

# ID DIGEST



## A DIVISION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NEWSLETTER

**August & September 2025**



**A Message from Wendy Armstrong, MD, FIDSA**  
Infectious Diseases Division Head

This late summer/early fall has been a time of opportunity in the Division. Two new faculty members have joined us—Jennifer Spicer as the Vice Chair of Education for the Department of Medicine and Sarah Scott, a clinician and researcher with an interest in health outcomes related to poverty and homelessness, including HIV and other infectious diseases. We will be welcoming several more faculty members to the Division over the coming months! This excitement is tempered by Steve Johnson's retirement. As you can see below, he has been an integral member of the CU ID community for 31 years, but we look forward to his next chapter and celebrating his career with him. I'm also thrilled that so many of our (mostly junior) faculty members are participating in programs like the Teaching Scholars program (Sam Kaplan, Steven Mudroch), the Certificate Training Program in Health Quality Transformation (Hayato Mitaka, Alyssa Castillo and Karinne Brade) and the Leaders in Informatics, Quality and Systems Fellowship (Brian Grundy). I think the Division is an exciting place to be right now and am proud to have the honor of being Division Head for this group of compassionate, talented, dedicated faculty. Read on to see evidence of all that's happening!

**Featured News**



### **Honoring Dr. Steven Johnson's Remarkable Career in Infectious Diseases**

Dr. Steven Johnson is retiring from the University of Colorado School of Medicine on October 31, 2025. While Dr. Johnson will conclude his clinical work at the University of Colorado Hospital and the HIV Outreach Clinics, he will continue to share his expertise through periodic lectures locally and nationally in his new role as Professor Emeritus.

Dr. Johnson has had a remarkable career and an enduring impact on our division, our institution, the state of Colorado, nationally, and within the specialty of infectious diseases overall. He earned his MD at Northwestern University Medical School (1980-1984) funded by an Army scholarship, then completed his Internal Medicine Residency at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center (1984–1987) and his ID Fellowship at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (1987–1990). From 1990–1994, he served as a staff physician at Walter Reed, where he was an HIV provider, ID consultant, Chair of Infection Control, and Co-Director of the TB Clinic.

He was recruited to CU in 1994 and led the Infectious Disease Group Practice and HIV Clinical Program until 2016. Among his many accomplishments in the CU clinical space, he expanded the HIV program, launched the OPAT program, acquired the Travel Clinic, relocated the IDGP to Anschutz, and developed many outpatient initiatives, including Transplant ID, body fluid exposure management, and Hepatitis C treatment. Perhaps most importantly, Steve directed the Ryan White Part A program throughout his tenure, securing \$27 million in competitive grant funding over 32 years. He also served on the City of Denver's Ryan White Planning Council and the Governor's AIDS Council.

Steve has made a profound impact across the state—empowering healthcare providers through training and expanding access to care for patients in remote areas. Steve played a key role in launching Ryan White Part C-funded HIV clinics in Grand Junction and Durango (2000), traveling monthly for 25 years until June 2024. In 2003, he was instrumental in developing the Ryan White Part C-funded HIV collaborative clinic at the Pueblo Community Health Center. He provided consultations, including monthly on-site clinics, for 22 years until September of 2025. In 2013, he helped establish the Ryan

White Part B-funded HIV collaborative care clinic at Salud Family Health Center in Fort Collins. He provided consultations, including monthly on-site clinics, for 12 years until September of 2025.

Throughout his career at CU, he has been a busy clinician in the IDGP (1994-2025), on the UCH inpatient ID services (1994-2025), on the VAMC inpatient ID service (1994-2008), and at 5 outreach clinics: ARTS Denver, Mercy Durango (2000-2024), St. Mary's Grand Junction (2000-2024), Pueblo Community Health Center (2003-2025), and Salud Fort Collins (2013-2025). He has had over 55,000 patient encounters. Steve served as the Medical Director of the Colorado AIDS Education and Training Center from 1998-2004, then Medical Director of the Mountain-Plains AIDS Education and Training Center from 2005-2015, and then back as the Medical Director of the Colorado AIDS Education and Training Center from 2016-2025.

In 2016, Steve became the Associate Division Head for Clinical Affairs in the ID Division, continuing in this role until 2023. During this time, he expanded the inpatient clinical services and helped lead the division's clinical response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During his 31-year career at CU, he has given over eight hundred invited lectures, including local, regional, national, and international locations. He has also participated in both the NECTAR and COZIE programs in Zimbabwe. Steve is an author on 46 peer-reviewed publications, 29 book chapters/monographs/invited articles, 25 publications for the AIDS Education and Training Centers, and 58 abstracts.

Recognized as a national authority in HIV care, Dr. Johnson has been called upon to serve in numerous high-impact advisory roles. He was a member of the CDC/HRSA Advisory Committee on HIV and STD Prevention and Treatment from 2011 to 2015. From 2018 until his retirement in October 2025, he served on the DHHS Panel for the Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in Adults and Adolescents with HIV. He also contributed to the NIH COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines from their inception in March 2020 through April 2024 and remained a member of the IDSA COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel until his retirement. Since 2007, he has served as a board member for the IAS-USA Cases on the Web, a role he continues to hold.

Steve's service to CU and UCH has been exceptional in both scope and influence. He was a member of the CU Medicine Board of Directors for 21 years (1999-2020), Co-Chair of the UCHHealth Vaccine Subcommittee for 19 years (2006-2025), and served on the Department of Medicine Assistant-Associate Professor Promotions Committee for 19 years (2006-2025).

His contributions have been recognized with numerous awards, including the President's Award for Outstanding Clinical Service (1998), the Outstanding Physician of the Year Award (2006), and the Lifetime Achievement Award (2024) from the University of Colorado Hospital Medical Staff. He received the COVID-19 Pandemic Leadership Response Team Award from the Department of Medicine in 2020. In addition, he has been recognized for 25 years of service at the St. Mary's Family Practice Center in Grand Junction and Mercy Regional Medical Center in Durango. He has also received recognition awards for

service on the DHHS Antiretroviral Treatment Guidelines Panel and the NIH COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel. He has been recognized as a Top Physician in HIV and Infectious Diseases in *5280 Magazine* twelve times.

Steve, your leadership and presence will be greatly missed in our division and across the broader HIV care landscape. We are deeply grateful for your decades of service and the legacy you leave behind. We wish you all the best in retirement and look forward to staying connected.

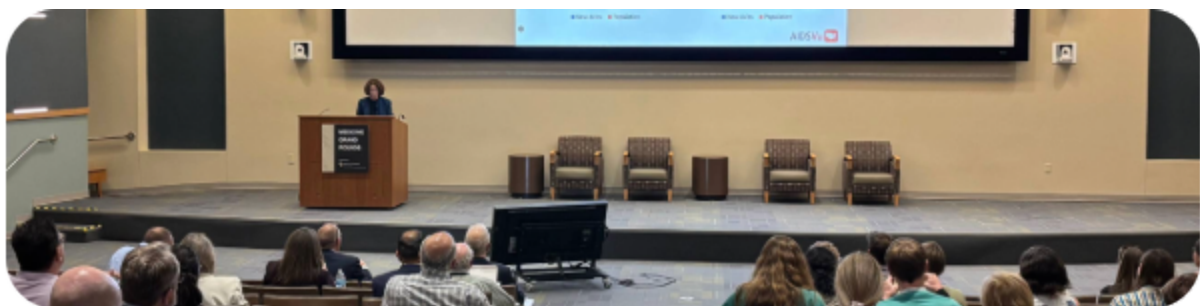
---



### **Dr. Wendy Armstrong Named President-Elect of IDSA**

We are thrilled to share that Dr. Wendy Armstrong has been named President-Elect of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), effective October 23, 2025. A nationally recognized leader in infectious diseases and HIV care, Dr. Armstrong brings decades of clinical expertise, research insight, and advocacy to this prestigious role. Her appointment reflects a deep commitment to advancing the field and supporting the next generation of ID professionals. Congratulations, Wendy!

