



Division of Infectious Diseases

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



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**February 2024**

### **Eddie Stenehjem Leadership Announcement**

Hello CU Infectious Diseases community. I hope this finds you well. We've had a busy month, so much so we needed an additional day. Happy Leap Year! This is a jam-packed newsletter celebrating the incredible work of our faculty. Dr. Barocas was named to the Board of Scientific Counselors for Infectious Diseases of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Dan Frank won the SOM Research Faculty Collaborator award, and both Tim Jenkins and Lakshmi Chauhan were inducted into the Clinical Excellence Society. Being surrounded by such incredible clinicians, researchers, and educators is such an honor. Thank you for all that you do. In March we will be launching the ID Division Head search. We are excited to find the next leader of this incredible division. For those that are attending, have a great time at CROI!

Sincerely,  
Eddie Stenehjem



**Joshua Barocas, MD**

Board of Scientific Counselors for Infectious Diseases,  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

### **Joshua Barocas to Serve on Board of Scientific Counselors for Infectious Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

Joshua Barocas has been invited by Secretary Becerra to serve on the Board of Scientific Counselors for Infectious Diseases of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Board advises the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS); the Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and the Directors of the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), the National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP), the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), and the Global Health Center (GHC), CDC. The Board provides advice concerning strategies, goals, and priorities for the programs and research within the national centers and will monitor the overall strategic direction and focus of CDC's infectious disease programs and centers.

Congratulations to Josh on this remarkable achievement, a testament to his expertise and dedication in the field of infectious diseases.

### **Jose Castillo-Mancilla: Long-Acting HIV Treatment Demonstrates Efficacy in People with Challenges Taking Daily Medicine as Prescribed**

In a groundbreaking achievement, the results of the LATITUDE study (ACTG A5359) were recently unveiled, demonstrating the superior efficacy of long-acting CAB/RPV compared to the oral standard of care for individuals facing barriers to adherence. Led by Jose Castillo-Mancilla and Aadia Rana (UAB) for nine years, the study navigated challenges, including a global pandemic, to impact lives and change guidelines. Special appreciation is extended to Tom Campbell and the [Infectious Diseases Clinical Trials Unit](#) for their support. The DSMB Review on February 12, 2024, affirmed the long-acting injectable's effectiveness, leading to the halting of Step 2 and offering the long-acting regimen to eligible participants. The ACTG A5359 team is diligently working on protocol amendments, and participants will be updated accordingly. Read the [NIH Newsroom article](#) and [press release](#).

## **Patient Experience Quotes**

"I recently visited **Dr. [Misha] Huang** for an International travel vaccination review and was extremely impressed with the level of care I received. The staff was friendly and welcoming, and

Dr. Huang took the time to answer all of my questions and address any concerns I had. I felt like I was in good hands throughout the entire visit. I would highly recommend Dr. Huang to anyone looking for a caring and knowledgeable physician."

"The kindest Doctor [**Dana Karp**] I see. I feel she cares about my health and wants me to be the best I can be. Give me her address and I will send her flowers! Have her give classes and teach compassion to other Doctors."

"I love that he [**Dr. Craig Nielsen**] doesn't make my visit feel rushed, and actually listens to me and gives me educated advice/treatments."

"**Dr. [Alyssa] Castillo** is always quick to respond to my messages. She takes them seriously and explains my health problems and reasons for treatment she recommends and keeps other physicians in the "loop." She is one of the best!"

"Outstanding visit with **Donna McGregor**. She was very knowledgeable and thorough, and took extensive time reviewing my travel itinerary and answering all of my questions. I appreciate her desire to make sure I understood everything! The nursing staff, including Angel and one other, were outstanding as well!"

"I felt **Dr. Nina Millman** was professional, very personable, was sharp, intelligent, and on top of things. Yeah, I'm in very good hands. Thank you."

"**Dr. [Kristine] Erlandson** is possibly the best doctor I have ever had. She cares about me and what happens to me. She contacts me to check on how I am doing. She makes herself available. She listens and takes what I say seriously. She is kind. She is partnering with me to help me get better."

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## Awards Received

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### **Dan Frank Receives Research Faculty Collaborator Award**

Congratulations to Dan Frank, honored at the CU Anschutz Research Awards Ceremony on February 27, 2024, with this year's Research Faculty Collaborator Award. Dan studies the human microbiome's impact on health and disease. The award acknowledges a researcher who employs collaborative approaches and teamwork to address challenging scientific questions. Official event photos haven't yet been released, but we've included an unofficial snapshot capturing the celebratory moment below. A truly well-deserved recognition.



### **Colbert Lab's Manuscript Earns APSselect Recognition**

The "Colbert Lab" recently published a manuscript in the *American Journal of Physiology – Lung Cellular and Molecular Physiology* that was chosen for the February 2024 APSselect recognition. This award highlights research from across all the American Physiological Society journals for distinction in scholarship. The first author, Evan Zehr, is a current Chief Medical Resident and future Pulmonary/Critical Care fellow at Vanderbilt University. Other notable authors (from an ID standpoint) include Bruce McCollister and former fellow Sam Windham (currently on faculty at WashU in St. Louis). This study investigated the multidirectional relationship between bacterial pneumonia-induced shedding of epithelial heparan sulfate (a component of the pulmonary epithelial glycocalyx) and the subsequent inhibition of local antimicrobial peptide function. Read the manuscript [here](#).

### **Nipun Atri "Best Preceptor" Award**

Nipun Atri was nominated by students for the "Best Preceptor" Award based on the course "Advanced Sciences Global Health & Underserved Population" this past Fall. A student quote states: "I worked with Dr. Atri for a week on inpatient ID consults and really loved the experience. He was a great teacher and mentor, and also very warm around patients and students. I appreciated his teaching style, I felt challenged and supported at the same time. I really learned a lot about basic ID concepts and I am very grateful for my week with him!" Congratulations and thank-you for your dedication to our students, Nipun.

### **Lakshmi Chahaun & Timothy Jenkins Inducted into DOM Clinical Excellence Society**

Lakshmi Chauhan and Timothy Jenkins were inducted as first-ever members of the Clinical Excellence Society (*Academiae Laureati Medici*) within the Department of Medicine. We wanted to share photos from the induction ceremony that took place on February 8, 2024. Lakshmi and Tim are pictured below with Vineet Chopra and John Carethers. Congratulations again to both Lakshmi and Tim on this incredible recognition.



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## Other Division News

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### **Daniel Pastula Re-Elected as Vice President for the Colorado State Board of Health**

Daniel Pastula has been re-elected as Vice President for the [Colorado State Board of Health](#) for another one-year term. Congratulations and thanks to Dan for his continued leadership in promoting health initiatives for our community.

### **Lakshmi Chauhan Named APD for the Neuro-Infectious Diseases & Autoimmune Neurology Fellowship**

Lakshmi Chauhan has been appointed as an Associate Fellowship Program Director for the [Neuro-Infectious Diseases & Autoimmune Neurology Fellowship](#). Congrats, Lakshmi!

### **Andrés Henao-Martinez: LAPAHS Course at the University of Amazonia in Iquitos, Perú**

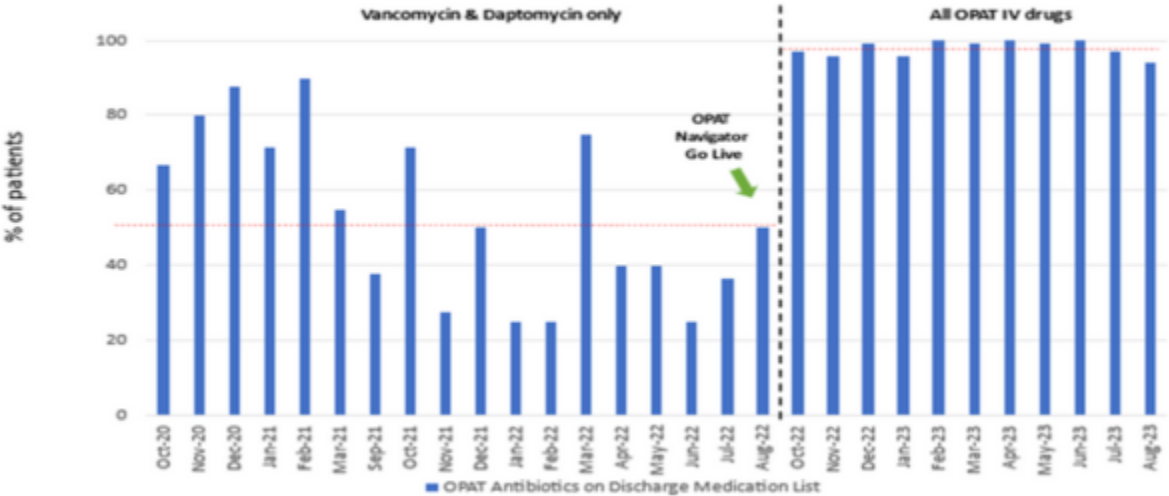
Andrés Henao-Martinez, our Travel Clinic Director, provided an account of his recent trip to Iquitos:

"We had the privilege to be invited to give lectures in tropical medicine at the LAPAHS tropical medicine course at the University of Amazonia in Iquitos, Perú. We shared experiences and didactic activities with students and faculty from UCLA, the University of Oklahoma, STONY Brook, the University of Michigan, and Colorado State University. The clinical setting in Iquitos provides a unique environment for hands-on learning, with exposure to diverse and challenging cases. I felt like a little kid in awe listening to the Amazonian tropical medicine experts. Students benefit from immersive experiences in tropical medicine, gaining invaluable skills. Universidad de la Amazonia offers comprehensive educational programs, fostering the development of healthcare professionals equipped to address the region's specific health challenges. Collaborating with Universidad de la Amazonia opens doors to innovative research enterprises. The region's biodiversity and unique health issues provide fertile ground for exploration and innovation, encouraging interdisciplinary research initiatives, an opportunity for successful partnerships."



**Post-Intervention OPAT Data Provided by Lorna Allen**

The new OPAT workflow was implemented in September of 2022. Post-intervention data at a year shows that there has been a significant increase in the accuracy of OPAT medications on the discharge medication list (52% --> 95%) and frequency of OPAT orders on the AVS (54% --> 99%). This was a huge process change for the division and directly translates to improved continuity of care for our patients.



**New Clinical Pathways Available in Epic**

Misha Huang has operationalized two new clinical tools. Thank you, Misha!

1. Hospitalist-driven penicillin de-labeling pathway. This pathway was developed in collaboration with the divisions of Hospital Medicine and Allergy/Immunology (Drs. Anita Moudgal and Anjali Kalra), as part of the Clinical Effectiveness & Patient Safety (CEPS) grant program. The pathway aims to help providers to identify inpatients with low-risk penicillin allergies, and allows them to order a direct oral amoxicillin challenge, without the need for skin testing or an Allergy consult. By

expanding access to penicillin allergy de-labeling, we hope to increase the number of patients who are able to be treated with first-line beta-lactam antibiotics and decrease the negative clinical outcomes that can be associated with use of alternative antibiotics. This will initially be piloted within the hospitalist group, with the potential for future expansion to other service lines.

2. [Inpatient Hepatitis C treatment pathway](#). Thank you to Robin Bricker-Ford, PharmD, for developing a pathway to guide the evaluation of hospitalized patients with hepatitis C, initiate treatment if appropriate, and link patients to follow-up. Starting eligible patients on HCV therapy while in the hospital can significantly streamline the process for patients who might otherwise be lost to follow-up if their HCV management is relegated solely to the outpatient setting. This pathway will go live in early March and will greatly expand access to HCV therapies for our patients!

### **National HIV PrEP Curriculum**

The National HIV PrEP Curriculum is [live](#), a new and free resource developed at the University of Washington for healthcare professionals to learn about HIV PrEP. Kudos to Sarah Rowan who participated on the advisory board and presented a mini lecture on same day (rapid) PrEP starts.

### **Judges Needed for Class of 2024 Capstone Presentations**

CU faculty members and fellows are invited to participate as judges in the upcoming MSA Capstone Poster Presentations for graduating medical students. This event provides a platform for students to showcase their research across various areas including Basic Science; Bioethics, Humanities, Arts, and Education; Clinical Science; Global Health; and Public Health and Epidemiology. Please consider [signing up](#) to judge one, two, or all sessions.

### **Martin Krsak & Eric Poeschla Hit the Slopes**

Check-out Martin and Eric's three days on the Vail slopes as they embrace the great Colorado outdoors ([YouTube link](#))!



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## **Some Recent Publications**

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### **Margaret Fitzpatrick**

Margaret Fitzpatrick was part of a multi-site group at the VA who developed research targets for antimicrobial stewardship, published as a white paper in *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology* titled "Research agenda for

antibiotic stewardship within the Veterans' Health Administration." [Read more](#).



**Sarah Rowan & Karen Wendel**

Sarah Rowan and Karen Wendel published a paper titled "Mycoplasma genitalium: Key Information for the Primary Care Clinician" in *Medical Clinics of North America*. [Read more](#).



**Sarah Rowan**

Sarah Rowan published an additional paper titled "Barriers to hepatitis C treatment and interest in telemedicine-based care among clients of a syringe access program" in *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*. [Read more](#).



**Lakshmi Chauhan, Ken Tyler, Rumyar Ardakani, & Daniel Pastula**

Lakshmi Chauhan, Ken Tyler, Rumyar Ardakani (Neuro-ID Fellow), & Daniel Pastula published a paper in *The Neurohospitalist* titled "An Overview of Saint Louis Encephalitis." [Read more](#).

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## Call for Submissions

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We want to hear your news! Please email submissions for our next newsletter to [eleanor.shields@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:eleanor.shields@cuanschutz.edu).

Visit the [ID Division Website](#)

