Department of Internal Medicine
2017-2018 Annual Report
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chair’s Welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Internal Medicine At-A-Glance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Clinical Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Quality, Safety and Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Innovating to Meet Our Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>The Importance of Community Partnership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Friends,

As I reflect on my first two years at Dell Medical School, I am humbled by the strong commitment of our faculty, residents, students, and staff, and proud of the community that we’ve built together. We have been charged with transforming health and care in Travis County, and have the privilege to meet this mission in unique ways each day.

As a new department in a new medical school, we’ve appreciated an abundance of “firsts”; we held our inaugural department Grand Rounds last fall, welcomed our first primary care track residents earlier this summer, took occupancy in our first departmental offices in the Health Discovery Building and moved into a new hospital at Dell Seton Medical Center. However, we celebrate our new beginnings with gratitude, as they’re built upon a rich legacy of programs that have existed for decades, in collaboration with our established and respected partners in the community. Our success would not be possible without the strong work of those who forged the way, and we earn our accomplishments together.

As we enter our third year as the Dell Medical School Department of Internal Medicine, we look forward to continuing this journey with you. We’ll still have a number of “firsts”, but even more exciting are the traditions and culture that will emerge, creating a new legacy for our community.

Best Wishes,

Michael Pignone, M.D., MPH
Professor and Chair
At-A-Glance: Our Faculty

11 Specialty-Specific Divisions

147 Faculty

Assistant Professors: 116

Associate Professors: 15

Professors: 16

40% Women
60% Men
At-A-Glance: Our Residents

Internal Medicine

Primary Care Track
Distinction Track
Preliminary Year Internship

63 Total Residents
41% women
59% men

15 Graduates in 2018
10 hospital medicine
5 specialty fellowship
At-A-Glance: Our Residents

Dermatology

Total Residents
9
- 78% women
- 22% men

Graduates in 2018
3
- 2 specialty fellowship
- 1 private practice
2017 - 2018 Grand Rounds

9 National Speakers

10 Local Speakers

1026 Total Attendees
2017 - 2018 Grand Rounds

Speakers Came From:
- Dell Medical School
- University of Utah
- Stanford University
- UT Austin — College of Pharmacy
- The Cleveland Clinic
- Tulane University Health Sciences Center
- Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, Florida Atlantic University
- University of Virginia Health Systems
- New York University School of Medicine
- Harvard Medical School

Speaker Topics:
- Colorectal Cancer Screening: 2017 Update
- Pragmatic Approaches to Addressing Lifestyle in Primary Care Using Tech and Team-Based Approaches
- The Hispanic Cardiovascular Mortality Paradox: Fact or Fiction?
- Opioid Harm Reduction in the Age of Fentanyls
- The Nutrition Reversal of Cardiovascular Diseases: Fact or Fiction?
- Nudging Quality in Cancer Care
- Overcoming Language Barriers to Access to Medical Care
- Graduate Medical Education: It’s Not What You Think
- Best of Dermatology Inpatient Consults: The Ulcer Edition
- Polypharmacy and Deprescribing in the Geriatric Population
- Graduate Medical Education: What Have We Done and What Do We Need to Do?
- The Antibiotic Paradox
- Sleep Matters: Identifying Sleep Disruption in Your Patients
- Chronic Kidney Disease: Altering the Rate of Progression
- Sepsis: Of Measures and Mandates

Grand Rounds Planning Committee Members (2017-2018)
- Rene Salazar, M.D., Asst. Dean for Diversity and Professor — Prim. Care (CMT CHAIR)
- Clay Cauthen, M.D., Assistant Professor — Cardiology
- Dayna Diven, M.D., Professor — Dermatology
- Parker Hudson, M.D., MPH, Assistant Professor — Infectious Disease
- Paul Nader, M.D., Division Chief and Assistant Professor — Nephrology
- Jeni Skar, MBA, Department Administrator
- Cassandra Ryan, Senior Administrative Associate (CMT COORDINATOR)
Department Leadership

*Internal Medicine is led by a team consisting of the Chair, Department Administrator, and Associate Chairs. Together they manage the direction for the mission pillars of research and innovation, clinical excellence, educational leadership, and community impact across internal medicine and its specialties.*

**Michael Pignone, M.D., MPH, Professor and Chair**
Dr. Pignone is professor and inaugural chair of the Department of Internal Medicine. In his prior appointment, he was professor and chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine and director of the Institute for Quality Improvement at UNC-Chapel Hill. He received his medical degree and completed residency training in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. He then completed fellowship training through the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program, which included a graduate degree in epidemiology from the UNC School of Public Health.

