

ID DIVISION NEWSLETTER



UPDATES FROM THE DIVISION OF
INFECTIOUS DISEASES AT CU ANSCHUTZ

October & November 2024

A Message From Eddie Stenehjem Interim ID Division Head

Happy Holidays to all of you! It is my hope that everyone is having a joyous holiday season. Although on-call through the Thanksgiving holiday, I was able to spend time with my wife's family and enjoyed time with kids. I have much to be thankful for, including this opportunity to work with such an amazing group of ID professionals.

I keep thinking that the good news I get to share will slow down. Well, that certainly hasn't happened yet. As many of you know, Wendy Armstrong, MD, will be our next ID Division Head! I am beyond excited to have Wendy join and lead this team. Wendy has been with Emory University for the past 17 years where she has held numerous leadership positions. She was the Fellowship Program Director for 16 years, the Vice Chair of Education for the DOM, Medical Director of the Ponce de Leon Center (one of the largest HIV clinics in the US), and the Associate Division Director of the ID Division to just name a few. I have full confidence that Dr. Armstrong will take this division to new heights. Wendy will start on April 3, 2025.

Happy Holidays!

Featured News



Wendy Armstrong, MD, FIDSA, FACP

Head of the Division of Infectious Diseases
Department of Medicine

Wendy S. Armstrong, MD, FIDSA, FACP, Appointed Head of the Division of Infectious Diseases

We are thrilled to announce the appointment of Wendy S. Armstrong, MD, FIDSA, FACP, as the new head of our Division of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine, effective April 3, 2025. Currently a professor at Emory University School of Medicine, Dr. Armstrong brings extensive leadership experience, presently serving as Interim Division Chief and Executive Medical Director of the Ponce de Leon Center. A globally recognized expert in HIV care and infectious diseases, she has held prominent positions within the Infectious Diseases Society of America and will become President in October 2026. Dr. Armstrong is poised to lead our division with expertise and vision. We are truly honored to welcome her to our team!



Celebrating the Colorado-Zimbabwe International Exchange (CoZIE) Program

Our division is proud to partner in the Colorado-Zimbabwe International Exchange (CoZIE) program, a bilateral exchange of doctors between CU and the University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences. The program aims to enhance global health through collaboration. Thomas Campbell, MD, who has been involved in the CoZIE program since its origin and visited Zimbabwe more times than he can count, says “I think the greatest benefit of this program is we are working to improve health equity worldwide. By improving health care in other parts of the world, we improve health care for all of us. That’s really the basis for the program.”

Pictured above are Zimbabwean doctors Tendai Mando and Melinda Munemo during their recent visit to CU, alongside Eddie Stenehjerm and Vineet Chopra.

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Dr. Paul Sax: 2024 Tim Gill Visiting Professor

The Division was delighted to host Dr. Paul Sax as the 2024 Tim Gill Visiting Professor on November 5 and 6. Dr. Sax, the Bruce and Robert Beal Distinguished Chair and Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, also serves as the Clinical Director of the ID Division at Brigham and Women's Hospital and is the Editor-in-Chief of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. During his visit, he met with our HIV research faculty on November 5 and enjoyed dinner with Front Range community members living with HIV, alongside Drs. Joshua Barocas, Kirk Fetters, Eric Poeschla, and staff member Eleanor Shields. On November 6, Dr. Sax delivered a compelling ID Grand Rounds presentation titled “The Future of Antiretroviral Therapy,” participated in the annual T32 Trainee Symposium, and shared insights during the Department of Medicine Grand Rounds with his talk, “What My Mistakes Taught Me.” We extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Sax for his invaluable contributions during this visit.

We are deeply grateful to Tim Gill, whose generous endowment supports this annual lecture series. Mr. Gill is the founder and co-chair of the Gill Foundation which vigorously supports efforts to secure nationwide civil rights for LGBTQ Americans.

