

**September
2019**



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Depression treatment project takes off

Depression rates in rural areas are found to be higher than urban areas. Furthermore, many rural areas have limited mental health services and long wait times for appointments for services nearby.

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) has funded West Virginia University researcher Robert Bossarte, Ph.D., to test three depression treatment options for patients with newly diagnosed depression in rural areas: antidepressants alone; antidepressants combined with unguided cognitive behavior therapy provided online; and antidepressants combined with guided online cognitive behavior therapy.

An informational call will be offered for WVPBRN members to learn about the pro-

ject and how to be a part of the effort to provide treatment options to their patients.

This call is open to providers or administrators in your clinic and will take place via ZOOM teleconferencing platform. Each call will last approximately 30 minutes with extra time following for questions. To accommodate various schedules, this call will be offered 3 separate times to choose from:

- **Tuesday, October 1 at 8:00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday, October 1 at 5:00 p.m.**
- **Friday, October 4 at 12:00 p.m.**

RSVP for a time to Stacey Whanger, WVPBRN Manager, swhanger@hsc.wvu.edu to receive the call information and a reminder email.

Mountains of Hope promotes lung cancer screening

In West Virginia, more people die of lung cancer than breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer combined. The number one risk factor for lung cancer is smoking. The United States Preventive Services Task Force recommended using low-dose computed tomography (LDCT) as the only lung cancer screening for those high at-risk adults aged 55 to 80 years who have a 30 pack-year smoking history and currently smoking or have quit within the past 15 years. This prompted Governor Jim Justice to sign a proclamation in 2018 to designate November as Lung Cancer Awareness Month.

Early detection is vital in saving lives. Mountains of Hope, West Virginia's comprehensive

cancer coalition, is encouraging lung cancer screening providers to observe Lung Cancer Awareness Month this November. Uniting health care providers, improving knowledge about the new screening, and increasing the lung cancer screening rates in the state with a goal of reducing lung cancer mortality.

Lung Cancer Screening requires shared decision making and a referral for LDCT scan. Lung Cancer Awareness toolkit and resources are available to help promote lung cancer screening and educate patients.

For additional information contact Cancer Prevention and Control at 304-293-2370.

The mission of the WVPBRN is to improve the health of West Virginians by collaborating with primary care practices to conduct translational practice-based research.

WVPBRN Spotlight: Samantha Minc, MD

Samantha Minc always knew she wanted to be a doctor. However it was others around her who knew she'd be a surgeon long before she did. Minc figured this out the first time she stepped into an operating room. She had the same instant draw to the vascular field. "I was just kind of like, 'this is awesome,' and that was it!" Minc explained. Now a vascular surgeon at the WVU Heart and Vascular Institute, she has a drive for public health with a particular interest in preventing diabetes and vascular disease-related amputation.

"I have always had an interest in community health and service. My years working in vascular – particularly in "inner city" Chicago – have only served to confirm my interest in the area [of public health]...almost all vascular disease is completely preventable with lifestyle changes, community support, and appropriate access to care," Minc explained.

From Montreal, Canada, Minc attended Tufts University in Boston, MA for her undergraduate and medical school educations. She did her general surgery residency at Yale New Haven Hospital in New Haven, CT, before moving to Illinois for her vascular fellowship at the University of Chicago.

Minc was drawn to Morgantown, WV because of West Virginia University's mission-driven focus and the opportunity to pursue meaningful academic work while still working as a vascular surgeon. During her time with the Heart and Vascular Institute, she has become engaged with the WVPBRN.

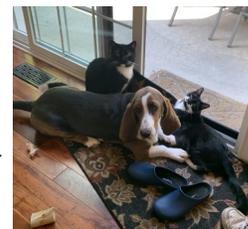
Alongside her research team, Minc studied discharge data from across the state and found that among patients with diabetes and peripheral arterial disease, West Virginians have a significantly higher rate of amputation

than the rest of the country. Minc was also able to identify "hot spots" across the state, demonstrating that certain zip-codes have a much higher rate of amputation than others. To gain a better understanding of this issue, Minc performed focus groups with amputees and providers across the state, including a group of WVPBRN providers to understand their experiences with vascular disease, diabetes, and amputation. Minc and her research team are currently analyzing this important information with the goal of creating a community-based intervention to decrease the rates of amputation in the state.

"The WVPBRN has been a fantastic resource to allow me to reach out to primary care providers across the state to get a better understanding of their experiences when it comes to preventing vascular- and diabetes-related amputation," said Minc. "I look forward to continuing to build these connections to build community-based programs to reduce amputation rates."

