How stress free should Medical School be? How stress free should internship/residency be? How stress free should it be to practice medicine? “Wouldn’t it be nice!” (Beach Boys 1966).

Almost all Medical Schools acted in concert to make the first two years pass/fail. The purpose of this was to take the stress off of students, however, it succeeded in making the Step 1 exam the only true indicator of accomplishment for the pre-clinical years. This obviously elevated Step 1 making the first two years more stressful.

Stress can’t be tolerated so something had to be done. It would have made sense to admit a mistake was made and reinstitute grades in the pre-clinical years but instead it looks like we will be doubling down by making Step 1 pass/fail. So add into this equation the fact that students don’t have to attend lectures in the first two years and what message will we be sending? I think the message is that this material isn’t important for anyone to know. And if that is true, we can probably eliminate another year of medical school and get down to two years instead of 4.

The other unintended consequence of making grades and Step 1 pass/fail would be to put more pressure on the clinical years (mainly the clerkships) and Step 2. I am sure that some medical educator has already thought about that and is concerned that the stress level will just be displaced to those years. Answer; make Step 2 pass/fail. That of course pushes emphasis on clerkship grades and I can’t wait to start hearing appeals from those students who received a “High Pass” when they thought they deserved “Honors.” That difference may be all that is standing between them and a Dermatology residency.

What about the stress on residency programs? How are we to evaluate students? They are already doing more extra-curricular activity than Mother Teresa and will probably start hiring tutors to help with their personal statements.

So, how do I really feel about this? Medicine isn’t a profession for everyone, nor should it be. Stress, pressure, burnout will persist no matter what we do and we need to remain vigilant to intercede with individuals when appropriate. But we can’t, shouldn’t, try to make medical training stress free.

Our education system has an amazing history of training excellent physicians even with mandatory attendance, grades and Step scores. There is an old saying “If you can’t handle the stress, get out of the cath lab”. Do people gravitate to the level of stress they can tolerate by their career choices? But what specialty is without stress (other than ID)? There is stress in treating an uncontrolled diabetic or a hypertensive patient. There is stress in telling someone bad news. There is even stress in delivering a baby. You want to be stress free become a yoga instructor not a physician.

Making another major change in education without adequate data could be much worse than doing nothing. You think Medical School is stressful, watch game 5 of the Caps v. Vegas finals from last year. That was stressful. If you are a medical student please don’t watch.

Alan G. Wasserman, M.D.
Department of Medicine
July 2019 Grand Rounds

JULY 4 NO GRAND ROUNDS

JULY 11 “Victims of Torture and Asylum”
Katalin Roth, MD, JD
Professor of Medicine
Director, Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine
GW MFA

JULY 19 “Parasitology”
Thomas Nutman, MD
Lab Chief, Laboratory of Parasitic Diseases
Chief, Helminth Immunology Section
Chief, Clinical Parasitology Section
National Institute of Health

JULY 26 Tamagna Endowed Lecture
“Renovascular Hypertension and Ischemic Nephropathy: 2019”
Stephen Textor, MD
Professor of Medicine
Division of Nephrology
Mayo Clinic
Rochester, Minnesota

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).

Academic Promotions 2019
Congratulations to the following Full-Time and Limited Service Medicine Faculty on their academic promotions, effective July 1, 2019:

Professor
Michael Irwig, MD
David Diemert, MD with Tenure

Clinical Professor
Atul Grover, MD, PhD

Associate Professor
Jalil Ahari, MD
Andrea A. Anderson, MD

Clinical Associate Professor
Dr. Maria Alexander Gomes, MS

Adjunct Associate Professor
Neal D. Barnard, MD

Adjunct Professor
Gail J. Povar, MD

Resident Lecture Series
July 2019 Noon Conference

JULY 1 NEJM Case
JULY 2 “Intro into HIV”- Dr. Marc Siegel
JULY 3 "Inflammatory vs. Osteoarthritis"- Dr. Saira Bilal
JULY 4 HOLIDAY
JULY 5 Multiple Sclerosis– Dr. Rothstein
JULY 8 Clinical Mystery Case– Dr. Simons
JULY 9 Patient Safety Conference
JULY 10 “EtOH Withdrawal”- Dr. Karolyn Teufel
JULY 11 Medicine Grand Rounds
JULY 12 “Anemia”– Dr. Shant Aryanian
JULY 15 Jeopardy
JULY 16 “Arrhythmia”- Dr. Allen Solomon
JULY 17 C. Diff– Dr. Liappis
JULY 18 Medicine Grand Rounds
JULY 19 Climate Change and Health– Dr. Hana Akselrod
JULY 22 “Neutropenic Fever”- Dr. Afsoon Roberts
JULY 23 “Heavy Metal Poisoning”– Kelly Johnson Arbor
JULY 24 “Non Invasive Oxygenation”–
Dr. Jeffrey Williams
JULY 25 Medicine Grand Rounds
JULY 26 Social Lunch
JULY 29 CVD Prevention– Dr. William Borden
JULY 30 Perioperative Medication Management– Dr. Nabil Fallouh
JULY 31 Medications for Type 2 DM (Non insulin)–
Tamara Swigert

