



Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology

GI Happenings Newsletter

Prepared by Essence Pedrosa



Happy New Year Colleagues!

As we usher in 2025, I want to extend my warmest greetings to each of you. I am excited about the possibilities this year holds for us and look forward to our continued collaboration and achievements. In this month's newsletter, we have some exciting updates and announcements to share. We highlight clinical excellence, new grant awards, upcoming conferences, and special celebrations.

Let's embrace this New Year with enthusiasm and a steady commitment to excellence. Thank you for your hard work, and I look forward to an exciting and productive 2025 together.

Best,
Jennifer

IN THIS ISSUE

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Honors and Awards
- Hepatology
- Research News
- Fellow's Corner
- In case you missed it...
- Upcoming Events

IMPORTANT DATES

- DOM Grand Rounds – Jennifer Christie, MD **January 29th - 12 pm**
Bruce Schroffel Conference Center
- CU Anschutz Research Awards Ceremony February 19th
- March 1st, PRiSMs due
- April 20th, – All physician CO medical license renewal due

SAVE THE DATE

- **March 14-16th, 2025**
Rocky Mountain IBD Course –Sheraton Park City, Utah
- **Saturday, April 5th, 2025**
Sixth Annual Paul R. O'Hara II Esophagogastric Symposium

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Community Engagement houses the Health Equity in Action Lab:

- HEAL fosters action and leadership for health equity through training, consultation, and deliberate practice. They are building community capacity through a train-the-trainer program—faculty and staff are trained as HEALers who can facilitate DEI-related content. In addition, HEAL offers an array of trainings on DEI and health equity topics, workshops, retreat facilitation, and consultations by request. They collaborate with an interprofessional work group on the Inclusive Syllabus Project.

Request a Training, Consultation or Speaker [here](#).



AWARDS

RO1 Awards

- Dr. Wani will serve as a co-Investigator and site PI on a NCI grant (R01CA295877; January 2025-December 2030): A Clinical Trial of Cancer Prevention by Biomarker Based Detections of Barrett's Esophagus and its Progression. The objective of this grant is to conduct 2 clinical trials, a study of Barrett's detection in individuals without GERD using the methylated DNA EsoCheck/EsoGuard technology and a study of detecting Barrett's progression using the BAD technology, as well as a series of correlative science and basic investigations into Barrett's biology.

Clinician of the Year Award

- Kristy Severson was nominated and chosen by her peers to receive the UHealth Highlands Ranch Hospital Medical Staff Advanced Practice Clinician of the Year Award.
- The award was given after being nominated in recognition of achievement in amazing patient care and collaboration with other specialties.
- Kristy Severson will be recognized at the 3rd Annual Medical Staff Dinner on January 30, 2025. Congratulations Kristy!



3 Minute Thesis Competition

- Third year PhD candidate Grecia Rivera Palomino, in Dr. Theiss lab, recently participated in the 3 Minute Thesis Competition organized by the graduate school and won the 1st place in the event (chosen by judges) and People's Choice Award.
- The topic was related on how specific mitochondrial proteins in the intestinal epithelial cells can confer a protective effect to the host against enteropathogens during bacterial infections.
- Please visit the link: [Impact of Succinct Communication](#)

HEPATOLOGY!

Hepatology and Liver Transplantation Webinar Series

The 2024 Hepatology and Liver Transplantation webinar series concluded with lectures by Dr. Norvell (Updates in Management of Alcohol Associated Liver Disease). The webinars were well-attended from within our division as well as from community providers. Videos for all the webinars in this series from 2022, 2023 and 2024 are all uploaded on the website. The webinars also offer free CME and nursing credit. Be on the lookout for the release of the 2025 webinar schedule, coming soon!

For more information or to stay up to date on hepatology, check out our website [here](#).



Course Director:
Avash Kalra, MD
Assistant Professor
Director of Liver
Transplant
Outreach and
Strategic
Development

RESEARCH NEWS

Announcement from Dr. Sachin Wani

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am thrilled to share some exciting news from the Katy O. and Paul M. Rady Esophageal and Gastric Center of Excellence. As we look forward to 2025, I am pleased to announce the recipients of the American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grants (ACS IRG).

This year, we are proud to award three grants to outstanding researchers whose work will significantly contribute to the conquest of cancer and further the objectives of our Center. The recipients of these seed grants are:



Project Title	PI(s)
Childhood Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon Exposure – A Possible Cause of Young Age Esophageal Cancer in Kenya	Dr. Mohammad Bilal, Co-PI Dr. Sonja Dawsey, Co-PI
What Our Patients Are Trying to Tell Us: An Analysis of Flatiron Health Data to Better Understand Treatment and Outcomes for People Diagnosed with Esophageal Cancer	Dr. Carlin Callaway
Impact of adherence to endoscopic quality indicators in Barrett's esophagus on rates of post-endoscopy esophageal neoplasia: A population-based analysis using the GIQuIC National Quality Benchmarking Registry	Dr. Sridevi Pokala, Co-PI Dr. Thomas Enke, Co-PI

The purpose of the ACS IRG program is to support the development of exceptional research projects that have the potential to make groundbreaking advancements in cancer research. These awards are made possible through the generous support of the Paul O'Hara Chair, held by Madeline Kane, MD, PhD, and the Executive Director of the Rady Center of Excellence, Sachin Wani, MD.

