

Research Division

WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Welcome to the Winter edition of our quarterly research update from the Department of Family and Community Medicine. This edition we give the spotlight to staff team member Mary Beth Vonder Meulen, RN and the support she provides on

several projects that utilize her unique skills. If an entry touches on a common interest, please reach out to discuss potential collaborations.

-Chris White, MD, JD, MHA
Director of DFCM Research Division

UC DFCM Partners with The Christ Hospital Opioid Task Force for Community Healthcare Summit

Ryan Dattilo (L) and
Dr. Jeff Schlaudecker



The University of Cincinnati Department of Family and Community Medicine (UC DFCM) in collaboration with The Christ Hospital Opioid Task Force held the Community Opioid Epidemic Healthcare Summit: Best practice strategies to help patients reclaim their lives on Saturday, February 9, 2019. The summit welcomed over 150 attendees including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, students and community members.

The summit aimed to provide a better understanding of treatment options for patients with opioid use disorder, develop increased compassion and empathy for patients and families impacted by opioid addiction, and understand the role providers/staff may play in moving individuals and communities toward recovery.

For many, the most useful feature of the summit was hearing from Ryan Dattilo, as he shared his story with the audience. He received a standing ovation following his interview, which was facilitated by Dr. Jeff Schlaudecker. One attendee wrote, “Thank you for your first-hand experience - we need to humanize / personalize the opioid problem. It’s

about humans who are suffering from a disease. So brave and THE most important voice at this conference.”

The Primary Care Training and Enhancement grant, Principal Investigator Dr. Jeff Schlaudecker, plans to follow this well-attended event with a dinner and discussion, which will highlight patient voice in May.

Special thanks to Research Division team members Dr. Chris White and Dr. Saundra Regan for their efforts and to Keesha Goodnow, Program Coordinator, for organizing this important event.



UC DFCM Research Division Partners with College of Nursing on Virtual Reality Simulation Project

Research Division team members, Sandra Regan, PhD, Chris White, MD, JD, MHA, Sarah Brubaker, BA, Harini Pallerla, MS, and Mary Beth Vonder Meulen, RN, CCRC, have been working closely with Principal Investigator Sue Brammer, PhD, RN, from the College of Nursing along with Senior IT Manager Chris Collins, BA, from the UC Simulation Center on a \$1.2 million award for a Medicaid project entitled “Virtual Reality Simulation and Social Determinants of Health: A High-Tech Strategy to Improve Health Outcomes”. The project entails developing two unique, immersive virtual reality simulations that will allow providers to see life through the lens of patients facing challenges that impact health care, such as unstable housing, social isolation, and lack of transportation.

The simulations focused on social determinants of health and diversity are scheduled to be deployed with Medicaid providers as an instructional tool to address the curricula gap in provider training on the social determinants of health through virtual reality simulation. The goal is to raise participants’ awareness and knowledge on social determinants of health and how it impedes connecting with patients on a holistic level, thereby, impacting mental and whole health.

The team has been evaluating the project by having content experts from the Department of Family and Community Medicine (Drs. Anna Goroncy, Joseph Kiesler, Christine O’Dea, Megan Rich, and Barbara Tobias) provide feedback on the validity of the simulations during the development process and plans to have simulation participants complete pre/post-tests to assess self-efficacy in dealing with social determinants of health.

This spring we will be hosting an open house for providers within the department to stop by and participate in the virtual reality simulations. Please stay tuned for more information to come.



Above and top: Two scenes from a simulation scenario being developed for the VR SDH experience

WELLNESS CORNER

By Mary Beth Vonder Meulen, RN

In our Spring 2016 Newsletter, we discussed the link between air quality and health. Airborne chemicals, called volatile organic carcinogens (VOCs), have been linked to cancer. VOCs can be released from common household cleaning products, carpeting and upholstered furniture. The VOCs with the highest health risk include formaldehyde, benzene and chloroform.

Common houseplants, such as pothos and mother-in-law’s tongue, may help to improve the air quality of your home. However, multiple plants may be needed over time to clean the air of a typical room.

The January 8, 2019 *NIH Research Matters* has reported that a team of researchers at the University of Washington, led by D Stuart Strand, has genetically modified a common houseplant - pothos ivy. The genetically modified plant was able to clear out 4.7 times more benzene than the un-modified plant as well as significantly decrease the concentration of chloroform from the air.

You cannot buy genetically modified plants at your local garden store yet so consider adding several houseplants to your home and sweeten the air naturally.



Research Division Staff Team Members Recognized for Service

Congratulations to Research Division team members Daniel Hargraves, MSW, and Susie McDonald, MS, for their five years of service with the University of Cincinnati. Hargraves and McDonald are both senior research assistants with the division and support a variety of projects and initiatives, including the Project ECHO hub, HRSA Primary Care Training Enhancement, and Integrative Health and Wellness activities.



Charles Doarn, MBA, Recognized with International Award

Charles Doarn, MBA, research professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, was recently presented with the International Academy of Astronautics Life Sciences Book Award for his work on *Space Physiology and Medicine*. Doarn continues to be a fixture in the pioneering field of telemedicine with continuing contributions to dissemination through publications (see below).

Research Division Garner Accolades at Annual Awards

The University of Cincinnati Department of Family and Community Medicine was well represented at the 2018 CCTST Community Awards celebration. Congratulations to Jon Wessels (Home-based Primary Care), Emily Moss (Integrative Medicine), and the Patient and Family Advisory Council at The Christ Hospital Family Medicine Center for improving the health of children, adults, and communities.



DISSEMINATION

Manuscripts

Doarn CR, Dorogi A, Tikhtman, Pallerla H, Vonder Meullen MB. Opinions of the role of Telehealth in a Large Midwest Academic Health Center – A Case Study. *Telemed J E Health.* 2020;26(2):##-##. ePub - January 9, 2019.