When Minc isn't working, she enjoys spending time with Louicat, Bandit, and Molly – her two tuxedo cats and basset hound. Being out on the water is another hobby of Minc's, as she is a competitive rower and spends the majority of her time away from work training and traveling for competitions.

To learn more about Dr. Minc, you can find her on Twitter at @SamanthaMinc!



If there is a health system, site, specific person, or a team that you feel deserves to be recognized, please submit nominations to the WVPBRN Water Cooler's WVPBRN Spotlight tab or e-mail your nomination to Stacey Whanger at swhanger@hsc.wvu.edu.

Member Spotlight: Chaffee Tommarello, RRT, RPFT, AE-C

Chaffee Tommarello's affinity for the lungs began when she was just a child. In the sixth grade, she even had a West Virginia State Science Fair project focused on the lungs. Then in a one-month span during college she lost both her uncle and grandmother to lung cancer – one was a lifelong smoker, one was a lifelong non-smoker.

Tommarello has made a career out of treating lung disease. She is the Director of the Breathing Center for Cabin Creek Health Systems in Dawes, WV, which oversees the Grace Anne Dorney Pulmonary Rehabilitation and Black Lung programs. Her practice focuses on pulmonary rehabilitation, pulmonary function testing, respiratory disease management, lung cancer screening, and Black Lung testing. Tommarello is a Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist and a Certified Asthma Educator.

Beginning her professional education in Virginia, Tommarello attended the Program for the Exceptionally Gifted at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, VA to earn her Bachelor's of Arts degree in Human Resource Management. She then earned her Bachelor's of Science degree in Respiratory Care from Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA before returning to her home state of West Virginia.

Originally from Elkins, WV, Tommarello returned to West Virginia because she missed the state and the people.

"I was delighted to have the opportunity to help bring pulmonary rehabilitation to Cabin Creek. It is very unusual to have pulmonary rehabilitation in an FQHC Setting. I love being able to focus on the pulmonary needs of the community," Tommarello explained.

Because it is so unusual to have pulmonary rehabilitation in a rural area, Tommarello partnered with Dan Doyle, MD, of Cabin Creek and New River Health to author the article "Implementation

and Outcomes of a Community-Based Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program in Rural Appalachia".

They were published in the July 2017 issue of the Journal of Cardio-pulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention.

Working with the WVPBRN, Doyle joined forces with Tommarello and Mike Broce of the Charleston Area Medical Center on a study of Medicare costs for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease patients before and after participating in pulmonary rehabilitation.

"The WVPBRN has been instrumental in helping us form the connections to improve services to our patients, including bringing Federal Black Lung testing to our region," Tommarello said.

In addition to Tommarello's active participation within the WVPBRN, she also sits on the Chronic Lung Disease Project ECHO Hub – one of WV Project ECHO's seven programs.

When she's not working, Tommarello loves to travel. She has lived in Peru and Mexico, as well as many other places around the United States. She also loves to ski, swim, and read.

To learn more about Ms. Tommarello or Cabin Creek's programs, please visit cabin-creekhealth.org or find the Cabin Creek Breathing Center on Facebook!

Tommarello and Doyle's publication can be found at: <http://ow.ly/vHRK30piiR0>



"The WVPBRN has been instrumental in helping us form the connections to improve services to our patients, including bringing Federal Black Lung testing to our region" - Chaffee Tommarello, RRT, RPFT, AE-C

Design Studio supports community clinics



Primary care research is a valuable contributor to enhancing care in community health centers. A major initiative that has taken shape in the WVPBRN this year has been the Design Studio. Design Studio is a

collaboration between the WVPBRN and the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute's Clinical Research Design, Epidemiology, and Biostatistics (CRDEB) core. This initiative provides WVPBRN members with a venue for increasing research knowledge and capacity in a group-learning format.

Design Studio sessions are offered on a quarterly basis through a teleconferencing platform. Based on membership feedback, we offer these sessions on Fridays during the lunch hour (12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.). WVPBRN members with an interest in research or idea sharing fill out a project submission form to provide a general idea of the inquiry. During the session, the individual will share their idea with a panel of experts from CRDEB and WVPBRN researchers.

Thomas Hulsey, Sc.D. chair of the CRDEB core, leads the session discussions with Treah Haggerty, M.D. (WVU Family Medicine) and Courtney Hereford, MPH (WVSOM) to round out the panel. This panel provides step-by-step guidance on how to get ideas moving and strategies to achieve the overall project goals.

Other WVPBRN members on the call are able to share their thoughts, feedback, and support to ideas being shared. Over the past year, 31 community clinicians have attended at least one session to participate.