We believe that the innovative work of these researchers will pave the way for new discoveries and treatments that will benefit patients worldwide. Their dedication and commitment to excellence embody the mission of our Center, and we are honored to support their efforts.

Warm regards,

Sachin Wani, MD, FASGE, AGAF
Executive Director, Katy O. and Paul M. Rady Esophageal and Gastric Center of Excellence

Highlighted Publications

- Dr. Frank Scott was co-author on two publications in December 2024 issue of Gastroenterology, including the new guidelines for moderate to severe ulcerative colitis. One of our graduates of our fellowship program, John Haydek, who is now on faculty at UNC, was also a co-author on these publications.

Links: [https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085\(24\)05563-X/fulltext](https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085(24)05563-X/fulltext)

[https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085\(24\)05480-5/fulltext](https://www.gastrojournal.org/article/S0016-5085(24)05480-5/fulltext)

GI FELLOWS CORNER

Dr. Christian Davis' study titled - "High rates of dysplasia in a population-based analysis of incidental Barrett's esophagus" has been accepted for publication as an original research article in Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology.

Congratulations To Our Matched GI Fellows

Mohanad Awadalla, MD - University of Massachusetts Medical School

Julie Giannini, MD - Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Rachna Talluri, MD - University of Colorado

Alejandra Vargas, MD - Eastern Virginia Medical School

Kai Vosoughi, MD - University of Colorado

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

December Annual Employee Appreciation Event

This year's event was held at Punch Bowl Social. There was karaoke, bowling, arcade games, and much more! We sincerely hope those that attended had a great time and we look forward to celebrating a year of excellence and hard work again next year!



Annual American College of Gastroenterology Conference

In October 2024, we were proud to have several CU faculty and fellows present their research, invited talks, and receive professional awards at the ACG meeting in Philadelphia, PA. Cate Brady, MPA presented her work on "Strategic Recruitment for an Advanced Practice Provider Fellowship in Gastroenterology". Cate's poster was one of few APP posters accepted for presentation and was well received with over 25 QR code scans.

Staff Highlights

On December 5th, the GI staff gathered together for a staff ugly sweater contest. **Kay Denler**, the Division Administrator for GI, and GI admin team worked hard to bring the staff together for food, fellowship, a gift exchange, and of course, an ugly sweater contest!



UPCOMING EVENTS

DOM Grand Rounds – Jennifer Christie, MD

Jennifer Christie, MD, MASGE, AGAF, Professor & Director, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology will be presenting at the Department of Medicine's Grand Rounds on 1/29 at 12:00 pm. Join us in person at the Bruce Schreffel Auditorium, University of Colorado Hospital, Anschutz Inpatient Pavilion 2, First Floor Conference Room – Lunch Provided or via Zoom.



Wellness Announcement

Thanks to the Wellness and Epic Sprint Clinical Teams:

Epic Sprint is planned for Jan-Feb for AMC GI and Therapeutics. Please schedule 1:1 sessions, plan ahead with any pain points (big or small), and try to attend the education sessions during the Sprint.

Culture of Wellness

- Workflow observation & improvements
- Role model teamwork



Efficiency of Practice

- Intensive **re-education** (best practices, reduce variation)
- Epic Ambulatory **build** (user-centered design)

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Faculty Development Corner

Welcome to PRISM season. We wish you all a successful review.

An important note from Swati Patel, MD;

Assistant Professor faculty who are going up for promotion in 2025 should meet with Dr. Patel to go over their dossier to ensure they meet criteria and have lined up external letter writers. Those faculty who are post mid-course review and planning to go up in the next 2-3 years should also reach out to Dr. Patel so she can help ensure that they are on track.

An important note from Michelle Gruver;

All physician CO medical licenses are due up for renewal by April 30, 2025. Physicians can get reimbursed for the renewal fee using their faculty funds if you would like. Please submit receipts to your respective admin.

ASGE Annual Advanced Provider Course

The ASGE Annual Advanced Provider course will be held virtually the weekend of March 21-22. This course has the reputation of being outstanding and our very own **Katelyn Cookson, PA-C** in our interventional section is one of the course directors. Please consider registering as there will be valuable learning for everyone.

[Register here!](#)

SAVE THE DATE

SIXTH ANNUAL
PAUL R. O'HARA II ESOPHAGOGASTRIC SYMPOSIUM

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2025
ANSCHUTZ HEALTH SCIENCE BUILDING
DON ELLIMAN CONFERENCE CENTER



REGISTER HERE

Providers will have a unique chance to engage with esteemed practitioners specializing in esophageal and gastric disorders. They will be able to collaborate with colleagues and gain insights directly from patients. The discussions will cover a range of topics, including benign conditions, screening guidelines, pre- and post-treatment care, holistic approaches to patient well-being, and the latest discoveries in research.

CME AVAILABLE

This activity has been approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*



Katy O. and Paul M. Rady Esophageal
and Gastric Center of Excellence
DANGER CENTER | SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

ROCKY MOUNTAIN IBD COURSE

MARCH 14-16, 2025



Sheraton Park City
in Park City, Utah

REGISTER AT ROCKYMOUNTAINIBD.COM



School of Medicine
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Department of Medicine, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology

General Inquiries: 12631 E 17th Ave, B178 | Aurora, CO 80045

Phone: 303-724-0262

medschool.cuanschutz.edu/gastroenterology

