There is potentially one good thing to come out of the Republican plan to reform (excuse me, to repeal and replace) the Affordable Care Act and that is malpractice reform. The reform would only apply to Medicare, Medicaid and insurance subsidized by the Affordable Care Act. The change would be to impose limits to medical malpractice lawsuits and some product liability claims. There would be a $250,000 limit on “noneconomic damages,” which include compensation for pain and suffering, though states could set different limits.

Not surprisingly Democrats via plaintiffs’ attorneys, are opposed because it would take rights away from people served by these Federal Programs. Republicans say that malpractice limits would reduce health costs and save taxpayers billions of dollars. Who is correct? Well the Congressional Budget Office, which was touted by the Democrats as the ultimate authority when the Republican health plan was released, estimates that this change would result in reducing the federal budget deficit by almost $50 billion dollars over 10 years. The budget office states that there would be a slight decrease in the use of diagnostic tests and other services that are only done to reduce exposure to malpractice lawsuits.

Whether this is true or not, it is hard to justify using the Congressional Budget Office as the ultimate authority only when it suits your purpose. Unfortunately, one of our local Congressman, Jamie Raskin, Democrat from Maryland, is leading a charge against this bill. The non-economic damages cap in Maryland medical malpractice cases in 2017 is $785,000 and will continue to rise. There is no cap on economic damages. Does he know that California, arguably the most liberal state, has long had a $250,000 cap on noneconomic damages? The bill would also protect physicians from being named in a lawsuit against a manufacturer for prescribing a drug or medical device approved or licensed or cleared by the FDA. Physicians have often been brought in as extra bodies in suites against multi-million dollar corporations to place added pressure for those companies to settle but at great monetary and emotional expense for the physician to defend oneself.

But let’s get real. The only reason Democrats are opposed to this bill is that would limit the contingency fees that lawyers can charge for representing plaintiffs. Of all the special interests groups that the Democrats could choose from they had to settle on plaintiff attorneys? Interestingly, even though the American Medical Association is behind this bill, the Advanced Medical Technology Association, which represents device makers is against it. They don’t want physicians to be shielded from liability because it would just take away an often sympathetic defendant compared to them.

I have always been skeptical regarding the burden of malpractice cost on the overall health care system and it is probably overstated. However, if California can set limits and I have never heard that patients do not have recourse to sue nor is there a lack of attorneys waiting to assist, and the Congressional Budget Office believes there may be some real savings; then, the only objections comes down to less money for plaintiff attorneys. What could be wrong with ambulance chasers having more money and prominence? Two words: John Edwards.

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

**May 2017 Grand Rounds**

**MAY 4 Irene Tamagna Endowed Lecture**  
"Blood Pressure Control - Shouldn’t it be Simple?"  
Deepak Bhatt, MD  
Executive Director of Interventional Cardiovascular Programs  
Brigham and Women’s Hospital Heart and Vascular Center

**MAY 11 Hy Zimmerman Endowed Lecture**  
"Advances in Liver Transplantation"  
Lynt Johnson, MD  
Robert Coffey Professor of Surgery  
Chair, Department of Surgery  
Director, Hepatobiliary Surgery  
Medstar Georgetown University Hospital

**MAY 18 AOA LECTURE**  
"Cultivating Ingenuity: The Next Renaissance and the Role of Government"  
Howard Zucker, MD  
Commissioner of Health for New York State

**MAY 25 “QI GRAND ROUNDS”**  
Quality Improvement Groups  
Internal Medicine Residents  
GW Medical Faculty Associates

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**Cardiology Grand Rounds**  
5:00 PM, Ross Hall, Room # 104

**MAY 3**  
Mortality & Morbidity Conference

**MAY 10**  
Bernard Ashby, MD  
Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine  
Columbia University  
Mount Sinai Medical Center  
Vascular Medicine

**MAY 17**  
William Borden, MD  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Director, Healthcare Delivery Transformation Division, Cardiology  
Department of Medicine  
GW Medical Faculty Associates  
Health Care Symposium

**MAY 24**  
Ray Lucas, MD  
Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Professional Development– GWU  
Ellen Goldman, Ed.D., M.B.A  
Assistant Dean for Faculty and Curricular Development in Medical Education– GWU  
Teaching on the Fly

**MAY 31**  
Christopher Ramsden, MD  
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism  
Lipidology

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**Resident Lecture Series**  
**May 2017 Noon Conference**