---



### **Dr. Susan Buchbinder Visits as 2025 Tim Gill Visiting Professor**

The Division was delighted to host Dr. Susan Buchbinder as the 2025 Tim Gill Visiting Professor on August 26 and 27. Dr. Buchbinder is appointed at the San Francisco Department of Public Health as Director of the Bridge HIV program, and she is affiliated as a clinical professor of medicine and epidemiology at the University of California San Francisco. Dr. Buchbinder has been at the forefront of HIV prevention research, leading landmark clinical trials of vaccines, PrEP, and other prevention strategies, and has been central to shaping the public health effort for HIV programs in San Francisco.

and globally. During her visit, Dr. Buchbinder met with members of the community, delivered a compelling ID Grand Rounds presentation titled "Doxy-PEP: From Evidence to Implementation", and shared insights during Department of Medicine Grand Rounds with her talk "The Leading Edge of HIV Prevention." We extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Buchbinder for her invaluable contributions during this visit.

We are grateful to Tim Gill and the Gill Foundation for supporting this annual lecture series. The Foundation supports HIV research, treatment, and prevention efforts, as well as efforts to secure nationwide civil rights for LGBTQ Americans.



### 5280 Magazine Top Doctors for 2025

We're proud to celebrate our faculty who were recognized in this year's [5280 Top Doctors](#) list! Congratulations to Drs. Bob Belknap, Tom Campbell, Lakshmi Chauhan, Chuck Daley, Margaret Fitzpatrick, Katherine Frasca, Brian Grundy, Michelle Haas, Michael Haden, Andrés Henao-Martinez, Misha Huang, Steven Johnson, Shannon Kasperbauer, Nancy Madinger, Brian Montague, Larissa Pisney, Cara Wilson, Heather Young, and Shanta Zimmer.

---

#### Patient Experience Quotes

"I will really miss **Dr. [Steven] Johnson**. He saved my life."

"Truly one of the best doctors I've had in my life. He's the best of the best. And I thank him for everything. Thank you, **Dr. [Steven] Johnson**."

"**Dr. [Larissa] Pisney** is fantastic. She takes time to get to know you and your specific situation. She provides multiple options to you and her recommendation as to what would be best for your treatment. She answers all of your questions in a straightforward manner, and isn't afraid if she doesn't know something to say so and then find the answer for you. I highly recommend Dr. Pisney to anyone needing an infectious disease provider."

"**Dr. [Kristine] Erlandson**'s care is a masterclass in humanity and expertise. Each visit affirms not just her clinical excellence, but her unwavering presence and respect. Her nurse brings warmth and precision that make the experience seamless. Together, they embody what medicine should feel like—safe, seen, and sincerely supported."

"**Dr. [Brian] Montague** is the best doctor I've ever had, he is always kind and thorough and seems to genuinely care about his patients."

"**Dr. Sarah Scott** treated us with kindness, attentiveness, and professionalism. She exuded confidence in explaining and in listening to our concerns. My wife and I (the patient) were impressed with her knowledge and expertise."

"**Dr. [Laura Damioli]** is very knowledgeable and caring. She has great insight into an infection following a partial hip replacement that has been very difficult to treat. I am a heart transplant recipient, and since I am on antirejection medication, fighting the infection has been especially difficult. But Dr. Damioli and the team in Infectious Diseases have really gone the extra mile to provide me with a solution. I am very grateful for the care and support I have received."

"**Dr. [Sarah] Mann** was great, informative and easy to speak with. The nurse who gave me the shots was equally as wonderful."

"**Dr. [Hillary] Dunlevy** is kind and compassionate and put me at ease. She made the procedure (anoscopy) as comfortable as possible. She is my favorite healthcare provider and I wish I could see her for all my healthcare needs."

---

### Awards



### Dr. Steph Dillion, R03 Grant

Congratulations to Dr. Steph Dillion who scored in the 3rd percentile on an R03 grant! Steph serves as Principal Investigator, with division co-investigators Dr. Kristine Erlandson, Dr. Cara Wilson, Dr. Dan Frank, and Melissa Wilson.

The grant, titled "Gut Check: The Impact of Gut Bacteria on Physical Function in Older Adults with and without HIV," is a proof-of-concept study leveraging the NIH-supported MACS/WIHS Combined Cohort Study. It will explore specific microbial features of the gut



microbiome–physical function axis in older adults with and without HIV, and examine the microbiome’s role as a longitudinal determinant of changes in physical function.