His research is focused on chronic disease screening, prevention and treatment, and on improving medical decision making. His main areas of interest include heart disease prevention, colorectal cancer screening and management of common chronic conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease. He has developed and tested interventions, including decision aids, to mitigate literacy-related health disparities and to improve the use of appropriate preventive services. He has published over 250 peer-reviewed journal articles. In the department, Dr. Pignone is focused on building partnerships to support our unique mission at Dell Medical School.

**Elizabeth Jacobs, M.D., MAPP, Professor and Associate Chair for Research**
Dr. Jacobs comes to Dell Med from the University of Wisconsin School of Public Health, where she was professor in the Departments of Medicine and Population Health. In addition to serving as associate chair, she is also chief of primary care and value-based health. She received her medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco and her residency training in Primary Care at the Brigham and Women's Hospital. She completed a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar fellowship at the University of Chicago, where she also received a Master’s degree in Public Policy.

Her research is focused on access to, and cultural specificity of, medical care delivered to underserved patients, the impact of interpreter service interventions on the cost and quality of healthcare, health literacy and numeracy, and the role that trust in health care plays in racial/ethnic disparities in health outcomes. In the department Dr. Jacobs is focused on creating a strong foundation for health services research, which will extend across Dell Medical School.

**Carlos Meza, M.D., Assistant Professor and Interim Associate Chair for Inpatient Clinical Innovation**
In addition to serving as interim associate chair for inpatient clinical innovation, Dr. Meza also serves as chief of hospital medicine. He earned his medical degree from Texas A&M, and completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at UTMB in Galveston.

In addition to his leadership role in the department, Dr. Meza serves on the Medical Executive Committee, the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee and the Internal Medicine Peer Review Council for Dell Seton Medical Center. In the department, Dr. Meza is focused on building upon our already strong cadre of inpatient physicians to advance patient care.
Lysbeth Miller, M.D., Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Education
Dr. Miller has been training residents in the Internal Medicine residency since 1987 and serves as the program director for the residency in addition to serving as associate chair. Dr. Miller completed her medical degree at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine at the University of North Carolina, where she also served as chief resident.

Dr. Miller is a passionate educator and mentor and spends significant time teaching medical students and trainees. She serves on the Graduate Medical Education Committee, is a mentor and committee member for the Developing Outstanding Clinical Skills (DOCS) course and an active member of the national Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine group. In the department, Dr. Miller is focused on continuing to strengthen and grow our training programs.

Christopher Moriates, M.D., Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Quality, Safety, and Value
Dr. Moriates came to Dell Medical School from the University of California, San Francisco, where he was assistant professor of internal medicine. In addition to serving as associate chair, Dr. Moriates is the assistant dean for health care value for Dell Medical School. Dr. Moriates received his medical degree from the University of California, San Diego and completed his residency training in internal medicine at the University of California, San Francisco.

Dr. Moriates co-authored the book “Understanding Value-Based Healthcare” (McGraw-Hill, 2015) and was the founding editor for the “Teachable Moments” series in JAMA Internal Medicine. He directs the Distinction Track in Care Transformation for the Internal Medicine residency and is a nationally and internationally invited speaker on topics related to health care value. In the department, Dr. Moriates is the leader for quality and safety improvement work and facilitates the department-wide Morbidity and Mortality monthly conference.

Jennifer Skar, MBA, Department Administrator
Jeni came to Dell Medical School from the University of Minnesota, where she was chief of staff for University of Minnesota Health. She received her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Minnesota, including a Master of Business Administration from the Carlson School of Management. In previous roles, she has experience working in faculty affairs, strategy, business development, communications and department operations.

In the department Jeni serves as the administrative dyad partner to Dr. Pignone, with responsibility for finance, strategy and operations.
Internal Medicine Divisions

Specialty-Specific Divisions and Chiefs
Internal Medicine faculty are represented by 11 specialty-specific divisions. Division chiefs have been selected to lead faculty and build upon the good work already underway. Our chiefs are community leaders, collaborators, educators, researchers and master clinicians, whose work has broad impact, aligned with the mission and vision for the department and school.

