette – University of Maryland
  Nikita Kumar – University of Arizona

Our incoming fellows for July 2016 are:

Cardiology
- James McCaffrey– Drexel University
- Mortada Shams– GWU
- Talal Alzahrani - GWU (International Medicine)

Endocrinology
- Sanaa Al Zaghal– University of Arizona
- Sana Alakbar– University of Tennessee

Gastroenterology
- Brandon Rieders–GWU
- Aung Myint– GWU

Geriatrics
- Joseph Waksim– UPMC McKeesport
- Cristina Murdock– Baylor

Hematology Oncology
- Jacob Elkon–GWU
- Umera Thebo– Cleveland Clinic Foundation

Hospice and Palliative Care
- Kathleen McCabe– Mount Sinai
- Margaret Gloria – GWU

Infectious Disease
- Hana Alseebod– Maine Medical Center
- Ryan Karshner– Jackson Memorial Hospital/ University of Miami
- Daisy Torres Miranda– University of Florida– UF Health

Nephrology
- Yasir Ali–GWU
- Mohammad Husain– Prince George's Hospital Center
- Bethune Grindley– Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center/ Weill Cornell

Pulmonary Critical Care
- Kewal Patel– Wake Forest University
- Ivana Milojicic– Johns Hopkins University/ Sinai Hospital of Baltimore

Rheumatology
- Marc Philipps– Howard University
- Mohammad Mahal J Alrehaili– King Fahd Armed Forces Hospital– Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- (International Medicine)
Rheumatology Academic Conference Schedule
January 2016

ACC Building 6B-411B (8:00 am - 9:00 am)
Ross Hall: Room 201C (9:30 am– 11:30 am)
Questions? Call (202) 741-2488

JAN 7: Quality Improvement Projects
Dr. Almanabri and Miller

JAN 7: Didactic Sessions

JAN 14: Radiology Conference
Dr. Kathleen Brindle,
Associate Professor of Radiology
Chief, Musculoskeletal Radiology
NOTE LOCATION: GWU Hospital
Radiology Conference Room

JAN 14: Didactic Sessions

JAN 21: Intra-City Rheumatology Grand Rounds
NOTE LOCATION: WHC
NOTE TIME: 7:30 AM

JAN 21: Faculty Meeting

JAN 28: Sleep Apnea
Dr. Vivek Jain

JAN 28: Didactic Sessions

Kudos and Congratulations

Kudos... to Drs. Lei Du and Erica McBride on being chosen to represent the DC ACP Chapter at the National Meeting in DC in May.

Kudos... to Dr. Jillian Catalanotti, General Internal Medicine, on being invited to be a featured expert in the NEJM Group open forum discussion: "Resident Work Hour Restrictions: iCOMPARE and FIRST Trial”.

Kudos... to Dr. Samir Patel, Renal Division; he is the featured editor for the January 2016 issue of Advances in Chronic Kidney Disease Journal. He has brought together ten world renowned authors to compile this edition titled “The Elderly and Chronic Kidney Disease.”

Kudos... to Bob Plaszczs who has joined the MFA team as our Interim Chief Information Officer, we look forward to his contributions to our organization.

Congratulations... to the Hospice/Palliative Medicine Division on their fellowship expansion, Capital Caring and the VA have pledged money for two additional fellowship slots for Hospice/Palliative Medicine starting July 2016. Special thanks to Drs. Elizabeth Cobbs and Karen Blackstone as they both do a superb job training the fellows.

See you next month! The Editor