SAVE THE DATE

April 19, 2025

Colorado ID Symposium

CU Anschutz Medical Campus

SAVE THE DATE! Even though the Colorado Chapter of the IDSA didn't make it through the pandemic, we are bringing back the annual Colorado ID Symposium starting in 2025. Mark your calendars for April 19, 2025 for this event at the Anschutz Medical Campus. More details, website, and registration information are coming soon!

Patient Experience Quotes

“**Dr. Alyssa Castillo** always asks for my input into my care because she knows that I understand my complex medical history very well. She welcomes thoughts and suggestions from both my husband and me.”

“**Dr. Laura Damioli** has been my Infectious Disease doctor since 2019. She treated me with respect and compassion. I highly recommend her to anyone facing an Infectious Disease.”

“**Dr. Hillary Dunlevy** is a fantastic physician. She listens and communicates clearly and always involves me in my care plan. Furthermore, she strives to update her knowledge and apply the most pertinent treatment”

“**Dr. Kristine Erlandson** and HIV/IDGP Care Team are always extremely helpful whatever the issue I have regarding my Health & Wellbeing. Dr. Erlandson is one of the most thorough doctors at UCHealth. In all the years that Dr. Erlandson has been my doctor I always feel comfortable with her during our visit.”

“As always, **Dr. Steven Johnson** was kind, professional, knowledgeable and attentive. He answered all my questions and explained things in detail. He is a top rated doctor in my opinion.”

“**Dr. Steven Mudroch** was very easy to talk to and he took enough time to understand my

needs and to help with any questions I had.”

“**Dr. Craig Nielsen** is probably one of the best providers I have had in many, many years. He's kind. He's patient. He honestly is not, I would say he's not even a doctor. He's more of a friend. He takes his time to really explain everything to where you understand exactly what is going on and for you to ask any questions pertaining to your health care and how best he can assist you.”

“**Dr. Larissa Pisney** is professional, friendly and a great communicator. She listened carefully to my questions and concerns -- and provided clear information explaining my disease and treatment. I was very pleased with our meeting, and am happy she is in charge of my treatment.”

Awards



Dan Frank Awarded NIH R21 Grant

Dan Frank, PhD, has been awarded an R21 grant by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for his project titled "*Functional Roles of the Human Microbiome and Metabolome in Oral Cancer.*"



Gilead Sciences Grant Awarded to Katherine Frasca for Innovative HIV Prevention Research

Katherine Frasca, MD, received an Investigator Sponsored Research Grant from Gilead Sciences for the NOVA (Novel Research to Advance HIV Prevention) 2024 Program. The study will be evaluating the feasibility, acceptability, uptake, and sustainability of same day oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) utilizing clinical decision support to improve candidate identification, medication initiation and linkage to care in the emergency department.



Michelle Haas Receives Award from National Jewish Health

Michelle Haas, MD, and colleagues were awarded the National Jewish Health Medical Science Concepts Incubator Fund Award for their project "*Clinical Predictors and Biomarkers of culture positivity among patients with non-tuberculosis mycobacterial nodular-bronchiectatic lung disease*".



Sarah Parker, SHEA Antimicrobial Stewardship Award

Sarah Parker, MD, Professor of Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Medical Director of Antimicrobial Stewardship at Children's Hospital Colorado, has received the SHEA Antimicrobial Stewardship Award from the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America for her work in antibiotic stewardship.



Brian Grundy, "Stop the Madness" Antibiotic Stewardship Award

Brian Grundy, MBBS, is the second recipient of the Antibiotic Stewardship Award for excellent work in antibiotic discontinuation! The award was given by Madison Salam, PharmD, to Brian for boldly stopping Fetroja on a patient.



Sean McCandless, DOM Staff Elevation Award

Sean McCandless, Research Services Professional, was awarded the Department of Medicine Staff Elevation Award for September. Sean's nominator wrote, "Sean is a powerhouse of enthusiasm and diligence in his role as a coordinator for the RECOVER long COVID study at CU. Not only does he consistently complete his own regular duties to a high standard, he also is always willing to take on new duties, learn new skills, and take leadership on operationalizing new study procedures, no matter how complex."

Division Happenings



Lisa Lawrence Promoted to Assistant Professor

We are delighted to announce that Lisa Lawrence, MSW, has been promoted from Senior Instructor to Assistant Professor! We are very grateful for her invaluable contributions to the Ryan White program and leadership of the Patient Support Team.



Shelley Kon Selected for FY25 SSS Program and APIC Research Advisory Board

Shelley Kon, MD, was selected for the FY25 Spark-Seed-Spread (SSS) Innovation Investment and Accelerator Program and represented VA-ECHCS at the Innovation Accelerator Bootcamp in Chicago November from 19-21. She is working on an innovative way to improve C.diff diagnosis by developing a symptom assessment tool. She piloted the tool at our VA and the next steps are to improve and streamline the tool, and integrate it into everyday practice through the VA innovation program.

Shelley was also recently selected for the APIC research advisory board!



Chris Nyquist Elected Vice President of Society for Healthcare Epidemiology Board of Trustees

Chris Nyquist, MD, MSPH, Professor of Pediatrics and Epidemiology and Chief Epidemiology Officer at Children's Hospital Colorado, has been elected Vice President of the Board of Trustees of the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America and will be the first pediatrician to serve as President in January 2027. She also received the SHEA Pediatric Scholarship Award at IDWeek for her contributions to pediatric infection prevention and healthcare epidemiology.



Follow the Division of Infectious Diseases on Bluesky

In addition to [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#), the Division of Infectious Diseases is now on Bluesky! Follow us for the latest updates from our division.

Follow us on
Bluesky

LTBI Navigator Pilot

Jillian Roberts, RN, and Thalia McCann, PharmD, have developed a pathway to optimize the patient experience and quality of care for patients seen at the Infectious Diseases Group Practice (IDGP) with latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI). Through this program with regular check-ins, they are improving patient safety by confirming patients are taking their medications correctly, rapidly identifying possible drug interactions or toxicities, and helping patients remain engaged to complete their treatment course. Though this pathway remains in pilot phase, their work has already been impactful! Stay tuned for data regarding the pilot implementation and next steps in expansion in the coming months.

Invited Lectures & Traveling Physicians:

- Eric Poeschla, MD, & Poeschla Lab:
 - The Poeschla Lab presented their work on viral RNA sensing at the Cold Spring Harbor Retroviruses Meeting in May 2024.
 - Eric Poeschla gave an invited talk on his lab's research on MDA5 sensing of positive strand RNA virus dsRNA at the EMBO Innate immunity in host-pathogen interactions Symposium in Heidelberg, Germany on June 18, 2024.
 - Eric Poeschla served as project physician for a Mesoamerican archaeology expedition in July, 2024 in the Petén in Guatemala.
 - Eric Poeschla was a Visiting Professor at Makerere University School of Medicine in Kampala, Uganda on August 12, 2024 where he gave a research talk to faculty, trainees, and students.
- Katherine Frasca, MD, presented an oral abstract entitled "A Case of Secondary Syphilis with Retinitis and Laryngeal Involvement" at the 2024 CDC STI Prevention Conference in Atlanta, GA in September.
- Chia-Yu Chiu, MD:
 - Chia-Yu Chiu gave an oral presentation at the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, New Orleans, LA, in November 2024 titled "Demographic

and Clinical Characteristics of Patients with Chromoblastomycosis and Eumycetoma in Ten Medical Centers, United States."

- Chia-Yu Chiu gave three poster presentations at The Liver Meeting, San Diego, CA, in November titled "Clinical Utility of Two-Step Hepatitis E Virus IgM Antibody Testing in a Low-Prevalence Setting: A 10-year Retrospective Multicenter Study", "Optimizing Hepatitis B Virus Seroprotection in Thoracic Organ Transplantation: The Role of Heplisav-B Vaccination Schedule", and "Post-transplant HBV vaccine compliance and seroprotection in thoracic organ transplant recipients."
- Joshua Barocas, MD, presented two Grand Rounds talks, one at the University of Wisconsin Department of Medicine, and another at Weill Cornell Medical Center Department of Population Health.
- Eddie Stenehjem, MD, Andrés Henao-Martinez, MD, PhD, and Ed Havranek, MD, traveled to Zimbabwe in November to visit physicians at the University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences as part of the CoZIE program.