Division of Cardiology
Mark Pirwitz, M.D., FACC, Chief
The Division of Cardiology, led by Dr. Mark Pirwitz, is a large, subspecialized cardiology practice with expertise in General Cardiology, Interventional Cardiology, Noninvasive Imaging, Heart Failure/Transplant, Electrophysiology, and Peripheral Vascular Disease and Structural Heart Disease. The faculty participate in teaching of medical students and residents, and will notably accept its first class of cardiovascular disease fellows in July 2019. This training program will represent the first fellowship in the Department of Internal Medicine.

Dr. Pirwitz earned his medical degree and completed his internal medicine residency training and a cardiovascular disease fellowship in the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas. He completed an advanced fellowship in Interventional Cardiology at Mid America Heart Institute/St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City.

Division of Dermatology
Matthew Fox, M.D., Chief
The Division of Dermatology is led by Dr. Matthew Fox, whose division has subspecialty expertise in general dermatology, pediatric dermatology, Moh’s Surgery and dermatopathology. The division has clinical relationships across a number of sites with community partners, and the faculty are active participants and leaders in the education of medical students and residents. The Dermatology Residency program has matriculated 13 graduates, with many alumni matching into competitive subspecialty fellowships nationally.

Dr. Fox earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical School at Houston and completed his residency in Dermatology and fellowship training in Procedural Dermatology at the University of Michigan.

Division of Gastroenterology
Chief TBD
The department is currently recruiting a chief of gastroenterology to lead this growing division. This new leader will work to add clinical access, increase research, improve the existing educational experience in GI and begin a subspecialty training program.
Division of Endocrinology
Mrinalini Kulkarni-Date, M.D., Chief
Dr. Mrinalini Kulkarni-Date leads a division of endocrinologists that practice across the ambulatory and inpatient setting. The endocrinology faculty are very committed to the educational mission of Dell Medical School, are leaders within the undergraduate medical education setting and are active preceptors in the internal medicine residency program.

Dr. Kulkarni-Date earned her medical degree and completed her residency training in Internal Medicine at The University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. She completed her fellowship in Endocrinology at Carl T. Hayden VA/NIH-NIDDK/Good Samaritan Medical Center.

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Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Care
Liam Fry, M.D., Chief
Dr. Liam Fry leads the Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Care. Under her leadership, the division practices clinically across the community, in both the inpatient and outpatient setting, including nearly 30 nursing facilities across Central Texas, 15 assisted living facilities, as well as a home visit program. The Section of Palliative Care is led by Dr. Elizabeth Kvale, who is building health services research, innovative clinical models, and a training program in palliative medicine.

Dr. Fry earned her medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas and completed her residency training in Internal Medicine at Mt. Sinai Medical School in New York. Her Geriatric fellowship was at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine in Honolulu. She is certified in both Geriatrics and Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

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Division of Hospital Medicine
Carlos Meza, M.D., Chief
Dr. Carlos Meza leads a large division of hospitalists who practice predominantly at Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas, which serves as a flagship internal medicine service that anchors the teaching hospital. The faculty in this division are dedicated clinician educators who provide bedside and didactic teaching in the internal medicine residency program, as well as the inpatient education for the internal medicine clerkship, and lead a number of projects to improve quality, safety and efficiency of care in the hospital setting.

Dr. Meza earned his medical degree from Texas A&M and completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

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Division of Infectious Disease
Kristin Mondy, M.D., Chief
The Division of Infectious Disease, led by Dr. Kristin Mondy, provides clinical service in the inpatient setting at Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas and outpatient care at a number of clinical sites. The faculty are very involved in the teaching of medical students and residents and have partnerships across the community to improve the care for infectious disease patients.

Dr. Mondy earned her medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas and completed her residency training in Internal Medicine and her fellowship in Infectious Disease at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.
Internal Medicine Divisions (cont.)

Division of Nephrology
Paul Nader, M.D., Acting Chief
Dr. Paul Nader leads the Division of Nephrology, whose clinical practice has extensive experience in the management of the full spectrum of acute and chronic renal diseases and is distributed across the Austin metropolitan area. The clinical faculty boast a number of teaching awards from residents and students, and participate actively in a number of performance improvement projects.

Dr. Nader earned his medical degree at Texas Tech University School of Medicine in Lubbock. He completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at the University of Missouri in Columbia and a Nephrology fellowship at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School.