Medicine Team Contacts
Need to find a Resident on an inpatient team?
Please use Tiger text to reach the appropriate physician. Go to gwu.medhub.com/paging; password: GWUPublicCall; Select Internal Medicine.
Alternatively
GWUH Defining Medicine Intranet: Go to Applications \ Inactive-Non-Production \ Directory Contact System
If you have trouble with your MedHub account, please contact Mary Mitchum at mdmitchum@mfa.gwu.edu.
Please Join Us In Welcoming Our New Chief Residents

Chase Houghton, MD received his Medical Degree from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine in Columbia, South Carolina. He went on to his Internal Medicine Residency in 2016 at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. He has an interest in clinical education and quality improvement which he will be pursuing at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Outside the Hospital, Chase enjoys running, playing soccer and attending local sporting events. He will be serving as Chief Medical Resident at The Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Washington D.C., starting July 1, 2019.

Michael Simon, MD, MSc received his Medical Degree from The George Washington University following completion of a Master of Science in Physiology and Biophysics at Georgetown University. A native of New York, Michael first came to GW in 2004 for his undergraduate education and has been a Washingtonian ever since. Throughout his training, Michael has maintained an interest in academic medicine and served on the admissions committee for the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences. In 2016, Michael started his Internal Medicine Residency at his alma mater, bringing over a decade of experience in the GW medical and wider DC metro community to his program. Outside the hospital, Michael is an avid cinephile, traveler, baker, and consumer of all forms of science fiction. He maintains a strong civic interest in government and policy, engaging often with his colleagues about the issues of the day. His academic interests include pulmonary and critical care medicine, and in particular the evolving connection between our changing climate and human health. Michael will serve as Chief Medical Resident at The George Washington University Hospital starting on June 23, 2019.

Elora Negose, MD received her Medical Degree from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. She went on to her Internal Medicine Residency in 2016 at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. She is in the Primary Care Program and had the opportunity to spend a year training with a focus on Primary Care. She is passionate about medical education, quality improvement, and serving the underserved. She has spent time working at Bread for the City, a local non-profit organization, and at the Indian Health Services, serving patients in the Navajo Nation. She has presented work at the annual Society of General Internal Medicine, Society of Hospitalist Medicine, and American College of Physicians national conferences. She won national recognition for her clinical vignette at the American College of Physicians national conference. She had the opportunity to present grand rounds both at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the NIH and at George Washington University. Outside the hospital, Elora is an avid Kathak dancer, world traveler, and cook. She will be serving as Chief Medical Resident at The George Washington University Hospital starting June 23, 2019.

Ralph Linwood Millett, MD received his medical degree from The University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He is aiming for a career in Hematology/Oncology and to that end has produced multiple publications during his time as resident at the George Washington University Hospital. He has also served on the House Officers Committee as well as the House Staff Council on behalf of internal medicine residents. He will be serving as Chief Medical Resident at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center starting June 23, 2019.

Kathryn (Katie) Humes, MD received her Medical Degree at the Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine in 2016 and completed her residency at George Washington University in 2019. During her residency, she served as the resident liaison for the Medical Executive Committee and Hospital Quality Council, both of which seek to improve the quality of care delivered to the patients of GW Hospital. She also served as president of the House Officer Council and Resident Quality Improvement Council, and was involved in several other hospital and internal medicine committees during her residency. She has written a few op-ed pieces for various online publications and has presented research at several national meetings, including those for the American College of Physicians, Society of General Internal Medicine, American College of Gastroenterology, and Society of Hospital Medicine. She is interested in quality improvement, hospital medicine, and health policy, and will serve as Chief Medical Resident at The George Washington University Hospital starting June 23, 2019.

Please Join Us In Welcoming Our Newest Faculty to the Department

Jacob M. Elkon, MD, joins us as Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology & Oncology at the GWU Cancer Center. Dr. Elkon earned his Medical Degree at Mercer University School of Medicine. He completed Internal Medicine Residency at the George Washington University and then a three year Fellowship in Hematology/Oncology at the same institution.

Dr. Elkon is board certified in Internal Medicine and board eligible for Hematology and Oncology and is licensed in the District of Columbia.

He is a member of several professional organizations including American Society of Hematology, American Society of Clinical Oncology, and the American Medical Association.

Dr. Elkon’s interests are in Medical Education. He is published and has participated in a number of research projects.

Congratulations

To Dr. Satyanisth Agrawal, Gastroenterology, and his family on the arrival of their baby girl, Aanya Tandon Agrawal, 5/23/19, 7 lbs, 2 oz, 20 inches.

To Erwin Osborn on their newest addition, Scott Adams Osborn, born on 6/7/2019, 8 lbs, 14 oz, 21 inches.
2018 - 2019 Department of Medicine
End-of-the-Year Party
June 7, 2019

The George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates
Department of Medicine, Suite 8-416
2150 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW