

# Section of Hematology and Medical Oncology

## Newsletter



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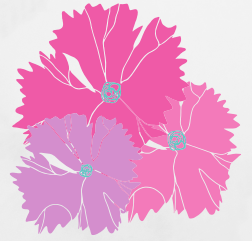
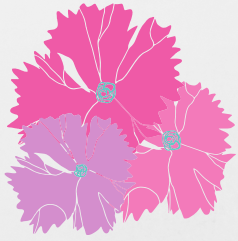
### Congratulations to Gerald Denis - Recipient of GMS Exceptional Mentoring Award during COVID-19 (Doctoral Programs)



Gerald Denis, PhD

Congratulations to **Gerald Denis, PhD**, for being the recipient of the **GMS Exceptional Mentoring Award** during COVID-19. This award, based on student nominations, recognizes faculty who embraced the **GMS** mission during the COVID-19 crisis and those who are forging ahead by going above and beyond the expected contributions despite the challenges of the continuing pandemic.

# Fellows Graduation



L to R: Kevan Hartshorn, MD, Meredith Halpin, MD, Mark Sloan, MD, Rena Zheng, MD, PhD, Raphael Szalat, MD, Jose Acevedo, MD

A small outdoor reception was held on Sunday, May 16th, at Dr. Mark Sloan's house for faculty and fellows to honor the achievements of the 2021 graduating class of fellows. Congratulations to **Meredith Halpin, MD, Rena Zheng, MD, PhD, Raphael Szalat, MD, and Jose Acevedo, MD!** We are so proud of you and know you will continue to do great things in the future!

# New Faculty



Geoff Oxnard, MD

We are delighted to welcome **Geoff Oxnard, MD**, to the section of Hematology and Medical Oncology. Dr. Oxnard is an internationally recognized thoracic oncologist, who has focused his research efforts on lung cancer targeted therapies and novel diagnostics. He will be joining our thoracic oncology group on a part-time basis, while continuing in his current position at Foundation Medicine, Inc.

Dr. Oxnard received his undergraduate degree in chemistry from Harvard University and his medical degree from the University of Chicago-Pritzker School of Medicine, where he graduated with honors. He completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and his fellowship in Medical Oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. He joined the faculty of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School in 2011 where he was a member of the Lowe Center for Thoracic Oncology, rising to the rank of Associate Professor of Medicine. In June 2020, he was recruited to Foundation Medicine Inc., where he currently serves as Vice President, Global Medical Lead of Liquid Franchise, and leads the development of circulating tumor DNA (ctDNA) assays to advance cancer therapy.

Dr. Oxnard has published extensively on resistance mechanisms to tyrosine kinase inhibitors in lung cancer, and has gained prominence for his work on liquid biopsies to guide the use of targeted therapies. Among his many accomplishments, he is co-first author of a widely cited study demonstrating efficacy of selpercatinib, a RET inhibitor, in RET fusion positive non-small cell lung cancer, published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 2020. He has been the recipient of numerous research grants, including a Damon Runyon Clinical Investigator Award and both R21 and R01 grants from the NIH.

We are excited to have Dr. Oxnard join us and look forward to working with him as we advance both our clinical and research missions in the section!

# Staff Updates



Alexandra Hern, BSN, RN

We are excited to announce that **Alexandra Hern, BSN, RN**, has joined the Cancer & Hematology Clinical Research Program at Boston Medical Center in the role of Oncology Clinical Research Nurse.

Alex holds a Bachelor of Sociology from Suffolk University and received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Villanova University in July 2020, and Massachusetts Licensure in 2021. She previously worked at Dana Farber Cancer Institute as a clinical administrative support specialist.

Alex will be training alongside Mary Ellen Migre and Anthony Shelton. A determination of which disease groups for which she will be responsible will occur at a future timepoint. Please welcome Alex to our team!



Ashray Mohan

Thank you to **Ashray Mohan** for all of his hard work and contributions to the section. Ashray will be deeply missed as he leaves Boston to begin Medical School in Iowa in the Fall.