Division of Primary Care and Value-based Health
Elizabeth Jacobs, M.D., MAPP, Chief
Dr. Elizabeth Jacobs leads the Division of Primary Care and Value-based Health, a shared division between the Departments of Internal Medicine and Population Health. The division is home to the Primary Care Residency Track, which began in 2018 in partnership with the Central Texas VA. The division has deep roots within the community, has practice sites across Austin and is home to a number of preceptors in both the undergraduate and graduate medical education experience. Dr. Jacobs also is responsible for primary care practice innovation at Dell Medical School and through several academic community partnerships with our federally qualified health center partners.

Dr. Jacobs earned her medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco and completed her residency training in Primary Care at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. She completed a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program fellowship at the University of Chicago, where she earned a graduate degree in public policy.

Division of Pulmonology and Critical Care
Koonj Shah, M.D., Acting Chief
The Division of Pulmonology and Critical Care, led by Dr. Koonj Shah, has a significant inpatient presence in the inpatient setting at Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas, providing care to vulnerable patients in the ICU. The ICU faculty are active educators of residents and students, and active citizens within the hospital setting.

Dr. Shah earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio and completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC. He completed his Pulmonary and Critical Care fellowship at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York.

Division of Rheumatology
Chief TBD
The department is currently building its Rheumatology division, recruiting clinician educators to build access to for the community and improve the educational experience for learners. Working with community partners, the division will play a critical role in improving the care of patients with rheumatologic disease in Travis County.
Education

The department is working in partnership with the community to educate and train future leaders who will creatively address today’s health challenges to transform health and care. We’ve been busy refining our existing training programs, as well as developing new educational offerings to medical students and trainees to meet this mission.

Other Key Accomplishments:

• Developed and implemented a Dell Medical School Internal Medicine Clerkship, a consistently top-rated clerkship and curriculum in the Medical School
• Developed and implemented Palliative Care & Geriatrics Clerkship and Internal Medicine Selectives for medical students
• Active faculty participation and department support for Medical Student Interest Groups in Primary Care and Internal Medicine
• Developed a Resident Distinction Track in Care Transformation for residents wanting to focus on developing and practicing skills leadership, innovation and discovery
• In partnership with the Central Texas VA, developed a Primary Care Residency Track, a comprehensive, robust and patient-centered training experience for the next generation of primary care physicians
• Successfully submitted and received approval for an ACGME Cardiovascular Disease Fellowship; the department’s first fellowship

What’s Ahead for 2018-2019:

• Implement an academic half-day for Internal Medicine residents
• Recruit our first class of cardiology fellows
• Build the VA Primary Care residency track
• Continue to develop Internal Medicine Selectives in the Medicine Subspecialties
• Promote internal medicine careers with medical students through the student interest groups, educational experiences in clerkship, Selectives and electives and mentorship
Clinical Innovation

The department is committed to working with our community partners to provide access to high-quality clinical services, develop innovative models of care and improve the quality and value of the care to support the health ecosystem. Over the past year, the department has focused on partnering to strategically recruit in clinical specialties of high need to serve the community and build our growing clinical practice within the department.

Other Key Accomplishments:
- Faculty recruitments in high-demand clinical areas, including Dermatology, Palliative Care and Primary Care
- Developed a Primary Care Division in collaboration with the Department of Population Health, creating a platform to coordinate care for our patients
- Planning and prioritization for building med specialty clinical programs
- In partnership with CommUnityCare, developed a sustainable model for Complex Primary Care, to treat the most vulnerable patients in our community

What’s Ahead for 2018-2019:
- Opening our first UT Health Austin Internal Medicine clinics
- Working with our partners, improve access to additional high-demand specialties, such as Rheumatology and Gastroenterology
- Working in collaboration with Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas, provide strong leadership and direct responsibility for the inpatient internal medicine services
- Enhance cross-departmental and cross-institutional collaborations with our partners
Over the past year, a major area of focus has been the development of performance improvement workgroups, which focus on a limited number of hospital based quality goals, in partnership with Dell Seton Medical Center. Using tried-and-true performance improvement techniques, and with tenacious focus on incremental and sustainable improvements, we’ve empowered faculty physicians to lead interventions at the hospital front lines to improve the quality of care for our patients.

