Our **mission** is to ensure children and families have access to **healing, service and innovation** throughout their life; and to provide **training, education and opportunities** to the next generation of pediatric healthcare leaders.

Our **vision** is a world in which **all** children, families and communities **achieve their full potential**.
Dear Supporters & Friends,

It is with deep gratitude that I have the honor of sharing our 2019 Annual Report on behalf of the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Department of Pediatrics and the Children’s Hospital University of Illinois. This past year was defined by achievement and advancement in our residency program, in our newly funded faculty research, and in our progress toward meeting 2020 strategic planning goals. Our expansion was captured in the growing number of patients under our care and the increasing support from our generous donors.

I am very pleased that our group of 2019 pediatric residency graduates achieved a 100% board pass rate as first-time test takers; this is a particular point of pride as the national average is 86%. In terms of research, our total Department of Pediatrics research funding grew to more than $15 million in FY19, an increase of almost $6 million from FY18. Additionally our Blue Ridge Institute ranking for National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding rose to #35 nationally in 2019, up more than 30 places since 2014.

Over the past few years, our pediatric clinical leaders implemented new initiatives to improve access to care for busy families. As a result, our system has experienced a 4% increase in overall pediatric encounters since 2015. Approximately 80% of our patients are publicly insured and reside in Chicago’s most underserved communities, and it is core to our mission to provide convenient, supportive care to these families. To meet their specific needs with regard to school and work schedules, we expanded Child & Youth Center hours in 2019 to offer evening appointments four nights per week and additional Saturday clinics.

In 2020, we will further expand our services to vulnerable populations with medical complexities via our CHECK program as a designated Illinois Integrated Health Home (IHH) and through our established partnerships with the UIC Department of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC) and United Healthcare. CHECK is only one part of our plan for 2020, and we hope you will stay connected and support us in our work as providers, educators, researchers, and advocates.

Gratefully,

Benjamin W. Van Voorhees, MD, MPH
Head, Department of Pediatrics
Physician-in-Chief, Children’s Hospital
University of Illinois
Pediatrics Senior Leadership & Associate Heads

Benjamin Van Voorhees, MD, MPH  
Department Head  
Physician-in-Chief

Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH  
Executive Vice Head

De-Ann Pillers, MD, PhD  
Vice Head for Academics

Edmundo Cortez, MD, MHA  
Vice Head for Clinical Operations

Michelle Barnes, MD  
Associate Head for Education

Claudia Boucher-Berry, MD  
Co-Associate Head for Faculty Affairs

Harsha Kumar, MD, MBA  
Associate Head for Finance

Molly Martin, MD, MAPP  
Associate Head for Research

Amanda Osta, MD  
Associate Head for Education

Mary Lou Schmidt, MD  
Co-Associate Head for Faculty Affairs

Jaye Schreier, MD  
Associate Head for Clinical Affairs
At Our Core: Excellence in Education, Research and Patient Care & Commitment to Community

- Training the next generation of pediatric healthcare leaders
- Contributing to pediatric research as a leading institution in Chicago and beyond
- Providing care to more than 50,000 children and adolescents system-wide
- Prioritizing children and families in our surrounding neighborhoods

Education
Research
Patient Care
Community
Our 2019 residency graduates achieved a 100% board pass rate as first-time test takers; this is a particular point of pride as the national average is 86%. Approximately 70% of 2019 graduates went onto provider positions and fellowships in the Chicagoland area, at academic medical centers (UIC, University of Chicago and Northwestern) and at partnering Federally Qualified Health Centers.
We are proud to offer ACGME-accredited fellowships in Adolescent Medicine, Pediatric Endocrinology, Pediatric Hematology-Oncology and Neonatology-Perinatology. Additionally, we offer the new Clinical Leaders and Academic Scholars (CLASS) fellowship that provides concentrated preparation in one of three tracks: (1) clinical services leadership, (2) educational leadership, or (3) research.
Summer Scholars Program

Our Pediatrics Research Committee started the Summer Scholars Program in 2018 to enrich the experience of students conducting research in the Department. All students working for pediatric faculty are invited to participate, and all pediatrics faculty have the opportunity to participate as mentors. Students can also apply for paid internships. 33 medical and undergraduate students have participated to date.

2019 Highlights

10 research projects
focused on topics including sickle cell patient education, residency recruitment methodologies and coordinated oral health

4 didactic lectures
presented to summer scholars on research topics including survey design and mixed methods and qualitative research

8 faculty mentors
including Dr. Molly Martin, Associate Head for Research, who served as a mentor on three research projects

5 universities
9 scholars attend UIC, undergraduate or College of Medicine, while the others attend universities in Iowa, Arkansas and Ireland

2019 Summer Scholars present at the College of Medicine Research Day
Research by the Numbers in FY 2019

The Department of Pediatrics received more than $15 million in total research funding in FY 2019.

Pediatrics faculty were cited as authors on 172 publications (articles & books/chapters) in FY 2019.

Pediatrics faculty provided 193 academic and/or research presentations to external audiences in FY 2019.

#35 National Research Ranking

Our Blue Ridge Institute ranking for NIH funding rose to #35 nationally in FY 2019, reflecting an increase of almost $6 million from FY2018 in NIH-sponsored research. For the second consecutive year, UIC is the highest ranked/most NIH-funded pediatrics department in Illinois.

*Lurie Children’s Hospital is listed as its own entity, not as a department of pediatrics.
Select Research & Innovation Highlights

Angela Rivers, MD, PhD
Sickle Cell Transition and Adult Readiness (STAR) & Multimodal Therapy Approach

The **STAR Clinic** prepares Sickle Cell patients ages 16-21 to transition to adult care and also focuses on academic, vocational, social and emotional support. The **Group Healthcare Model**, funded by the **UIC Department of Specialized Care for Children**, uses a model from the Centering Healthcare Institute.

Dr. Rivers’ research on multimodal therapy approaches for Sickle Cell is funded by an **NIH R01 focused on Erythrocyte Mitochondrial Retention** and a **UIC Center for Clinical and Translational Science pilot on Selenium Deficiency**.

Molly Martin, MD, MAPP
COordinated Oral Health Promotion (CO-OP) Chicago

CO-OP Chicago, funded by the NIH, brings together pediatricians, dentists, researchers, health psychologists, and policy experts to test the ability of an oral health promotion intervention to improve child and family oral health. Components of the primary intervention include family-focused education and support from community health workers (pictured left).

Anantha Harijith, MD
Pathogenesis of Neonatal Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD)

Dr. Harijith’s research on **Pathogenesis of Neonatal Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD)** has been recognized and funded by multiple entities during the last two years. In FY19, he was awarded an **NIH R01** to develop Pfizer compound PF543 into a drug for BPD as well as wheezing. The user patent of this drug is held by Drs. Harijith and Natarajan. Dr. Harijith was also awarded an **American Heart Association grant** to look into the role of S1P receptors in the pathogenesis of BPD. Finally, he received additional funding from **Chiesi Pharmaceuticals** to further develop PF543.
Our interdisciplinary team of health care professionals, researchers, and trainees supports the health and well-being of children and families around the world through research, education, and advocacy. To establish multidisciplinary global health connections, we have engaged faculty from the Departments of Pediatrics and Emergency Medicine, the UIC Center for Global Health, the Colleges of Pharmacy and Nursing, and the Schools of Public Health and Bioengineering.

As part of the African Research Innovative Initiative for Sickle Cell Education (ARISE) project funded by the European Union, the UIC Pediatric Sickle Cell team trained visiting staff from Nigeria and the United Kingdom on community engagement and implementation science, and we welcomed other visiting Sickle Cell specialists.

Under the supervision of Dr. Lewis Hsu, Dr. Bola Ojo and Mrs. Stephanie Quirk presented a poster on Sickle Cell Disease and the ARISE project at the Foundation for Sickle Cell Disease Research annual meeting in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Examples of Our Projects Around the World

Vietnam
Formal partnerships with City Children’s Hospital Ho Chi Minh City & VNUHCM-University of Science

Nigeria
Sickle Cell newborn screening in partnership with organizations from Nigeria and the United Kingdom

Ethiopia
Formal partnership with Mekelle University providing pediatric and OBGYN rotations for UIC trainees

India
Sit Down and Play, a NIH funded research program promoting positive parenting behaviors, in Chicago and India

Global Health Leaders

Ai-Xuan Holtermann, MD
Pediatrics & Surgery
2018 - 2019 Co-Director

Arvind Shukla, MD
General Pediatrics
2018 - 2019 Co-Director

Sarah Messmer, MD
Medicine-Pediatrics
2019 - 2020 Co-Director

Peter Varga, MD
Pediatric Cardiology
2019 - 2020 Co-Director
A Children's Hospital within a Hospital

Children's Hospital University of Illinois is a 90+ bed specialty children's hospital, inclusive of a Level III NICU and Pediatric Emergency Room. It is located within the University of Illinois Hospital at UI Health, home to an additional 16 associated pediatric specialties. Outpatient care is provided at the Child & Youth Center at the UI Health Outpatient Care Center.
UI Health provided care to more than **50,000 unique children & adolescents** in 2019.

- **Inpatient and Emergency Care** through Children’s Hospital University of Illinois, the Pediatric Emergency Room and the University of Illinois Hospital.
- **Outpatient Care** through the Child & Youth Center, Family Medicine, Surgical Specialty & Psychiatric clinics.
- **Dental Care** (pediatric check-ups and oral procedures) through the UIC College of Dentistry.
- **Neighborhood Primary & Urgent Care** through the Mile Square Federally Qualified Health Centers network.
- **Genetic Screening, Testing & Care** through our statewide genetics program.
- **Care Coordination** for patients with medical complexity through the CHECK population health program.
Children's Hospital University of Illinois celebrated significant, sustained reduction of Central Line-Associated Bloodstream Infections (CLABSI) in 2019. Our "Anti-CLABSI Team" has been hard at work for the past 7 years chasing zero, and as a result, our general pediatrics ward has gone more than six years without a CLABSI while our PICU and NICU have gone more than three years.

The prevention of these infections is due to a collaborative program focusing on hand hygiene accountability. These patient safety milestones have been celebrated system-wide and were featured multiple times by the Children's Hospital Association.

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit team, including faculty and fellows, celebrate another CLABSI-free year.

The inpatient general pediatrics team, including nurses, physicians and staff, promote the importance of hand hygiene and its role in infection prevention and patient safety.
Section of Adolescent Medicine

Our team of adolescent medicine specialists focus on fostering healthy, successful transitions into adulthood through primary care, sexual and reproductive care and an eating disorder clinic.

In 2019, our team was selected as the lead for Adolescent Health for ECHO-Chicago, housed at the University of Chicago. ECHO utilizes an innovative model to establish and cultivate a robust network that builds community-based capacity to reduce the serious health disparities in underserved communities. Courses are available to physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and social workers. Pictured left is the 2019 Adolescent Health course description.

Dr. Karen Bernstein, Section Chief and Program Director for Adolescent Medicine Fellowship, received the Evelyn G. Laufer Award for best oral presentation at the 2019 North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology Meeting for her platform presentation: "Does Choice of Contraceptive Method Influence Frequency of STI Screening and Rates of STI's among Adolescents and Young Adults in an Urban Academic Setting".
In 2019, our perinatal cardiology team, led by Dr. Naveen Imran and in partnership with UI Health Maternal Fetal Medicine, expanded fetal cardiac diagnostic services. By providing expert cardiac care at the time of delivery, infant morbidity and mortality are reduced. **We offer patient-centered, noninvasive cardiac imaging techniques, including Cardiac MRI and Cardiac CT.** This enables us to obtain highly detailed information and is imperative to forming highly tailored treatment plans for each patient. This cardiac imaging allows us to better understand the aging process for cardiac anatomy and anticipate problems before symptoms appear.
Section of Pediatric Critical Care

The Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) of UI Children’s Hospital comprises a tertiary care unit staffed by highly experienced pediatric critical care attending physicians and critical care nurses, along with senior Pediatric resident physicians. They provide care to pediatric and young adult patients who require complex medical and post-operative surgical care. Coverage includes sedation services provided to most pediatric inpatients and outpatients who require such services to facilitate painful or uncomfortable procedures. The Division of Pediatric Critical Care also supports a pediatric transport system focused on efficiency, timeliness, and safety of all pediatric transports to UIC. Our transport system provides transport coverage for the entire metropolitan Chicago area and beyond. The UI Health Pediatric ICU and Pediatric Emergency Department (see page 31) are respectively Illinois Department of Public Health-certified Pediatric Critical Care Center (PCCC) and Emergency Department Approved for Pediatrics (EDAP).

Led by Dr. Edmundo Cortez, our section chief, members of the Division of Pediatric Critical Care are very actively involved in quality improvement and patient safety initiatives for the Department of Pediatrics and UI Hospital System. Education and training are important components of the Division of Pediatric Critical Care that includes a core lecture series for rotating pediatric residents and medical students. In addition to the pediatric critical care faculty, lectures are delivered by such specialists as nutritionists and respiratory therapists. The pediatric critical care faculty also proctor and facilitate monthly patient simulation curricula of the pediatric residency program.
Our team of developmental biology and basic science researchers and clinicians are carrying out cutting edge research activities and addressing the critical need for novel insights, bio-markers and therapies to treat devastating chronic childhood and adult lung diseases.

Excellence in Research

In 2019, Drs. Usha Raj and Tianji Chen were awarded funding by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) to identify the endothelial-smooth muscle cell cross-talk that occurs via extracellular vesicles and the role of microRNA cargo in the pathogenesis of pulmonary hypertension. Our team also collaborated on a recently funded project related to mesenchymal stromal cells-based therapeutic strategies to resolve pulmonary fibrosis (Dr. Jae-won Shin, UIC Department of Pharmacology).

We have been continuously funded by the NHLBI and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) to understand molecular pathogenesis of abnormal lung repair using pre-clinical models of inflammatory and oxidant lung injury and pneumonia.
Our Pediatric Endocrinology team runs an American Diabetes Association certified Diabetes education program. In 2012, we began hosting an annual “Care of Students with Diabetes Conference” for school nurses and dedicated health aides. In 2019, the team hosted 300 nurses from Chicago Public Schools and Catholic Charities at the University of Illinois. The program was also extended to include a two day education session at the Wheeling school district.

The Division of Pediatric Endocrinology participates in three NIH funded studies that target: (1) first degree relatives of children with Diabetes, (2) African American teenagers with Type 1 Diabetes, and (3) adolescents with Type 2 Diabetes. Through our research experience, we are providing our diverse patient population with the opportunity to participate in cutting edge trials in Diabetes management.

We are proud to support our children and adolescents with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes. In addition to providing clinical services, the Endocrinology team partnered with undergraduate students at the University of Illinois to develop the Beta Buddy Program. Each undergraduate student is paired with a child with Diabetes to serve as a big brother/big sister. With support from the Friends of UIC Pediatrics, participants engage in multiple social activities and bonding exercises over the course of a year.
Our expert team of board certified pediatric gastroenterologists provides a full range of diagnostic and treatment services for children with GI and liver diseases. We offer specialized care for children with eosinophilic esophagitis, celiac disease, food allergies, Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis, fatty liver, and autoimmune hepatitis. We offer diagnostic testing including endoscopy, colonoscopy, liver biopsy, manometry, capsule endoscopy (camera pill), and other advanced procedures.

Children with feeding problems and/or developmental disabilities, who are among our most medically fragile patients, have the best outcomes with a team approach. Established in 2018, our G-Tube Clinic provides comprehensive care and support for children with (or who may need) a gastrostomy or nasogastric tube. In 2019, our team served 60 patients by offering appointments weekly or as needed. We also have telehealth capability and are available by phone 24/7/365.

Our faculty are active in pediatric GI research and have been invited speakers at regional and national conferences. Dr. James Berman and Dr. Thirumazhisai S. Gunasekaran have been listed among Chicago’s “Top Doctors” for sixteen years and counting by Castle Connolly, and they have also been recognized by Chicago Magazine.
The Section of General Pediatrics is the largest section within the Department of Pediatrics. Our team of General Pediatricians, Internal Medicine/Pediatricians, and Advanced Practice Nurses offer newborn, primary, well child, and acute care within our Child & Youth Center (CYC) for outpatient care; and inpatient care within the pediatric ward at Children’s Hospital University of Illinois and the mother/baby unit at UI Health.

Our Section of General Pediatrics expanded significantly in 2019 to meet the growing needs of our patient population, both in terms of appointment availability and for specialized care. To better serve busy families, regular CYC hours in 2019 were Monday through Thursday, 8 am-8 pm; Friday, 8 am-5 pm; and Saturday, 8 am-noon.

**Primary care with a personal touch:**

Dr. Jalene Shoener, Associate CYC Director, piloted a program to call patients prior to their appointments. The “no show” rate was reduced from 25% to 9%, with other goals being to improve rates of vaccinations and developmental screenings.
Enhanced bonding opportunities at UI Health for mothers and newborns:

Many rooms in our mother/baby unit have recently been renovated to enhance bonding opportunities. Our teams continue to be available for nurturing care, and to provide support and guidance. For example, there are now more outpatient RN/LPNs who are trained as lactation consultants, and a breastfeeding club is now being hosted every Tuesday at the Outpatient Care Center.

Specialized Care for Adolescents and Children:

Dr. Alexandra King is the Director of “Healthy & Fit,” a new, intensive, lifestyle based management program with a focus on family engagement to achieve healthy weight while also screening for co-morbidities. In 2019, more than 100 patients met with registered dietitians. Further plans are to provide program participants with a free exercise program called “Let’s Get Fit!”

The Childhood Cancer Survivor Clinic serves children and adults who have gone through childhood cancer. We focus on educating the patient and family on what treatments were received, the risk for long term health effects, and how to stay healthy. Using evidence based guidelines, our specialists provided care for 14 new patients and 66 returning patients in 2019.

The Pediatric Lifestyle Class is designed for families who are dealing with obesity and the co-morbidities of obesity. The eight-week curriculum combines diet modification, increased physical activity, stress reduction strategies, and behavioral parent training to build healthy living habits.
Section of General Pediatrics

Our Pediatrics Clerkship Program continues to rank as one of the most popular clinical rotations among medical students at the UIC College of Medicine. In 2019, the Faculty Teaching Honor Roll included 14 pediatric attending physicians.

Additional teaching awards in 2019 included:

- Dr. Pavan Srivastava received the M2 Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Medical Education
- Dr. Michelle Barnes received the General Pediatrics Teaching Award and the Department of Pediatrics Faculty of the Year Award
- Dr. Melissa Wagner-Schuman, Dr. Angela Rivers, and Dr. Leah Finkel received the Rising Star Awards
- Dr. Amanda Osta won the Junior Faculty teaching award from the Academic Pediatric Association.

Drawn to expanding opportunities for mentoring from high profile faculty, medical students and residents receive a high quality training experience. A new supplemental curriculum to augment the newborn medicine experience, which was developed in 2019 by Dr. Jaye Schreier, is now available to medical students who are doing a pediatric clerkship. An attending physician gives one on one feedback to students on their work-ups through this innovative, online, case based curriculum.

Department of Pediatrics faculty and staff with College of Medicine Dean Mark Rosenblatt congratulate our Rising Stars, Dr. Leah Finkel and Dr. Angela Rivers, and Faculty of the Year, Dr. Michelle Barnes, at the 2019 Faculty Recognition Ceremony.
Transitional care and comprehensive services are offered to children with developmental delay, autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disability, learning disorders, and more. Our multidisciplinary team includes board certified behavioral/developmental pediatricians, as well as a psychiatrist, psychologist, advanced practice nurse, and pharmacist.

Under the guidance of Dr. Reshma Shah, a collaborative QI project entitled “Preschool for Me When I Am Three: If I Need an IEP,” was designed by Joyce Masterton, our nurse practitioner, as part of her doctoral program. It helps families partner with local school districts to obtain school based services for young children with developmental and behavioral concerns.
Our genetics faculty provides state-of-the-art diagnostic and clinical evaluation services and treatment for children and adults who have birth defects, as well as biochemical metabolic and genetic disorders. Services for prospective parents also include: genetic counseling, carrier testing, and prenatal diagnosis. Comprehensive diagnostic biochemical and cytogenetics laboratories are located on-site.

In 2019, we were again awarded a “Regionalized Care in the Treatment of Biochemical Genetic Diseases” grant from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). This enables us to provide comprehensive services (e.g., nutrition, genetic counseling, and case management) to rural areas of the state of Illinois where services to manage these conditions are not otherwise available (i.e., within a 150 mile radius of both Peoria and Springfield). Our team provided services via more than 2,600 encounters statewide in 2019.
Dr. Mary Lou Schmidt, Division Chief of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology, is involved in many research studies, and she is the Principal Investigator for a tri-institutional Children’s Oncology Group (COG) that includes John H. Stroger Hospital of Cook County and Rush University Medical Center. UIC serves as the lead site for COG, which provides access to international pediatric cancer clinical trials and state of the art cancer care.

Numerous organizations and groups generously contribute funds that are used to grow programs and create more opportunities to enroll in clinical trials. One example is the Impact Award Grant from Hyundai Hope on Wheels, which last year presented Dr. Schmidt with $100,000 (pictured below).
UI Health has the largest Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) program in the state, which is involved in cutting edge research worldwide to offer comprehensive services to children, teens, and young adults living with SCD. Last year our unique Sickle Cell Transition Adolescent-Adult Readiness (STAR) Clinic served 42 unique patients whose ages ranged from 16 to 21. Funded by the UIC Division of Specialized Care for Children, the program focuses on 5 key areas: medical, emotional/psychological, social domain, academic/education; and vocation/career.

Dr. Lewis Hsu, Director of the Pediatric Sickle Cell Program, is dedicated to finding cures for SCD and improving treatment and education until cures can be found. In addition to training, mentoring, and writing curriculum materials for learners at all levels at UI Health, he is active in Global Child Health initiatives. For example, last year he led an online course through Project ARISE that was funded by the European Union to improve newborn screening for SCD in Africa.

Dr. Angela Rivers, Director of STAR Clinic, is devoted to improving the lives of patients with SCD by developing new drug alternatives and transforming healthcare delivery models. She is also active in the community, appearing in radio talk shows during Sickle Cell Awareness Month to talk about complications of SCD and current therapies. Dr. Rivers was the recipient of the 2019 Department of Pediatrics Rising Star Award.
Section of Pediatric Infectious Disease

Our team of pediatric infectious disease specialists cares for children who have diseases caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. We have a specialized clinic for children with HIV and infants born to HIV positive mothers. Our team partners with and covers telephone consultations for Shriners Children’s Hospital of Chicago, providing 24-hour coverage; and Dr. Karen C. Hayani participates in quarterly infection prevention meetings at Shriners. Dr. Hayani, Dr. Arthur L. Frank, and Dr. Andrew J. Kreppel serve in leadership roles on Departmental and University-wide clinical and academic committees.

Dr. Karen Hayani (right) is the principal investigator at the UIC site for a long term, multi-center study of women living with HIV and their HIV uninfected infants and children: the Pediatric HIV AIDS Cohort Study (PHACS) Surveillance Monitoring for ART Toxicities (SMARTT) Protocol. The study is funded by the National Institutes of Health. The UIC team has been actively engaged since the inception of PHACS in 2005. There are currently 389 study subjects enrolled at the UIC site (225 patients and 164 caregivers), with new enrollment ongoing.

Dr. Andrew Kreppel is the Director of Quality Improvement in the Department of Pediatrics where he leads our multidisciplinary team of pediatric specialists and nurses to achieve tremendous progress in patient safety. Under his leadership, our Children’s Hospital have consistently maintained zero Central Line-associated Bloodstream Infections (CLABSI) and implemented a new Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) risk screening tool for pediatric patients. In 2019, Dr. Kreppel was among an elite group of 16 doctors system-wide to be nominated for UI Health Physician of the Year.

(From right to left) Dr. Benjamin Van Voorhees, Department Head of Pediatrics, congratulates Drs. Andrew Kreppel, Jaye Schreier, and Mary Lou Schmidt on being nominated for UI Health Physician of the Year.

Our Faculty

Karen Hayani, MD
Associate Professor
Section Chief

Arthur Frank, MD
Associate Professor

Andrew Kreppel, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor
Under the direction of Dr. De-Ann Pillers, Division Chief of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, UI Health is home to a **46-bed unit designated by the Illinois Department of Public Health as a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)**. We are also state-designated as a Clinical and Administrative Perinatal Center, of which Dr. De-Ann Pillers is a Co-Director. In collaboration with UI Health Maternal Fetal Medicine, we manage a **perinatal network inclusive of four Level III NICUs, three Level II centers, and one Level 0 center** conducting outreach, education, quality improvement projects, and morbidity/mortality reviews. Dr. Pillers is also site PI for the NICHD Pediatrics Trails Network, the IBT Therapeutics Connection Probiotics study, and the Shire Takeda Footprints study. Among her other research projects, she is collaborating with Dr. Wenxiang Luo on a study of urine metabolomics that is funded by the Gerber Foundation.

In July, we hosted our second annual Neonatal Picnic to welcome our new neonatology fellows to the UI Health family.
Dr. Aarti Raghavan is one of the select few Neonatologists nationally who holds a MS in Patient Safety Leadership. In addition to being Medical Director of the NICU, she is Program Director for Graduate Programs in Patient Safety Leadership that is housed in the Department of Medical Education and certified by the Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education.

Dr. Nishant Srinivasan is the Associate Director of the Neonatology Fellowship Training Program, which has expanded to a capacity of 9 fellows. He was appointed to the UIC Illinois Department of Public Health Administrative Perinatal Center as a neonatology educator with emphasis on neonatal simulation.
Our team of pediatric nephrology specialists collaborate with transplant surgeons, pharmacists, nurses, dietitians, and social workers to provide early intervention for children with kidney disease and kidney related issues. We offer a preventative pediatric renal clinic, multidisciplinary pediatric urology/pediatric nephrology clinic, kidney transplantation, chronic peritoneal dialysis, and continuous renal replacement therapy (CRRT)/hemodialysis. Our faculty are actively engaged in clinical research, including National Institutes of Health (NIH) multi-center studies on progression of chronic kidney disease in children.

Our Pediatric Nephrology-Urology Clinic consolidates patient visits and provides comprehensive, high quality care because some cases (e.g., chronic kidney disease and transplant care) require consults from both subspecialties. This unique cross-disciplinary team shares clinics every other Thursday to discuss cases and facilitate inpatient and outpatient services.

Pediatric Emergency Medicine

The Department of Pediatrics works closely with the Department of Emergency Medicine to meet the needs of our patients who have an acute illness or injury and provide them with access to health and healing. Our Pediatric Emergency Department provides 24-hour coverage by board-certified pediatric emergency medicine physicians and nurses.
Our team of pediatric neurology specialists provide advanced, comprehensive care for children with nervous system problems, including epilepsy, headaches, cerebral palsy, developmental delays and other brain disorders. We have Centers of Excellence dedicated to including Pediatric Epilepsy, Sturge-Weber Syndrome and Neurofibromatosis (NF).

Dr. Akira Yoshii is the director of our Tuberous Sclerosis Clinic and is a clinician and basic science researcher studying synaptic transmission in the Tuberous Sclerosis Complex. In 2018, the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance recognized our program as a designated Tuberous Sclerosis Clinic.

In 2019, Dr. Saba Ahmad was named Division Chief of Pediatric Neurology. She is also the director of the Pediatric Epilepsy Center and her clinical and research interests include epilepsy and neurogenetics/neurometabolic diseases, with a focus on epilepsy management, with an emphasis on dietary and surgical interventions. Her other titles include the Associate Head for Health Systems Integration, Co-Director of the Tuberous Sclerosis clinic, and course director for the Pediatric Neurology clinical rotation. Dr. Ahmad is actively involved in patient and physician advocacy and was named to the faculty honor roll by the pediatric residents for her outstanding teaching and mentorship.

Dr. Michelle Barnes, Dr. Maddie Mier, Ms. Lauren Messmore, and Dr. Saba Ahmad met with Illinois State Senator Patricia Van Pelt (center) in Springfield as part of UI Health Pediatrics Advocacy Day.
Section of Pediatric Pulmonary, Allergy and Sleep Medicine

Our team of multidisciplinary specialists provide diagnostic evaluations and management of respiratory, allergy, and sleep-related disorders in infants, children, and adolescents. The full range of services include consultation, pulmonary function testing (PFT), skin testing for environmental and food allergies, bronchoscopy services, and sleep studies.

With Dr. Pranshu Adavadkar recently being named Director of the Pediatric Sleep Program, the UI Health Sleep Science Center is now fully accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM). Certified sleep physicians, nurse practitioners, and technologists provide high quality care that is evidence based. Affiliated with Sleep Fellowship and Pediatric Residency programs, the center performs sleep studies seven days a week in a safe and comfortable environment.

Our Faculty

Harsha Kumar, MD, MBA
Associate Professor
Pulmonary
Section Chief

C. Lucy Park, MD
Associate Professor
Pulmonary, Allergy/Immunology

Pranshu Adavadkar, MD
Assistant Professor
Sleep

Pravin Muniyappa, MD
Assistant Professor
Allergy/Immunology

Chithra Poongkunran, MD
Assistant Professor
Sleep

Sindhuja H. Vardhan, MD
Assistant Professor
Pulmonary

Our Advanced Practice Nurse
Maureen Smith, APN (Sleep)
Pediatrics faculty were actively engaged as principal investigators on numerous community and/or population health projects in 2019. They focused on issues particularly imperative to the well-being of our surrounding communities, including early childhood education, sexual health among adolescents, obesity, mental health, tobacco control, asthma, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Projects were funded by multiple sources, including the National Institutes of Health and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

CHECK, which is one of our population health programs, continued its success and growth in 2019 under the leadership of its new executive director, Michael Gerges, MA, LCPC. In addition to providing over 12,000 staff hours delivering services in partnership with the UIC Department of Specialized Care for Children, CHECK undertook one of UI Health’s first Pay for Performance efforts that is focused on older adults. Another of the ways that CHECK is to meet its clinical and strategic goals outside its original grant population and funding period is by beginning Integrated Health Home services when the Illinois Department of Health and Family Services officially starts the program.
Led by Melishia Bansa, MPH, our community engagement team is continuing to build a Community Medical Neighborhood in partnership with federally qualified health centers, emergency rooms and referring providers, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations. In 2019, our physicians, residents, medical students and interns, and staff offered information and training to over 1,000 community members at over 150 neighborhood activities. For example, more than 100 free physicals were provided at over 20 back to school events.

The PATH 2 Purpose (P2P): Primary Care and Community-Based Prevention of Mental Disorders in Adolescents study is a two-arm comparative effectiveness study of two different online prevention programs: an evidence-based, self-directed online depression prevention program called CATCH-IT (Competent Adulthood Transition with Cognitive-behavioral and Interpersonal Training) with the current gold standard group therapy program called TEAMS (Teens Achieving Mastery over Stress). The P2P study is in the process of recruiting 564 adolescents, ages 13-18 years, of all genders, English speaking, and with elevated symptoms of depression. If shown to be comparable in prevention effectiveness to the current gold standard group model, CATCH-IT would provide primary and specialty care clinicians and other health professionals, health systems and school systems an alternative intervention for at-risk adolescents that is feasible to implement on a large scale, low-cost, and culturally acceptable.
Our 2019 Castle Connolly Top Doctors

One hundred UI Health providers across 44 specialties, including 12 pediatrics providers, were named among the region’s top physicians by Castle Connolly, the consumer healthcare guide. After being nominated by peers in a nationwide survey, providers were chosen by a physician-led research group. Additionally, 30 of the recognized providers were featured in Chicago magazine’s January 2019 “Top Doctors” list.

Adolescent Medicine
Karen Bernstein, MD, MPH

Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
De-Ann Pillers, MD, PhD

Pediatric Hematology-Oncology
Lewis Hsu, MD, PhD
Mary Lou Schmidt, MD

Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
Reshma Shah, MD

Pediatric Allergy/Immunology
C. Lucy Park, MD

Pediatric Gastroenterology
James Berman, MD
T.S. Gunasekaran, MD

General Pediatrics
Rachel Caskey, MD
Amanda Osta, MD

Pediatric Infectious Disease
Karen Hayani, MD

Pediatric Nephrology
Eunice John, MD (1939-2019)

Faculty Wellness in the Department of Pediatrics

The long-stated vision of the Department of Pediatrics has been “...a world in which all children, families, and communities achieve their full potential.” To that end, many of our efforts in clinical care and research have been focused upon serving vulnerable population and working toward healthcare equity. In 2019 more attention was also concentrated on faculty wellness, with an initiative led by Dr. Claudia Boucher-Berry, Co-Associate Head for Faculty Affairs, to uphold personal resilience, an environment of wellness, and an efficiency of practice. Components included town hall meetings, workshops, and an anonymous suggestion box. A Faculty Diversity/Inclusion Committee was also formed to support such diversity goals as recruitment and retention. Under the leadership of Dr. Kristen Kenan and Dr. Felicia Scott, activities included a Pediatric Diversity Cook Book, Pediatric Resident Recruitment Diversity Dinner, Walk In My Shoes Lecture Series, and Student National Medical Association Regional Recruitment Fair.
Highlights of 2019

In 2019, a new leadership group/associate board was started called Professionals for Pediatrics. We appreciate this great beginning toward developing goals and connecting with resources to expand the capacity and advance the mission of the UI Children’s Hospital and the Department of Pediatrics.

We continue to be very touched by the efforts of the Friends of UIC Pediatrics who have been our supporters and advocates since 2019. Through their events and other methods of fundraising, they have purchased medical equipment and funded programs that have “helped kids heal.”

Highlights of 2019 were the investitures of De-Ann Pillers, MD, PhD, as the inaugural Dharmapuri Vidyasagar Professor in Neonatology; and Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH, as the Savithri and Samuel Raj Professor in Pediatrics. Dr. Pillers is a nationally and internationally recognized clinical, translational and basic science researcher whose leadership and vision for neonatal medicine have contributed tremendously to our understanding of neonatal vision science and genetics. Dr. Klein is a nationally and internationally recognized health services researcher whose leadership and vision for pediatric and adolescent preventive medicine and global tobacco control have contributed tremendously to our understanding of the prevention of asthma and other lung diseases.
Support for the Department of Pediatrics comes in many forms, and the accomplishments represented in this annual report are reflections of the honor and privilege we have of working with many collaborators to deliver clinical care, education, and research to benefit infants, children, and adolescents. What follows is a sample of some of those individuals and efforts that are investments in our longstanding commitment to work toward a world in which all children, families, and communities achieve their full potential.

$100,000+
St. Baldrick’s Foundation
American Heart Association

$25,000 - $99,999
Mr. Michael P. Krasny
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Circle of Service Foundation
Dr. Arthur L. Frank
Gilead Sciences, Inc.
London North West Healthcare NHS Trust
Morracci Family Foundation
Morgan Stanley Global Impact Funding Trust, Inc.

Ms. Usha Raj
Dr. George R. Honig and Ms. Olga Weiss

$10,000 - $24,999
American Academy of Pediatrics
CureSearch for Children’s Cancer
Joy in Childhood Foundation

$5,000 - $9,999
Dr. Benjamin and Mrs. Donica Van Voorhees

$1,000 - $4,999
The PKU Organization of Illinois
American Society Hematology
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital
Mrs. Denise and Mr. John Maniatis
Dr. Lewis Hsu and Mrs. Judy C. Fan-Hsu
Mr. Michael J. Gleeman
Dr. Joel W. Secrest and Mrs. Lynn Secrest
Dr. Jonathan D. Klein and Dr. Susan E. Cohn
Ms. Susana Rendon
Betsy and Alan Cohn Foundation, Inc.

$999 or less
Adler Planetarium
Dr. Ramin Alemzadeh
Dr. Peter D. and Mrs. Joanne Analytis
Ms. Helen A. Applegate
Mr. Louis G. and Mrs. Alexandra P. Apostol
Dr. Kathy B. and Mr. Peter Apostol
Mrs. Frances H. and Dr. James Apostolides

This list is intended to include the names of all donors who made contributions to UIC Pediatrics & Children’s Hospital University of Illinois during Fiscal Year 2019 (July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019). If your name has been misspelled, entered correctly or unintentionally omitted, please notify us at mlee9@uic.edu
DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS 2020

OUR WHY
Tying our strategies and goals to our mission

PATIENTS, FAMILIES & LEARNERS
We have the expertise, research & capacity to improve the status of child health in Chicago & beyond
We have the opportunity and responsibility to train the next generation of pediatric healthcare leaders

OUR GOALS
For 2020

PATIENTS SERVED, FINANCE & FUNDRAISING
Increase the number of patients under care to further serve our community and improve the training experience
Reduce expenses & improve collections to continue successful efforts toward a balanced budget
Increase gifts and philanthropic grants to support pediatric programs and care

OUR STRATEGY
Guiding strategic planning priorities from 2016-present

STRATEGIC PLANNING PRIORITIES
Clinical & Subspecialty Growth
Business & Governance Development
Research Programs
Education Leadership
Strategic Partnerships
Population Health
Global Health & Technology
Visit kids.uihealth.care to learn more about our clinical programs/patient care. Visit pediatrics.uic.edu to learn more about our academic programs and research.

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