Bashshur RL, Krupinski EA, **Doarn CR**, Merrell RC, Woolliscroft J, Frenk J. Telemedicine across time: Integrated health system of the future: A Prelude. *Telemed J E Health.* In Press.

Doarn CR. Remote neurological and mental health management in long duration spaceflights. *Neurol India.* 2019; In Press.

Doarn CR, Vonder Meulen MB, Pallerla H, Acquavita SP, Regan S, Elder N, Tubb M. Development and Usability Testing of e-Quit worRX, and iPad App for Smoking Cessation Counseling and Shared Decision Making in Primary Care. *JMIR Form Res* 2019. In Press

Latifi R, Parsikia A, Boci A, **Doarn CR**, Merrell RC. Increased Access to Care through Telemedicine in Albania: An Analysis of 2,724 Patients. *Telemed J E Health.* 2019 In press.

Books

International Space Station – Multilateral Medical Policy Board. Transitions in Space Medicine: 25 Years in Photos. Editor – **CR Doarn.** NASA SP-2018-0641. ISBN 978-1-62683-048-6. NASA, Washington, DC.

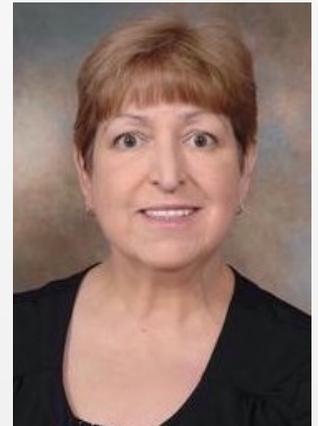
Book Chapters

Doarn CR. Telemedicine (Ch 68). Fifth edition, *Currents in Family Medicine.* Eds South-Paul J. and Matheny S. McGraw Hill. In Production. 2019.

Staff Spotlight: Mary Beth Vonder Meulen, RN

Over the course of the next several editions, the Research Division would like to highlight the staff members behind the scenes of the success of many of the department's projects within the university's walls and out in the community. This interprofessional team is a culmination of years of training and experience in varied backgrounds, providing a strong, unique base of skills that reaches beyond standard tools of academia. This spotlight section will be dedicated to highlighting a more granular view of the division's celebrated staff.

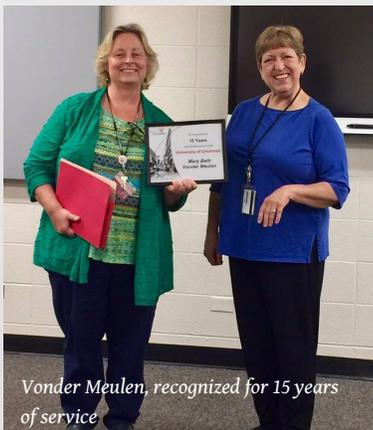
We begin this first edition with the Research Division's most experienced member, Mary Beth Vonder Meulen, RN. Vonder Meulen graduated from UC in 1987 as a third generation nurse. She has been part of the University of Cincinnati since 1990 where she has led clinical trial coordination, traveled to Honduras on medical clinic projects, and has offered her skills and knowledge as an RN on several research studies. Below, Vonder Meulen reflects on her journey to her current position and what today's projects might mean for tomorrow's approach to care.



From Mary Beth Vonder Meulen, RN:

Ever since I was in kindergarten, I had always told my family that I wanted to be "a nurse and a mom". However, I never considered becoming a research nurse, even when I joined the UC Department of Family & Community Medicine in 1990 as the Nurse Manager of our Residency Practice. I had applied at the suggestion of my friend, Dr. Jeff Heck, the new Family Medicine Residency Director. I thought that joining an academic practice would be exciting, especially with the added incentive of an international experience with the department's medical brigades to Honduras.

I was only in my new job for a couple of weeks when an unexpected vacancy gave me the chance to learn about Primary Care Research. At that time, our department had up to ten clinical trials active at any time, with many of our faculty physicians active as Principal Investigators. I knew nothing at all about clinical research but thankfully was able to team up with (Research Division Associate Director) Soni Regan, who became my lifeline. Every day held new challenges, but I always had the support of our experienced researchers to offer guidance.



Vonder Meulen, recognized for 15 years of service

The UC Department of Family & Community Medicine had a great reputation as an Academic Research site that could run successful trials in common chronic illness such as HTN, Headache and Infective Disease. In 1996 Dr Phil Diller became the director of the Research Division and centralized our research efforts at a departmental level. I moved to a full-time position as a research nurse, gained my research certification and have been here ever since.

Our division leadership has changed since that time, each director bringing their own individual enthusiasms, but the overarching goal remains the same - striving to add new knowledge to the science while providing the very best in patient care.

Primary Care Research allows me the time to work closely with our patients, students and colleagues as we investigate a wide diversity of chronic health problems. Much of our current research focuses on the primary care of patients living with chronic pain. Our population is aging and surviving diseases that would previously have been fatal. The need for practical solutions that mediate pain, optimize function, and promote wellness now define both our Research Division and my own passion.



"The Ice Cream Truck", one of many Wellness Activities led by Vonder Meulen

Research Directory

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Faculty



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Dedicated full-time staff members with over 40 years of cumulative experience provide full project support from assisting in design and implementation to analysis and evaluation. The division offers expertise in:

- Project Management
- Data Management
- Grant Writing
- IRB Protocols
- Statistical Analysis
- Data Collection Methods
- Project Reports
- Manuscript Development, Writing and Editing
- Research Nurse
- Qualitative Research



For more updates on our projects and other events in the UC Department of Family & Community Medicine, please like our Facebook page today!

<https://www.facebook.com/ucfamilymed/>