

Resident Corner: HCA Call Center Study Results

Ilana Feuerstein, MD, Barbara Lam, MD, and Brooke Lubinski, MD, the Senior Primary Care Residents

The call center for Healthcare Associates (HCA) receives approximately 1,000 patient phone messages every day. The way these messages flow through the practice impacts patient care, operational efficiency, and employee satisfaction.

A practice-wide survey to better understand current attitudes towards message management showed that almost 100% of staff members feel that managing phone messages is an important part of caring for our patients, but 30% report that messages don't always get to the right person the first time.

Interviews with nearly 40 patients and staff members revealed several areas that are working well: patients love that a person answers the phone and described how reassuring it is to talk to someone kind and patient. Staff appreciated the ability to connect directly with patients and residents, attendings, and NPs reported how much they appreciate the support of their colleagues.

We also found clear areas for improvement. Many roles feel overwhelmed by the number of messages they get, and the lack of transparency around the status of a task can lead to repeated, frustrated phone calls from patients. Our goal is to create a message management solution that is patient-centered with clear task tracking and ownership. The solution should prioritize teamwork and accurate message assignment as well as maximize patient engagement and make it easier for them to take ownership.

We had a robust discussion at Grand Rounds about potential solutions. The next round of residents will continue the work and move towards testing in the upcoming year. Thanks to everyone who contributed their time and support throughout this project!

*Extraordinary care for every patient,
every day –
this is our calling and our promise
to our patients.*

Division Updates

Clinical Scholarship

The Co-Directors for Clinical Scholarship are conducting a needs assessment as the first step toward supporting increased scholarship in the division and are currently interviewing division leaders, clinical faculty, and program leaders. Cait DesRoches and Kelly Graham will report out on this work at the end of the summer.



Cait DesRoches



Kelly Graham

Oral History Project in the Works

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HMS student Emily Bloch, along with Mark Aronson and Adam Rodman gathered dozens of hours of interviews to produce an oral history of the founding years of the Beth Israel Ambulatory Clinic (BIAC). Many of the innovations of BIAC, including a primary care residency track, dedicated primary care faculty, and electronic health records, among others, have gone on to become standard in primary care. The first piece from their project is currently under review for publication.

Newest Division Arrivals



Brittne Halford & Kevin welcomed
Kevin, Jr. on 5/6/21

Kayla Tremblay & Kevin welcomed
Will on 5/12/21

Mitch Izower & Amanda welcomed
Grant on 5/14/21

Jacob Koshy & Anita welcomed
Matthew on 5/20/21

Julia Cooperman & Vlad welcomed
Jonah on 6/12/21

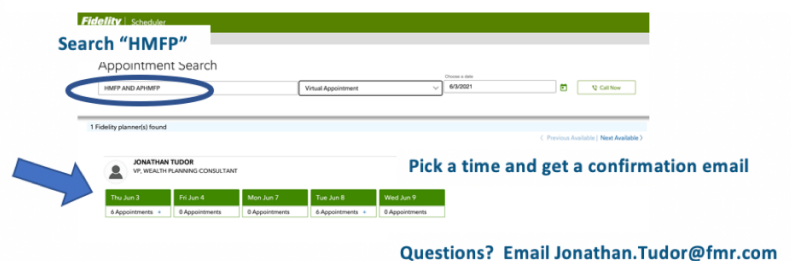
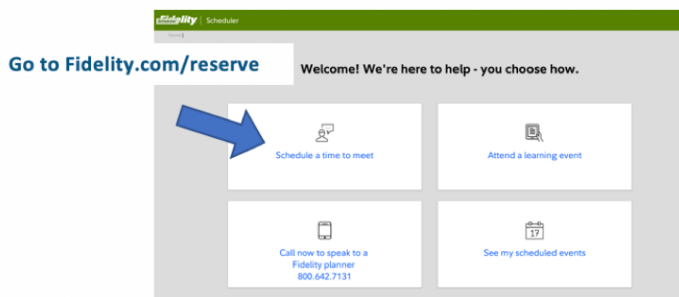
Catherine Gardiner & Brian welcomed
Jack on 6/15/21

Health & Wellness Tip from Ritika Parris



The Division of General Medicine participated in several wellness-related activities over the past few months.

