



As the year comes to an end, it is a great time to reflect upon the highlights of 2022. Most notably, despite the ongoing triple-threat of COVID, RSV and influenza, research endeavors have not diminished. Faculty, fellows and residents continue to embark on new and exciting projects, all with the aim of better caring for our patients.

As the pattern of the pandemic has changed, residents and fellows are finally back to traveling to in-person meetings to present their research, which not only provides a forum to present the work, but also a short respite from business-as-usual!

Notably, in October, 2022, we completed the transformation to a new, national Human Rights Protection Program (HRPP). This transition included a major change in our IRB structure and function. Although the new process takes some time to get used to, and we are still all on a learning curve, we have successfully transitioned to the new format.

As part of that transition, investigators are now asked to fill out an investigator agreement form, once every three years, that the HRPP office keeps on file. We also need a current CV from all investigators. There have also been some changes to our standard consent forms. All currently approved consent forms need to be edited to the new template by the end of the year. Please note that the Ascension St. John consent for case reports *has not changed*, and we use the same form as before.

On behalf of the Department of Biomedical Investigations and Research, we wish you all peace and joy during this holiday season and extend our best wishes for your health and happiness in 2023. (Oh, and Go Blue!)

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’Twas the Night Before Christmas

’Twas the night before Christmas, and all o’er the house
Stirred the clicking — most frantic — of every mouse.
All the stockings were hung by the TV with flair,
But children played on apps in their rooms without care.
Sneaking smart-phones and laptops right into their beds,
While visions of going viral danced in their heads.
When out on the street there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
When what to my wondering eyes did appear -
An electric sleigh, without any reindeer.

"Self-driving" said the driver, so lively and quick.
I knew from his TikTok it must be St. Nick.
"I don't strew CO₂," he said, "on glaciers and meadows,
So my polar bear friends can hang onto their ice floes."
He had a snow-white goatee, and six-pack of a belly,
"I just couldn't go on like a bowl full of jelly.
Now I eat fruits and veggies, meditate, and do yoga,
And don't just watch e-sports — Elf Sports — on the sofa."

And after our chitchat he went straight to work,
And filled all the stockings with candies and merch.
Then laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, he told me, "Lord knows
2022's been filled with sorrow and stresses;
With viruses, wars, and protesting injustice.
We miss those we loved, who are no longer here;
Handshakes, hugs, friendships, and moments of cheer.
Santa's whole workshop is now Work from Home,
I call elves for IT help, they ask, 'Safari or Chrome?'
I tell them of toys, and they say, 'You're on mute!'
I've got grey sweatpants on 'neath the top of my suit.
Family and friends can gather this season,
But we'll debate about masks, and we all know the reason.
The year has been tough, but still at each turn
People have become heroes, and helped us to learn:
That even across social distanced divides,
we are all essential workers in each other's lives.
So thanks to doctors! To nurses! Delivery crews!
Farmers and pharmacists, bus drivers too!
Thanks to med techs, and scientists in laboratories,
Those in clinical trials, and the great Dr. Fauci!"

Santa sprang to his sleigh, to the sky gave a whistle,
And his autonomous vehicle took off like a missile
But I heard him exclaim, as he zipped out of sight,
"Look out for each other! And to all, a good night!"

Adapted from <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/19/948257955/opinion-twas-the-night-before-christmas-in-2020>



Announcements



Call for Proposals:

The Ascension St. John Hospital Medical Staff Committee has generously allocated funds to help support faculty research. These funds are available for physicians and doctoral level researchers only; residents and fellows may apply for funding via the GME Research committee (as usual). A total of \$20,000 per year has been allocated; individual investigators may request up to \$10,000 for a project. An application format and funding policy have been developed.

The deadline for research proposals and the other required documentation (as listed in the policy) for the Spring 2023 cycle is **February 28, 2023**. Review will occur in March.

For a copy of the application instructions or If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Susan Szpunar at susan.szpunar@ascension.org or 313-343-7838.

Resident Research Day 2023

Our Annual Resident Research Day, which has been held remotely since 2020, will return to a live event in 2023. Please mark your calendars for Wednesday, March 29, 2023. We hope that you will attend as much of the sessions as you can, to hear about the great research being done by our residents and to cheer them on in their scholarly endeavors.

Recent Publications

Al-Saheli ZI, Bazzi T, Barthel B. Oncological management dilemma: a rare presentation of hairy cell leukaemia with hepatic involvement presenting concomitantly with pancreatic adenocarcinoma. *BMJ Case Rep.* 2022 Nov 22;15(11):e252423.