Other Updates:

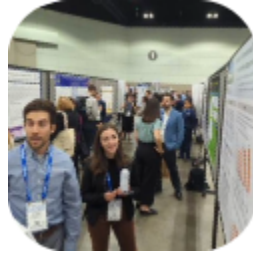
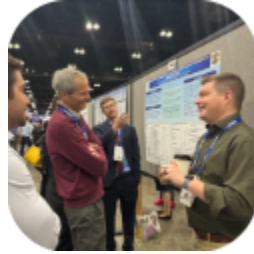
- Andrés Henao-Martinez, MD, PhD, obtained a PhD from Universidad de Alicante in Spain.
- Martin Krsak, MD, will be named Associate Editor for the journal *Therapeutic Advances in Infectious Disease*.
- Chia-Yu Chiu, MD, has joined the hepatitis C special interest group as the communications lead (elected) for the American Society for The Study of Liver Disease. He will serve in this role from January 2025 through December 2026.
- Cory Hussain, MD, completed his last day at Denver Health on November 15. We wish him the best in his new position at Sutter Health in San Francisco where he will work in HIV primary care and informatics.

IDWeek 2024

Many division members attended, gave talks, participated in panels, and moderated discussions during **IDWeek 2024** in Los Angeles. Posters were widely presented by our faculty, ID fellows, medical students, and collaborators.

Highlights and photos below. Thank you to everyone who sent in submissions!

- Meghan Jeffres, PharmD, won the Gita Patel Award from the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists for her education and research on antibiotic allergies.
Congratulations, Meghan!
- Andrés Henao-Martinez, MD, PhD, presented "[Therapy for Invasive Candidiasis](#)".
- Hermione Hurley, MD, presented "[Management of Substance Use Disorders in HIV](#)".
- Sam Kaplan, MD, and Meghan Jeffres, PharmD, were two of the testers for puzzles at IDWeek and gave feedback to creators on modifications before officially opening the ID Outbreak Escape Room.



Some Recent Publications



Kaylee Mickens, PhD Student

Congratulations to Kaylee Mickens from the Wilson-Santiago Collaboratory for the publication of her first 'first-author' paper in *PNAS Nexus*! The article "Death and survival of gut CD4 T cells following HIV-1 infection *ex vivo*" investigates the role gut bacteria play in CD4 T cell death and survival, and has implications for HIV-1 persistence in the gut.

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Pranav Padmanabhan

Congratulations to Pranav Padmanabhan with the Barocas Lab for the publication of his first 'first-author' paper in the *Journal of Urban Health*! The article is titled "Association of Involuntary Displacement of People Experiencing Homelessness and Crime in Denver, CO: A Spatiotemporal Analysis". The paper generated significant media attention as covered in the [News Features](#) section of this newsletter.

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Melissa Wilson, MS

Congratulations to Melissa Wilson, Research Instructor and biostatistician with the Erlandson Lab, for the publication of her first 'first-author' paper in *AIDS and Behavior*! The article is titled "Effect of a Supervised Exercise Program on an Exercise Self-Efficacy in Aging Adults With and Without HIV: A Secondary Analysis of the Exercise for Healthy Aging Study".

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Maheen Abidi, MD, FAST, FIDSA, & Kristine Erlandson, MD

Maheen Abidi and Kristine Erlandson recently published an article titled "Area Level Social Deprivation and Cytomegalovirus Seropositivity at the Time of Solid Organ Transplant" in *JAMA Network Open*.

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Lakshmi Chauhan, MD, Daniel Pastula, MD, MHS, & Kelli Money, MD

Lakshmi Chauhan, Daniel Pastula, and Kelli Money had a chapter titled "Japanese encephalitis" published in a new book titled *Neurobiology of Infectious Diseases*, a comprehensive book for neuro-infectious diseases.

