

## Winter/Spring 2019

### Director's Note

#### The Yin and Yang of Accountability and Forgiveness

Increasingly, I hear talk of “accountability” in the news. These conversations often center on a need for accountability and are followed by punishment to prevent future transgressions. I do support accountability in the general sense but I also acknowledge that this approach can’t solve all problems. Much of my effort as a primary care physician is to help patients move past what they have done and instead focus on starting anew. As an addiction medicine specialist, I, in particular, cannot let past behavior obscure or prevent future positive, healthier behavior. As I work to provide a therapeutic space for recovery and redemption, it is counter-productive to continue to bring up the past. Of course, the patient and I should acknowledge the mistakes and injuries of the past but only as a touchstone for ongoing learning and developing wisdom. We both have to move on. This just may be the key component of forgiveness: the opportunity and ability to change. As recovery proceeds, patients are gradually forgiven and trusted by others, and in turn, they begin to forgive and trust themselves. This healing process supports self-efficacy, which directly impacts a patient’s life and well-being. For this reason, I believe that it is not a stretch to state that we primary care clinicians are in the “forgiveness business”. We provide absolution and bear witness to the patient’s capacity, commitment, and ability to improve. We can also choose to stand against stigma: an ultimate form of accountability - perpetual life-crushing punishment for a disease that is out of one’s control. With this perspective, we can view harm reduction as a form of forgiveness in the medical realm. Stigma and harm reduction represent the yin and yang of accountability and forgiveness. As clinicians who care for people with substance use disorders, a disease which drives bad decisions, we can play a key role by helping patients learn to balance accountability and forgiveness in this aspect of their life journey.



Warm Regards,  
Christopher W. Shanahan, MD MPH FACP  
Director, Community Medicine Unit



#### MCSTAP Program

Christopher Shanahan is the Medical Director of the MCSTAP Program, which officially kicked off January 2nd, 2019. The **M**assachusetts **C**onsultation **S**ervice for **T**reatment of **A**ddiction and **P**ain (MCSTAP) offers real-time, telephonic professional consultation to primary care providers on safe prescribing and managing care for patients with chronic pain and/or substance use disorder (SUD). They also have a new website with more information and tools for clinicians caring for patients with SUD a/o Chronic Pain: [www.mcstap.com](http://www.mcstap.com).

Consultations can be made by calling 1-833-PAIN-SUD (**1-833-724-6783**), **Mon-Fri, 9-5pm**.



**Annual Kathleen Bennett Memorial Lecture in Community**



The CMU hosted its annual Kathleen Bennett Memorial Lecture on Oct 10th. This year's outstanding presentation was very well-received and those who knew her the best concluded "Kathy would have love this presentation!" The highest of praise goes to Dr. Megan Sandel for her excellent presentation and work on public housing as a medical treatment.



### East Boston Neighborhood Health Center Welcomed HHS Secretary

EBNHC had the distinct honor of hosting United States Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar II on April 8th to discuss the national HIV epidemic and EBNHC's experience as a leading-edge provider of HIV prevention, screening, and treatment.

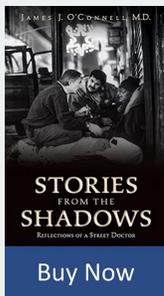


In 1995, EBNHC launched Project SHINE, a clinical and supportive services department that provides a range of services including community-based prevention, screenings for HIV/STIs/HCV, PrEP, HIV care, behavioral health, medical case management, linkage and retention, and psychosocial support.

"We're grateful for Secretary Azar for visiting us to see how community health centers play a vital role in the fight to end the spread of HIV and how we are leaders in providing value-based care," said EBNHC President and CEO Manny Lopes.



### Network in the Media



Dr. Jim O'Connell of Boston Health Care for the Homeless recently published a book, Stories from the Shadows: Reflections of a Street Doctor.

Dr. O'Connell's collection of stories and essays, written during thirty years of caring for homeless persons in Boston, gently illuminates the humanity and raw courage of those who struggle to survive and find meaning and hope while living on the streets.

You can learn more about the book and BHCHP [here](#).

### Upcoming Network Events

50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY 1969-2019 South End KICKS  
A Benefit Celebration for South End Community Health Center  
Wednesday, May 8, 2018  
6pm to 9pm  
[Click here for tickets and more information.](#)

South End Community Health Center is celebrating its 50th anniversary and is hosting a benefit celebration on **May 8th** to commemorate this achievement. Tickets for the event can be purchased [here](#).

Boston Healthcare for the Homeless is also hosting a gala to benefit the organization. Their annual "Medicine that Matters" event will be held on **May 20th** and tickets

can be purchased [here](#).

South Boston Community Health Center has recently started a health blog for their patients, a source of "supportive and non-judgmental advice from SBCHC's health experts." Their blog can be accessed [here](#).



## Upcoming Annual BMC Gala

The Boston Medical Center Gala is the hospital's signature event held annually each May at the Seaport World Trade Center. With nearly 1,000 guests in attendance, the event is BMC's largest and most successful event each year, raising significant funds for various initiatives across the hospital. Tickets for the BMC Gala on **May 8th** can be purchased [here](#).



## Featured Community Clinician

SEHC Medical Director, Elizabeth Davis, MD

Dr. Elizabeth Davis, the Medical Director at SEHC since 2016, has graciously agreed to answer our questionnaire in our *Featured Community Clinician* segment. Thank you, Dr. Davis!



Q. What is the best part about being an internist and a psychiatrist?

My training in both disciplines affords me the bandwidth to treat complex behavioral problems that impact individual's physical health. I have the flexibility to maneuver between mental and physical domains and to address risk in terms of what is the most important thing at that moment with any given patient.