**Dr. Szu-Wei Huang, Science Matters DOM Scholar in Infectious Diseases**

Congratulations to Dr. Szu-Wei Huang on receiving an early-career investigator award for his project titled “Roles of HIV-1 Ribonucleoprotein Complexes in Regulating the Conical Architecture of the Mature Capsid and Nuclear Import of Viral Cores.” The research will use advanced imaging techniques to investigate the role of vRNPs in the early phase of HIV-1 replication, with a particular focus on nuclear import.



**Dr. Kellie Hawkins, David Cohn Scholar in Public Health**

Congratulations to Dr. Kellie Hawkins on receiving an early-career investigator award for her study “Patient-Centered Development of an Intervention for Integrating Long-Acting ART into Low-Barrier HIV Care”. Low-barrier care models for people with HIV (PWH) who have adherence challenges and face multiple barriers to care have demonstrated remarkable improvements in viral suppression. Concurrently, long-acting antiretroviral therapy (LA-ART) is a highly effective, new tool for HIV management with the potential to have great impact among people who have difficulty adhering to daily oral pills. The objectives of her study are 1) To qualitatively assess preferences, barriers, and facilitators of LA-ART uptake among PWH with adherence challenges in the context of low-barrier care and 2) Develop an implementation plan for a low-barrier care intervention providing LA-ART choice (combined low-barrier/LA-ART intervention).



**Dr. Kristine Erlandson, R01 for the REINFORCE Trial**

Dr. Kristine Erlandson was awarded a 3-year R01 from NIDDK for “Incretin Microdosing for Cardiometabolic Health in People With HIV: The REINFORCE Trial.” This multi-PI grant includes Drs. Jordan Lake (UT Houston) and Markella Zanni (MGB), with statistical support from Melissa Wilson.

## Ryan White Part A Funding Update

Dr. Steven Johnson provided the following update on Ryan White Part A funding:

"We received our final notice of award for the Ryan White Part A grant for the current fiscal year, 3/1/25-2/28/26. We received a total award of \$879,819. This is 11% lower than last year, in part due to an overall cut in the grant to the City of Denver and in part due to other funding sources that we have obtained. However, given the current federal funds climate which has included major cuts to other HIV-related grants, I consider this award amount to be a great success. We are now in our 32nd year of Ryan White Part A funding with a cumulative award of over 27 million dollars! I wanted to say a special thank you to Lisa Lawrence and Barbara Palmer for decades of skillful management of the grant. And, of course, a thank you to the ID Division, the Department of Medicine, UCH (especially Tom Gronow), and the many physicians, APPs, nurses, pharmacists, medical assistants, social workers, front desk staff, administrators, and patient support team members who have delivered such great care to people with HIV!" -Steven Johnson

---

### Division Happenings



#### National APP Week

National APP Week was in September, and we're proud to recognize the incredible contributions of our Advanced Practice Providers. Our division is fortunate to have such a skilled and dedicated group supporting both inpatient and outpatient care. You are valued members of our faculty and team—and we were happy to celebrate with cookies! Thank you for all that you do.



#### Potluck at Wendy's House

Thank you to everyone who joined the potluck at Dr. Wendy Armstrong's home to welcome our new division members. The turnout was fantastic, with affiliate hospital-based faculty and family members joining in. Dr. Armstrong was delighted to host and was grateful for the delicious dishes shared by all!





### **Division Retreat**

Thank you to everyone who attended our faculty retreat—we loved seeing so many of us together! The energy, creativity, and collaboration in the room sparked a wave of exciting ideas we're eager to carry forward as our division continues to grow.



### **Division Baby Shower**

The Division was delighted to host a baby shower for Dr. Nina Millman. We're thrilled to welcome the new addition to our ID family! Thank you to everyone who joined in the celebration.