# Announcements



In celebration of Nurses Week, we would like to send a heartfelt thank you to our entire nursing staff who work so tirelessly to ensure that our hematology and oncology patients receive exceptional care without exception. While only one week is officially dedicated to recognizing nurses, we celebrate and recognize the significant contributions of our nursing community each and every day.

**Rosy Tavares** was nominated and selected to take part of the BMC Pathways 2021 program. The goal of Pathways is to accelerate the professional development and career advancement of high potential people of color at BMCHS.

**Deana Tarver** was recently promoted to ASR III. She will be working with Vania to coordinate care for mutli-disciplinary and new patients. She will begin training and transitioning to her new role in the coming weeks.

**Marie Marseille** has joined our team as a certified Medical Assistant. Prior to joining BMC, she worked at a COVID testing site and DotHouse Health Center.

**Peter Richards** will be joining our front desk team as an ASR II starting on 6/7. He has been with the Guest Support Services team at BMC for the past two years. He serves as the first point of contact for many of our patients and helps direct them for their visits on campus.

**Roderick Dowdell** will also be joining our front desk team as an ASR II starting on 5/24. He comes to us from the Radiology Registration team here at BMC where he has worked for the past two years.

Please join us in congratulating Rosy and Deana and welcoming our new team members Marie, Peter, and Roderick!

# Awards



Chris Heaphy, PhD

In collaboration with Drs. Josh Campbell and Rachel Flynn, **Dr. Chris Heaphy** received a BU CTSI Pilot Grant. The overall goal of the project is to identify coding and non-coding genomic alterations in the racially and socioeconomically diverse patient population surgically treated for prostate cancer at Boston Medical Center. In particular, the aim is to identify a genomic signature associated with more aggressive disease in African American men, as well as establishing a pipeline to integrate these genomic data with other biomarker measurements (e.g. presence of ctDNA, microbiome signatures) and clinical outcomes in a larger cohort of men, thereby creating a comprehensive snapshot of patients at the time of diagnosis and subsequently following treatment.



Shuaiying Cui, PhD

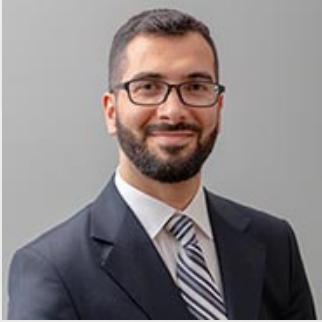
**Dr. Shuaiying Cui** received a grant from Duke Doris Charitable Foundation for the collaborative project “Interactions between fetal hemoglobin regulation networks” with Dr. James Bieker and Dr. Jeffrey Glassberg at Mount Sinai School of Medicine.



Mira Wagner

**Mira Wagner**, a rising M3 medical student in the Murphy Lab, received a prestigious American Society of Hematology (ASH) HONORS Award: Hematology Opportunities for the Next Generation of Research Scientists. Mira is investigating gene editing in sickle cell disease-specific iPSCs.

# Publications



Umit Tapan, MD

In collaboration with Dr. Kei Suzuki, Dr. Virginia Litle and Dr. Kimberley Mak, [Dr. Umit Tapan](#) published "The Impact of Residential Racial Segregation on Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer Treatment and Outcomes." [Read more](#)

# Presentations



Martin Steinberg, MD

[Martin Steinberg, MD](#), presented a talk, "Targeting Fetal Hemoglobin in Sickle Cell Disease" at the annual Hematology Research Study Update (HSRU) sponsored by Takeda Pharmaceuticals, on May 19, 2021.