Baracy MG Jr, Hagglund K, Kulkarni S, Afzal F, Arends K, Morris RT, Solomon LA, Aslam MF, Corey L. Decreased incidence of febrile neutropenia in Michigan following masking and social distancing orders for the COVID-19 pandemic: A population based cohort study. *World J Clin Oncol.* 2022 Jul 24;13(7):609-615.

Baracy MG Jr, Martinez M, Hagglund K, Afzal F, Kulkarni S, Corey L, Aslam MF. Minimally invasive hysterectomy for benign indications-surgical volume matters: a retrospective cohort study comparing complications of robotic-assisted and conventional laparoscopic hysterectomies. *J Robot Surg.* 2022 Oct;16(5):1199-1207.

Obeid W, Hiremath S, Topf JM. Protein restriction for CKD: time to move on. *Kidney360.* 2022 Jun 22;3(9):1611-1615.

Nichols LK, Maki SB, Szpunar SM, Bhargava A, Saravolatz LD. A comparison of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) versus influenza during the pandemic: Can we distinguish COVID-19 from flu? *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol.* 2022 Sep;43(9):1265-1268.

Salahie S, Szpunar S, Saravolatz L. Clinical predictors and outcomes for Legionnaire's disease versus bacteremic pneumococcal pneumonia. *Am J Med Sci.* 2022 Aug;364(2):176-180.

Samaan S, Abraham B, Swisher J, Cherri M, Umles N, Kamath A, Szpunar SM et al. Anemia and other independent predictors of 30-day readmissions in heart failure patients: a retrospective study. *Journal of Cardiac Failure.* 2022 April;28(5):S23.

Saravolatz LD, Pawlak J. In vitro activity of fosfomycin alone and in combination against *Staphylococcus aureus* with reduced susceptibility or resistance to methicillin, vancomycin, daptomycin or linezolid. *J Antimicrob Chemother.* 2022 Nov 14:dkac380.

Sharma M, Bhargava A, Szpunar SM, Johnson L, Saravolatz L. Do risk factors at the time of hospital admission differ by sex for in-hospital mortality from coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)? *Antimicrobial Stewardship & Healthcare Epidemiology.* 2021; 1 (e55):1-6.





QA/QI or Research?

- ☆ As defined by the Common Rule at 45 CFR 46.102(d), the term “research” means a systematic investigation involving human subjects, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.
- ☆ As defined by the FDA at 21 CFR 50.3(c), the term “research” means an experiment that involves a test article and one or more human subjects.
- ☆ Quality improvement (QI) in health care, unlike research, focuses on translating existing knowledge from research into clinical practice to improve the quality of health care for individuals and populations.
- ☆ The key difference between these two concepts is that research studies are intended to create new knowledge that can be generalizable to other populations and settings, while QI in health care uses existing knowledge to improve health care outcomes within a local health care institution or setting. (IOM, 2001; National Strategy for Quality Improvement in Health Care, 2012)

Points to Consider	Research	QA/QI
Purpose	To test an hypothesis OR establish clinical practice standards where none are accepted	To assess or promptly improve a process, program or system; OR improve performance as judged by accepted/established standards
Goal	To answer a question or test an hypothesis	To improve performance
Benefits	Designed to contribute to generalizable knowledge and may or may not benefit subjects	Designed to promptly benefit a process, program or system and may or may not benefit patients
Risks/Burdens	May place subjects at risk	By design, does not place subjects at risk, except for possible loss of confidentiality
Data Collection	Systematic data collection	Systematic data collection
End Point	Answer a research question	Promptly improve a process
Testing/Analysis	Statistically disprove an hypothesis	Compare a program/process/system to an established set of

Remember, only the IRB can make the official determination if a project falls under the heading of QA/QI or Research. Don't make the mistake of assuming that a project is exempt or is “not human subjects research” without consulting the IRB.



Humor



"That's too bad. Looks like you've got a nut allergy."



Upcoming SEMCME Programs

Professionalism: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Presented by the SEMCME IM Committee
January 19th, 2023, 1:00-4:00pm via Zoom

20th Annual Internal Medicine Comprehensive Review Course

2022 Research Workshop Series

Recorded sessions and materials will be available throughout the 2022/2023 academic year

SEMCME Pediatrics Forum

May 5th, 2023, 12:00-4:00pm, Beaumont Royal Oak

SEMCME Annual Michigan Summit on Quality Improvement and Patient Safety

May 12th, 2023, 8:00-4:30pm, MSU Management Education Center, Troy, MI

SEMCME Research Forum

May 24th, 2023, 8:00-2:30 pm, Lovett Hall
The Henry Ford, Dearborn, MI

For more information: <https://semcme.org/>

CME Update

- ◆ No upcoming seminars are currently scheduled.
- ◆ Contact Nancy DeRita for more information:
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