### **Invited Lectures & Traveling Physicians:**

- Dr. Eric Poeschla:
  - Eric Poeschla gave an invited talk at the 4th Triennial BatID Symposium in Chicago, Illinois on July 10, 2025: "Retroviral restriction in bats: characterization of a specific Pteropid post-entry restriction to HIV-1 and identification of Pteropus alecto TRIM5 as a functional antiretroviral restriction factor."
  - Eric Poeschla was a round table participant and discussant at a Sustained Viral Resilience Symposium in Oxford, UK, August 1-2, 2025.
  - Eric Poeschla was a visiting professor on August 7 at University of York/Hull Medical School, UK and spoke on "ADAR1 editing of dsRNA and MDA5 sensing of viruses: investigating the fundamental balance between effective antiviral innate immunity and deleterious autoimmunity."
- Dr. Chia-Yu Chiu presented twice at the World Transplant Congress in San Francisco, California, August 2-6, 2025. His projects were "Low-Dose Valganciclovir for Primary Cytomegalovirus Prophylaxis after Heart Transplant" and "Seroprevalence and Incidence of Measles, Mumps, and Rubella in Adult Solid Organ Transplant Recipients: A Large Database Analysis" (with mentor Dr. Andrés Henao-Martinez).
- The Erlandson Research Group had multiple abstracts accepted at the International Workshop on HIV/Aging in October.
  - Dr. Jacob Walker (Oral Abstract)
  - Dr. Grace Kulik (Poster and Oral Abstract)

- Dr. Steph Dillon (Poster)
- Dr. Evelyn Iriarte-Parra (Lightening Oral Abstract)
- Dr. Andrés Henao-Martinez was invited to give a presentation at ESCMID Global 2026 in Munich, Germany, April 17-21, 2026.

## Other Updates:

- The CU Anschutz Department of Medicine published a FY2025 Annual Report. Highlights from the Division of Infectious Diseases begin on page 84. [Read the Annual Report.](#)
- Dr. Wilson (PI) received the NOA for the R21 grant: "Gut microbiota dynamics, exercise and physical function among older people with HIV." Co-investigators are Dr. Steph Dillon, Dr. Kristine Erlandson, Dr. Dan Frank, and Melissa Wilson.
- Dr. Stephen Morris and family welcomed a daughter, Isabelle Leilah Morris, on July 25, 2025.
- Dr. Nina Millman and family welcomed a daughter, Aria Carmela Green, on October 9, 2025.

---

## Some Recent Publications



### Dr. Dan Pastula & Dr. Ken Tyler

Dr. Dan Pastula and Dr. Ken Tyler had two book chapters published in the latest [10th Edition of Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases.](#)

Pastula DM, Tyler KL. Coltiviruses (Colorado tick fever virus) and seadornaviruses. In: Mandell, Douglas, and Bennett's Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases, 10th Edition. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Elsevier Inc.; July 2025: Chapter 156.

Tyler KL, Pastula DM. Orthoreoviruses and orbiviruses. In: Mandell, Douglas, and Bennett's Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases, 10th Edition. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Elsevier Inc.; July 2025: Chapter 155.



### Poeschla Laboratory

The Poeschla lab published an original research investigation in *mBio* in July. Drs. Caitlin Miller and James Morrison were co-first authors, and collaborators on the Boulder campus also contributed.

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Eddie Stenehjem**

Dr. Eddie Stenehjem published an article titled "Increasing HIV Testing During Gonorrhea and Chlamydia Evaluations in Urgent Care and Emergency Departments: A Large Health System Initiative" in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Kellie Hawkins**

Dr. Kellie Hawkins published an article titled "Social Determinants of Health and Risk for Long COVID in the U.S. RECOVER-Adult Cohort" in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Nina Millman**

Dr. Nina Millman published an article titled "Disparities in screening, diagnosis, and treatment of diabetes mellitus among people with HIV at a large southeastern academic health center" in *HIV Research and Clinical Practice*.

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Margaret Fitzpatrick**

Dr. Margaret Fitzpatrick published an article titled "Standard vs. enhanced implementation strategies to increase adoption of a multidrug-resistant organism alert tool: a cluster randomized trial" in *Frontiers in Health Services*.

[Read More](#)



#### **Melissa Wilson**

Melissa Wilson, ID Statistician and Research Scientist, published her dissertation manuscript, "The effects of missing data due to study dropout on longitudinal analysis inference using outcome-dependent sampling" in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*.