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Chia-Yu Chiu, MD

Chia-Yu Chiu published two recent papers:

"Hepatitis B Vaccine Compliance, Serologic Response, and Durability in Adult Thoracic Organ Transplant Recipients" in *Clinical Transplantation*.

[Read More](#)

"Interferon-Gamma Release Assay Conversion and Reversion Reactions During Solid Organ Transplant Evaluation" in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

[Read More](#)



Margaret Fitzpatrick, MD, MS

Margaret Fitzpatrick was a co-author on the new WikiGuidelines Consensus Statement for the prevention, diagnosis, and management of urinary tract infections. WikiGuidelines is an international, not-for-profit, crowd-sourced approach to the development of guidelines.

"Guidelines for the Prevention, Diagnosis, and Management of Urinary Tract Infections in Pediatrics and Adults: A WikiGuidelines Group Consensus Statement" in *JAMA Network Open*.

[Read More](#)

Margaret was also a co-author on a commentary, "The Proliferation of Multiplex Molecular Testing for Urinary Tract Infections", in *JAMA Network Open*.

[Read More](#)

Additionally, Margaret was part of a faculty workgroup convened by the American Medical Association and the CDC as part of Project Firstline. The resulting publication was titled "National partnerships address critical needs in infection prevention and control" in *Antimicrobial Stewardship & Healthcare Epidemiology*.

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Steven Johnson, MD

Steven Johnson has two recent guidelines-related publications:

"2024 Clinical Practice Guideline Update by the Infectious Diseases Society of America on the Management of COVID-19: Anti-SARS-CoV-2 Neutralizing Antibody Pemivibart for Pre-exposure Prophylaxis" in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*

Read More

"National Institutes of Health COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel: Perspectives and Lessons Learned" in *Annals of Internal Medicine*

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Brian Montague, DO, MS, MPH

Brian Montague published a recent paper titled "The Leaders in Informatics, Quality, and Systems (LInQS) Fellowship" in *Applied Clinical Informatics*. Notably, Lorna Allen serves as faculty for the [LInQS program](#).

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Neena Thomas-Gosain, MD, MHS

Neena Thomas-Gosain published two recent papers:

"*Haemophilus parainfluenzae* infective endocarditis complicated by multiorgan septic emboli" in *BMJ Case Reports*.

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"Successful adaptation of an initiative to reduce unnecessary antibiotics for acute respiratory infections across two Veteran Affairs ambulatory

healthcare systems" in *Antimicrobial Stewardship & Healthcare Epidemiology*.

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News Features

CU Anschutz Today

Researchers, led by first author **Pranav Padmanabhan**, research assistant with Barocas Lab and MPH student at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, analyzed the effect of involuntary displacement on crime in one-quarter to three-quarters of a mile radius around sweep sites, among all sweeps between November 2019 to July 2023. Results show no change in most crimes, and negligible changes in others.

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Also covered in [Yahoo! News](#), [The Colorado Sun](#), and [The Denver Gazette](#)

Department of Medicine

Dr. Larissa Pisney, a CU Department of Medicine infectious disease expert shares what we should know and do before traveling this season.

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Dr. Mary Hamel, a former fellow in our division, has led groundbreaking malaria initiatives at the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control. Her work on malaria vaccines has been pivotal in advancing global health.

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Healio

"If people are asking to be screened for gonorrhea, chlamydia or syphilis, or presenting with those symptoms, they're also at risk for HIV," **Braden Sciarra, MD**, an infectious diseases clinical fellow at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, told Healio.

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Job Board

Denver Health ID and Infection Prevention/Stewardship Physician

Denver Health is recruiting for a combined ID and Infection Prevention/Stewardship physician.

[Learn more and share!](#)

CU Anschutz Open Rank TID Physician

We are recruiting for an open rank Transplant Infectious Diseases (TID) physician. [Learn more](#)

[and share!](#)

Call for Submissions

We want to hear your news! Please email submissions for our next newsletter to

eleanor.shields@cuanschutz.edu.

Visit the [ID Division Website](#)