Vaishali Sanchorawala, MD

[Vaishali Sanchorawala, MD](#), presented "A Zebra loses its stripes: Update on the diagnosis and treatment of systemic AL amyloidosis" at the Yale Cancer Center, Hematology Research Seminar Series, CT, on May 7, 2021

# Meetings



Gerald Denis, PhD

**Gerald Denis, PhD**, convened and chaired a symposium at the annual meeting of the American Association of Immunologists. As a member of the Obesity Society, Dr. Denis has been designing and chairing these guest symposia every year for the last 10 years at AAI meetings with an attendance of approximately 100 clinicians, basic scientists, trainees and industry professionals. These symposia are typically focused on the role of chronic inflammation in obesity as a driver of certain cancers, particularly breast cancer.



Elizabeth Klings, MD

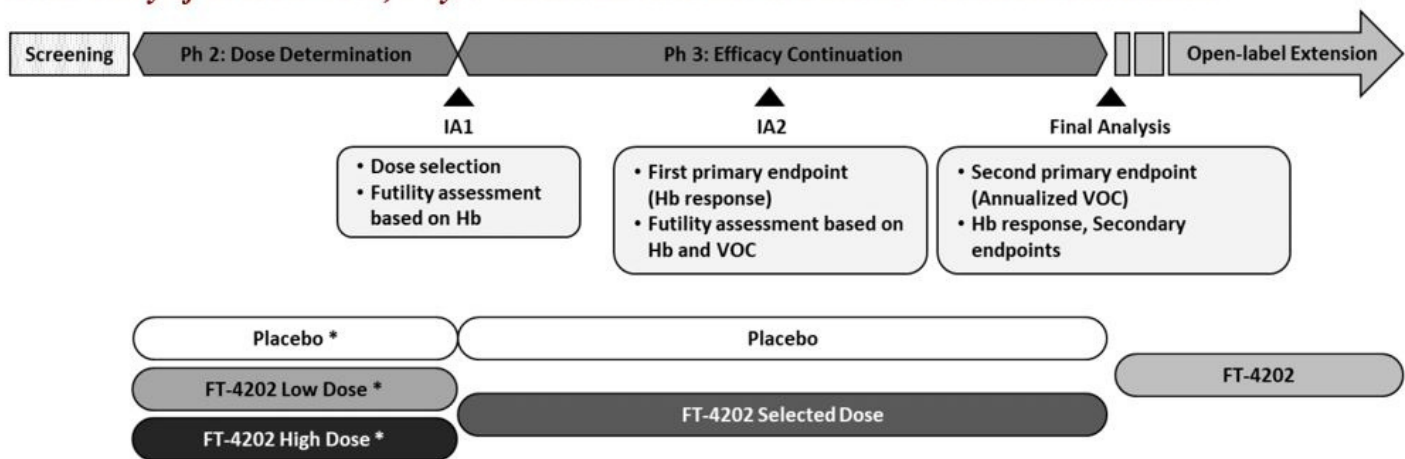
**Elizabeth Klings, MD**, was the scientific co-chair for the Foundation of Sickle Cell Disease Research Symposium in May 2021.

# Newly Opened Cancer Clinical Trials

## Newly Opened Cancer Clinical Trials

### SICKLE CELL DISEASE

**Forma HIBISCUS 4202-HEM-301:** *An Adaptive, Randomized, Placebo-controlled, Double-blind, Multi-center Study of Oral FT-4202, a Pyruvate Kinase Activator in Patients with Sickle Cell Disease*



# Announcements

## Annual Faculty Review

The annual faculty review for 2020 is now available at <https://www.bumc.bu.edu/FacultyDevelopment>. Once completed, please visit the [doodle poll](#) to schedule your review meeting.

## Follow Us on Instagram!



Hematology & Medical Oncology is officially LIVE on Instagram!  
Follow us at [@BMCHemOnc](#)

If you or one of your patients would like to be featured, please submit a request at <https://www.bumc.bu.edu/hematology/announcement-requests/>

## BMC Provider Profile Update Form

If you would like to add updates to your BMC Provider Profile Page, please fill out the form [linked here](#).

## Available Career Opportunities as of May 2021:

- Clinical Investigator, Hematology/Hematologic Malignancies
- Hospitalist
- Research Nurse
- Clinical Trials Coordinator