Design Studio has not only been successful in moving projects forward in development from WVPBRN members with limited research experience, but also offers a venue for collaborations to be made across the statewide network centered on project ideas. In just one year, Design Studio has contributed support and services to projects that have been accepted in the WVPBRN's Annual Collaborative Outreach and Research Engagement (CORE) Survey, submitted for poster presentations at various conferences, and refined preliminary data for a grant application. Collaboration with the panel continues following the initial session.

In June 2019, the concept of Design Studio was orally presented during the North American Primary Care Research Group (NAPCRG) PBRN Conference in Bethesda, MD. This collaborative process is receiving national attention for providing innovative ways to advance primary care research generated in clinics.

Anyone interested in learning more about Design Studio should contact, Stacey Whanger, WVPBRN Manager at swhanger@hsc.wvu.edu or 304-581-1821.

Metabolic Medicine Collaborative started by WVPBRN member

A group of providers from across West Virginia are meeting monthly for a one-hour informal meeting to discuss best practices in the area of metabolic medicine. Joanna Bailey, M.D. from Tug River Health Association initiated the idea for this meeting. Dr. Bailey came to the CEO core with this idea after receiving training in metabolic medicine and connecting with others around the topic. However, after informal meetings the group saw the need for facilitation and structure.

Dr. Bailey, who is an active member of the WVPBRN and WV Project ECHO, reached out with the idea of holding the meeting in an ECHO-like fashion where best practices can be shared among the group. The collaborative was

launched on April 23 with the goal of these meetings to provide an opportunity for networking, clinical support, and new ideas on metabolic health for these physicians while not adding to their burden of work. The meetings include discussion on complex clinical situations, clinic policy/workflow issues, review of medical literature and evidence, public policy and advocacy as it relates to metabolic and metabolic-related chronic disease.

The group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month from 12:00 -1:00 p.m. via Zoom. If there are any questions or if you would like to sign up, please contact Jay Mason at jdmason@hsc.wvu.edu or Kayetlyn Edinger at keding-er@hsc.wvu.edu.

Announcements

* Save the date:

The 2020 WVPBRN Annual Retreat will take place on May 7-8, at Stonewall Resort in Roanoke, WV. More information to follow. If you would like to be on the Retreat Planning Committee, please contact Stacey Whanger, WVPBRN Manager at swhanger@hsc.wvu.edu.

CONTACT

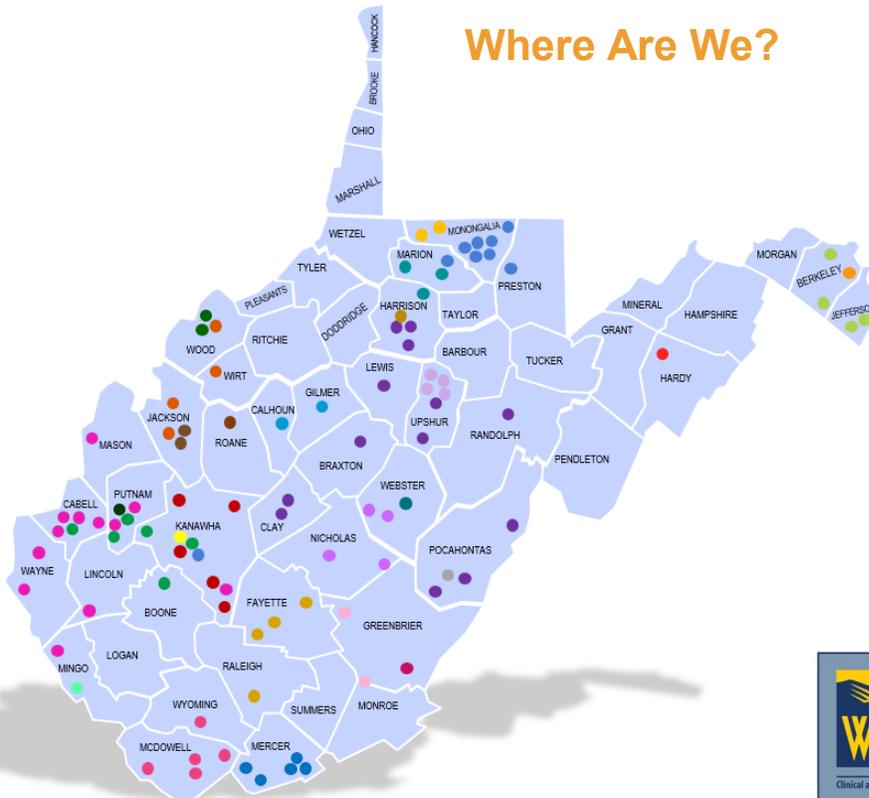
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