**MAY 1**  
"Levels of Care– Part 2"- Dr. Christina Prather

**MAY 2**  
"Wound Care Part 2"- Dr. Freba Farhat

**MAY 3**  
GME

**MAY 4**  
Medicine Grand Rounds

**MAY 5**  
TBD

**MAY 8**  
Geriatrics– Dr. Christina Prather

**MAY 9**  
Mortality & Morbidity

**MAY 10**  
"Hyperthermia"- Dr. Jalil Ahari

**MAY 11**  
Medicine Grand Rounds

**MAY 12**  
Chairman’s Rounds

**MAY 15**  
"NOACs"- Dr. Kavita Natrajan

**MAY 16**  
Allergy Board Review– Dr. Jennifer Kannan

**MAY 17**  
Chairman’s Rounds

**MAY 18**  
Medicine Grand Rounds

**MAY 19**  
MS– Dr. Ted Rothstein

**MAY 22**  
“Catheter Complications”– TBD

**MAY 23**  
Cardiac Stress Testing– Steve Robie

**MAY 24**  
GME Resident Appreciation Day

**MAY 25**  
Medicine Grand Rounds

**MAY 26**  
"Intro to Structural Heart Disease"- Dr. Christian Nagy

**MAY 29**  
No Conference– Memorial Day

**MAY 30**  
TBD

**MAY 31**  
"Breast Cancer"- Dr. Holly Dushkin

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**Medicine Team Contacts**

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

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

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

**RED TEAM**  
(202) 715-6039

**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
Kay Arnberger, PA-C joins the Division of Cardiology this month. Kay has completed two Bachelor degrees the first in the Arts, at The George Washington University and another in Science, Physician Assistant Program, The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. She is board certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and is BLS, ACLS and CCDS certified. Kay is licensed in the District of Columbia, Commonwealth of Virginia and Maryland.

Kay has more than ten years of experience in healthcare; and has acquired experience in the academic realms, as a Clinical Instructor in The GWU Physician Assistant Program, instructing PA students on the components of physical exams. Kay is also a Certified Cardiac Device Specialist (CCDS).

First Watchman and Mitraclip at GW!

Congratulations to Drs. Cynthia Tracy and Christian Nagy for completing the first Watchman left atrial appendage closure device procedure at GW. This device helps reduce the risk of stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation. Our structural heart program now offers Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) and over 90 have been done, Mitraclip-transcatheter treatment of severe mitral regurgitation, WATCHMAN, as well as ASD and PFO closure. Thank you to the staff of the cath lab and the OR, and to the departments of Medicine, Surgery, Anesthesia/Critical care and Nursing for their dedication to this truly multidisciplinary program.

8th Annual GME Retreat

Took place on April 21st, with welcoming remarks from Dr. Bruno Petinaux, Interim Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Richard Simons, Senior Associate Dean for MD Programs, and Dr. Jeffrey Berger, Associate Dean for GME.

Dr. Jehan El-Bayoumi presented on Health Equity and Medical Education, understanding the relationship between the Social Determinates of Health (SDOH) on health outcomes.
Rheumatology Academic Conference Schedule
May 2017

2300 M Street, N.W., Suite 3-332
8AM—11:30 AM
Questions: Call (202) 741-2488

MAY 4:
Radiology Conference
Dr. K. Brindle
Location: Radiology conference Room, GW Hospital

MAY 4:
M&M and Clinical rounds

MAY 4:
Knowledge Bowl and Rheumatology boards training /preparation
Dr. Taylor/ Dr. Curiel

MAY 11:
Transition Medicine
Dr. Patience White

MAY 11:
M&M and clinical rounds

MAY 11:
Grand Round Rehearsal

MAY 18:
Intra-city Grand Rounds
Location: GWU
NOTE: LOCATION TIME 7:30AM

MAY 18:
M&M and clinical rounds

MAY 25:
Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy

MAY 25:
M&M and Clinical rounds

MAY 25:
Knowledge Bowl and Rheumatology boards training /preparation
Dr. Taylor/ Dr. Curiel

Kudos and Congratulations

Kudos…to Dr. Maresh Mazhari, Cardiology, on a letter of praise from a couple, “our visit turned into one of the most thorough, thoughtful, in-depth, meticulous exams we remember… she combines a deeply personal bedside manner with a methodical, analytical approach.”

Kudos…to Dr. Ivan Pena, PGY2, as he was one of the winners for the research posters at the ACP conference; his poster was titled, “A Cross-Sectional Study Reveals an Association between Electronic Cigarette Use and Myocardial Infarction”, way to go!

Kudos…to Dr. Kusha Davar, PGY2, for being recognized by GW Hospital for his outstanding contribution to the care of our patients during the GW Proud moment in GW LEAPS rounds.

Kudos… to these internal medicine residents for their presentations at the GW Residency Fellowship in Health Policy meeting in March. The following residents presented: Drs. Lauren Gilkes, PGY 1, Sam Ober, PGY 2, Celia Mouyal, PGY 2, Nick Dallas, PGY3, and Ellen Dinerman, PGY3.

Congratulations… to Dr. Hind Rafei, PGY 2, on her two abstracts that were accepted to the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) meeting for June 2017 in Chicago.

Congratulations…to Dr. Mihir Patel, General Internal Medicine, on his recent publication, “Understanding of Cardiovascular Disease risk factors among Bangladeshi Immigrants in New York City” in Ethnicity and Health.

See you next month! The Editor

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