Elizabeth Blankenship, PA-C, Clinical Assistant Professor, in collaboration with colleagues, formed the first interdisciplinary workgroup aimed at improving the Multidisciplinary Huddle meetings occurring each afternoon between primary medical teams and nursing, social work, and pharmacy staff. This workgroup collaboratively produced patient facing educational flyers that are now included hospital-wide in the admission to hospital packet received by patients. The flyers help educate patients and their families on what to expect during and after discharge with an aim to enhance their experience and reduce potential complications once they get home.
Other Key Accomplishments:
- Recruited an Associate Chair for Quality, Safety and Value (Moriates)
- Inaugural interdisciplinary Morbidity and Mortality monthly conference (began Sept 2017)
- Helped faculty engage in national efforts in quality improvement and professional development
- Preliminary demonstrated improvements in length of stay and documentation.
- Hospital-wide Performance Improvement Council continues to report out on PDSA cycles and teach broader QI technique

What's Ahead for 2018-2019:
- Build upon our strong foundation of quality improvement work in the inpatient setting and spread across the specialty divisions in the department
- Sustained improvements in quality improvement goals in the inpatient setting and broader dissemination of training and participation
- Build an analytics team to support the tracking of outcomes metrics across our clinical environments
- Continue to support the development of scholarly product based on the quality improvement work of students, residents and faculty.
The department is building research capabilities to create new knowledge that improves the health of our patients and our community. In 2017, the department successfully competed for its first Dell Medical School-led funding, through a $2.3 million, three-year award from the Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas. This project engages providers and patients from the area’s Federally Qualified Health Centers to develop a larger solution for the vulnerable Travis County patients who have historically had limited access to routine screening for colorectal cancer.

**Other Key Accomplishments:**
- Recruited an Associate Chair for Research (Jacobs)
- Began recruitment for clinician-investigators
- Developed a new Institutional Review Board
- Built research partnerships with other UT Medical Schools
- Recruited and developed research mentors

**What’s Ahead for 2018-2019:**
- Lead the implementation of a health services research infrastructure for the medical school
- Successfully compete for new grant funding
- Implementation of faculty development opportunities in manuscript writing and publication
Innovating to Meet our Mission

A common bond that connects all of us is our commitment to the unique mission of Dell Medical School. Our faculty, staff, trainees and students are a diverse group of transplants and native Texans, all with the charge to revolutionize how people get and stay healthy. We’re committed to the patients we have the privilege to serve and are focused on a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Key Accomplishments:
Through the leadership of Chris Moriates and Victoria Valencia, the Dell Med Incubator was developed with the goal of transforming ideas to pilot projects, projects to solutions with broad implementation and impact, and impact to scholarly product in the form of presentation, abstract or publication. Examples of this work include:

- Dr. Brian Grundy, Internal Medicine Resident (PGY-2) and Richard Bottner, PA-C, Clinical Assistant Professor, successfully implemented a multimodal quality improvement project that reduced inappropriate IV potassium use on acute care floors of Dell Seton Medical Center by 50% over the first two months of the project’s implementation. This work was accepted and presented by Dr. Grundy as a plenary oral presentation at the 2018 Southern Society of General Internal Medicine meeting in New Orleans, LA.

- Dr. Eddie Abney, Internal Medicine Resident (PGY-3), led a project investigating the use of cardiac biomarker laboratory testing in the diagnosis of acute coronary syndrome (ACS). He and his team found that many patients with the condition had laboratory tests ordered that were inappropriate and no longer recommended by Clinical Practice Guidelines published by the American College of Cardiology. These data were presented to Executive Leadership at Dell Seton Medical Center who agreed to remove the option to order one of these laboratory tests from the order set used when diagnosing ACS, potentially saving the medical center over $100,000.

- Dr. George Rodgers, Cardiologist and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine, was committed to working through the backlog of patients who were waiting to see a cardiologist. He partnered with Internal Medicine resident and future cardiologist Ryan Sandoval, to develop a rubric and triage system, with the goal of providing more immediate access to the most critical patients identified on the waitlist. Through this project, after several months, the backlog was eliminated entirely and a model was created which could be translated across the med specialties.
The Importance of Community Partnership

Much of what we do would not be possible without the support of our community partners. When we align on mission and priorities we can together create a number of great opportunities for our community. Through these partnerships, we have expanded our educational opportunities, created better access to care for vulnerable patients through joint recruitment and laid the groundwork for programs that will help solve the grand challenges we face to transform health and care. We thank our partners for their support and look forward to our continued collaboration!

Community Partners Include:

- Central Health
- Central Texas Veterans Health Care System
- Community Care Collaborative
- CommUnityCare Health Centers
- Lone Star Circle of Care
- The Seton Healthcare Family, including the leadership at Dell Seton Medical Center
Contact Us

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