- Financial wellness: Last month, we were joined by Jonathon Tudor, Vice President, Wealth Planning Consultant at Fidelity Investments. He led us through an informative session with several key principles for financial well-being and security. The main take-away is that we have the opportunity for a 1:1 financial consultation with Jon, which several of our faculty have found helpful. Signing up is easy!



- Community Connectedness: The Division faculty development and coaching program is in its sixth month. More than 90% of the pairs have already met two or more times for 1:1 meetings. We have hosted large group sessions on “Promotions for the General Internist” and “Time Management” (thank you, Dr. Bates and Dr. Reynolds!). We also hosted a Coaching Bootcamp with guest speaker and physician coaching expert, Dr. Kerri Palamara, from MGH. Coaches, stay tuned for Part 2 of this Bootcamp in October! Next month, we will be hosting a Fellowship Panel featuring Drs. Grace Huang, Anjala Tess, Diane Brockmeyer, and Amy Sullivan to learn about academic development opportunities for GIM faculty.
- Workplace Satisfaction: This April we launched an HCA-wide pulse survey to get timely feedback on engagement, wellbeing, and development of the entire HCA community. Thank you to all who responded to the survey. We look forward to sharing results and next steps soon.

Ritika Parris, MD
*Director of Wellness, GME, and
HCA Faculty Wellness Advocate*



General Medicine Grants Funded 4/1 - 7/6

Cait Desroches, from The John A. Hartford Foundation

Project Title; Engaging Care Partners Through Shared Access to the Electronic Health Record

Ed Marcantonio, from HRSA

To fund the Harvard Medical School Fellowship in General Medicine

Emmanuel Mensah, from Helmsley

Project Title: Redesigning care, protecting the vulnerable

Mara Schonberg, from NIH NIA

Project Title: Research and mentoring program in shared decision making in the care of older adults

Caducean Lights Release

The Katherine Swan Ginsburg Humanism in Medicine Program of the Department of Medicine is pleased to present the second annual issue of Caducean Lights, a journal of art and literature at BIDMC. The journal is composed of previously unpublished and original submissions related to a medical subject in the form of poetry, short fiction, creative nonfiction, photography, and visual art, and submissions were open to all employees across all departments at BIDMC. Thank you to Co-Editor, Jon Crocker and for those members of General Medicine who had their work published.

[Click here to read the current issue.](#)



Photo by Danny Sands

Selected Shout-Outs (Continued)

Justine Blum - HMED

Thank you for a spectacular year of General Medicine Grand Rounds!

Mary Buss - Palliative Care

Thank you for working so hard to enhance and expand the Fellowship Program!

Heather Wathey - HCA

Thank you for supporting all of HCA during administrative transitions (and always!).

Sunny Grandhe - Palliative Care Fellow

Thank you for your enthusiasm for learning and growing, your perseverance, and for all the patient care you provided here at BIDMC this year!

Kirsten Engel - Palliative Care Fellow

Thank you for your exceptional service to our patients and to your co-fellows this year. It has been such a hard year in so many ways - thank you for your constructive and mature approach.

Brian Gacioch - Palliative Care Fellow

Thank you for your wonderful, mature, calm presence and your patient-first and team-first attitude. I am so glad you are joining us and look forward to continuing to work with you!

Howard Libman - HCA

Thank you for advocating for the Crimson Care Collaborative clinics and for the students. You have helped keep CCC alive this past year!

Ed Marcantonio - Research

Thank you for shepherding and leading the Harvard Gen Med Fellowship over the past two years - and congrats on the grant!!



Connect with the Division on Twitter

Twitter is a great place to connect with your colleagues and learn about their work, accomplishments, and trending topics in Medicine. Some Division/Departmental accounts to follow:

[Department of Medicine](#)

[Hospital Medicine](#)

[General Medicine Research](#)

[The IM Residency](#)

[Chief Residents](#)

[iMed Account](#)