Q. What drew you to working in community-based Primary Care?

The culture: The independence and creativity to build an addiction program that adequately meets the needs of individuals in the community. The attention paid to social and psychological wellness and the efforts made to integrate programs and resources with the practice of diagnosing and treating physical problems.

Q. What would be your advice to a budding Primary Care internist?

Continue to learn from your patients and strive to understand their experience with their symptoms and conditions. Approach your career with an open mind and flexibility, as the direction one chooses may change in ways that you may not predict.

Q. What has been your biggest challenge?

Juggling the multiple roles I play, both administrative and clinical, and not feeling overwhelmed.

Q. What have you learned from your position as Medical Director?

I have learned an enormous amount about the business/financial end of clinical medicine, including the operations of how a small organization runs. I have improved my skills in managing staff with respect to

their own personal growth, while also fulfilling the goals and requirements of the clinic.

Q. What experience with a patient has stuck with you and why?

Two years ago, I saw a 55 year old woman referred by another primary care clinician for a psychological evaluation. She has suffered from weight loss, lack of motivation, irritability, depressed affect, and general body weakness that had become so extreme her family was carrying her up the stairs and showering her. When I met her she was quietly combative, anxious, underweight, and unable to attend to my instructions/plan. I managed to obtain labs which showed severe vitamin B12 deficiency and hyperthyroidism. She was found to have pernicious anemia and Grave's. With treatment (which was initially difficult to enforce) the patient improved almost immediately and presented as a completely different person. It was so gratifying for me to have a clear "fix" for her suffering and to be able to distinguish between medical and psychiatric causes of illness. She has continued to be my primary care patient.

Q. What do you like to do, in your free time?

I spend a lot of my free time caring for 2 sons, one who is 16 and the other 10. I exercise regularly which keeps me sane. I feel like I constantly have to work to upkeep and maintain my home. For fun I like to eat out with my husband and friends and occasionally attend a play or a concert. Pretty routine stuff. I may have once been more interesting ;)



## Clinician Corner with Geoffrey Modest, MD

Please enjoy a few of Dr. Geoff Modest's recent blog postings:

[Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring and mortality: reinforces the importance of using ABPM for dx of hypertension](#)

[Cardiac risk calculators overstate CAD risk](#)

[Antibiotics overprescribing in urgent care. Argues the importance of primary care relationship, and that antibiotics lead to resistance](#)

For more postings, please visit his [blog](#) (posts prior to 2017 can be found at [BMJ](#)). If you would like to be on the regular mailing list for blog posts, please contact: [gmodest@uphams.org](mailto:gmodest@uphams.org).



## Education Opportunities

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**BLS Re-certification Practical**  
**May 1st, 2019**

If in need of re-certification, please contact [Sarah Brunt](#) to get set up with the online passkey.

### **Upcoming GIM & DOM Grand Rounds and Ambulatory Rounds**

GIM Grand Rounds (CME)

Chagas Disease

Presented by: Sukhee Sandhu, MD

Weds, Apr 17th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Grand Rounds (CME)  
Preventing Fetal Alcohol Syndrome  
Presented by: Daniel Alford, MD ([BU Profiles](#))  
Weds, Apr 24th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Ambulatory M & M (CME)  
Presented by: Julie Crosson, MD ([BU Profiles](#))  
Weds, May 15th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Grand Rounds (CME)  
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder  
Presented by: Kate Zona, PhD  
Weds, May 22nd, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Grand Rounds (CME)  
Primary Immunodeficiency  
Presented by: Paul J. Maglione, MD, PhD ([BU Profiles](#))  
Weds, May 29th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Grand Rounds (CME)  
Decoding Ophthalmology Examination Reports  
Presented by: Crandall Peeler, MD ([BU Profiles](#))  
Weds, June 5th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Grand Rounds (CME)  
Caring for Veterans  
Presented by: Amy Linsky, MD, MSc ([BU Profiles](#))  
Weds, June 12th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

GIM Ambulatory M & M (CME)  
Presented by: Julie Crosson, MD ([BU Profiles](#))  
Weds, June 19th, 2019@ 8AM-801 Mass Ave, 2nd flr, Rm 2127

If you are interested in receiving the weekly GIM Grand Rounds announcement please reach out to [Sandra Parlato](#) to be added to the distribution list.



### **BMC Officially Moves out of the East Newton Facility**

The latest move in the quest for BMC Campus consolidation is the move of all services out of the East Newton Campus. Inpatient hospital services have been

### **BMC and the ACO Anniversary**

This month marks one year that our Boston Medical Center Health System (BMCHS) has been part of the MassHealth accountable care organization (ACO) program.

The hospital is part of Boston Accountable Care Organization (BACO), one of BMCHS's four ACO partnerships across the state.

While BMC is still in the early stages of our ACO journey, we have made considerable progress over the past year in transitioning patients into the ACO and implementing programs to deliver well-coordinated and efficient care to our patients.

consolidated with the Menino services.



### **A Farewell to James Taylor, MD**

It is with a heavy heart that the Community Medicine Unit (CMU) has to share the sad news of the passing of Dr. James Taylor in August. Dr. Taylor was physician at East Boston Neighborhood Health Center since 1978, serving as the CMO there for more than 40 years. He devoted his career to providing health care to the East Boston community by caring for individual patients, planning public health interventions to reduce disease, and nurturing clinicians and staff.



Dr. Taylor had tremendous impact on the health of East Boston and surrounding communities. A lovely obituary for Dr. Taylor can be found [here](#).