[Read More](#)



#### **Dr. Rebecca Unterborn, Dr. Chia-Yu Chiu, & Dr. Karrine Brade**

Dr. Rebecca Unterborn, Dr. Chia-Yu Chiu, and Dr. Karrine Brade published a case report titled "Ganciclovir-resistant CMV encephalitis in a mantle cell lymphoma patient on pirtobrutinib: Case report" in *IDCases*.

[Read More](#)

#### **Dr. Chia-Yu Chiu & Andrés Henao-Martinez**

Dr. Chia-Yu Chiu and Andrés Henao-Martinez published an article titled "Association between tick-bite history and safety of gelatin-containing vaccines: Analysis of a large database of the United States" in *Ticks and Tick-borne Diseases*.

[Read More](#)



#### **Dr. Leland Shapiro & Andrés Henao-Martinez**

Dr. Leland Shapiro and Dr. Andrés Henao-Martinez published an article titled "Adjunct corticosteroids for non-HIV infected patients with severe *Pneumocystis jirovecii* pneumonia" in *The Lancet Respiratory Medicine*.

[Read More](#)

#### **Andrés Henao-Martinez**

Dr. Andrés Henao-Martinez published two articles in *Therapeutic Advances in Infectious Diseases*.

"Global "expiration" of abacavir in adults with HIV: a rapid review of safety and efficacy concerns challenging its role in modern ART"

[Read More](#)

"Yellow fever's distressing return: a wake-up call for public health in the Americas"

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Joshua Barocas**

Dr. Joshua Barocas and members from the Barocas lab published an article titled "Improving health and housing outcomes through a simulation and economic model: an evidence-based protocol of a group model building approach to develop an agent-based model" in *Frontiers in Public Health*.

[Read More](#)

Dr. Joshua Barocas published an article titled "Access to hospitals with extracorporeal membrane oxygenation capabilities as a potential of driver of disparities" in the *Journal of Critical Care*.

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Kristine Erlandson**

Dr. Kristine Erlandson published an article titled "Frailty, Pitavastatin, and Major Adverse Cardiovascular Events Among People With HIV" in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

[Read More](#)



**Dr. Wendy Armstrong**

Dr. Wendy Armstrong published an article titled "Long-Acting Cabotegravir/Rilpivirine, Lenacapavir, and Ibalizumab Use Among Persons With HIV-1 Viremia at a Ryan White-Funded Clinic in the Urban US South" in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

[Read More](#)

---

## News Features

### *Department of Medicine Newsroom*

CU Doctor Tackles Antimicrobial Resistance in New UCHealth System Role

As medical director of antimicrobial stewardship for the UCHealth system, **Misha Huang, MD**, aims to reduce an alarming and growing public health trend — antimicrobial resistance.

[Read More](#)

### *Department of Medicine Newsroom*

‘The Utmost Quality’: How CU Anschutz Training Prepares Infectious Diseases Fellow for Future Goals

As a fellow, **Tommy King, MD**, has found a passion for orthopedic infectious diseases and grown his skills as a clinician, educator, and researcher.

[Read More](#)

### *Department of Medicine Newsroom*

‘Where I Want to Be’: Egyptian Doctor Becomes CU Resident After Observership Experience

“Through our observership program, we aim to enhance our international exchange programs by exposing learners to advanced medical practices, cutting-edge technologies, evidence-based practices, and multidisciplinary care approaches employed in academic medical centers,” says **Andrés Henao, MD, PhD**, director of the department’s global health program and an associate professor of infectious diseases.

[Read More](#)

### *9News*

Colorado West Nile cases, deaths continue to climb

This time of the year, **Dr. Dan Pastula**, Chief of Neuro-Infectious Diseases and Global Neurology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and UCHealth, said it's not a surprise.

[Read More](#)

---



**Share Your Updates**

Have news for the next *ID Digest*? Send your submissions to [eleonor.shields-ramirez@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:eleonor.shields-ramirez@cuanschutz.edu).

**Stay Connected**

Visit our [Linktree](#) to find our platforms for staying connected with the Division of Infectious Diseases.

