



This is a very bittersweet time of year as we fondly say congratulations and good-bye to our graduating residents and fellows. Thankfully, we will get to work with some of you a bit longer, as you begin fellowships right here at Henry Ford St. John Hospital. On behalf of the GME Research Department, we wish you health, happiness and joy as you embark on your next adventure!

It is also sad as we bid adieu to our Rheumatology fellowship, which is being combined with the Rheumatology fellowship at Henry Ford main campus. Kudos to Dr. Dhar for almost single-handedly running a great program.

The sweet part of this time of year is that we get to welcome the new residents and fellows. Some of you we know already, as you did the research rotation with our Department. We hope that all of you have a productive, happy, and successful time here. Remember to seek balance in your life: work-family-leisure and please look after your health. You will hear much more about research in the coming weeks.

As you will see in the following pages, we have much to celebrate with respect to endeavors in scholarly activity; I hope that this stellar record of performance will continue.

A brief reminder about travel for research—your travel forms must be pre-approved before you travel, i.e. the forms and supporting documentation, with all appropriate signatures, must be submitted and approved **before you take your trip**.

Best wishes to all,

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Fast Stats

“Third Variables”—what are they and what do we do with them?

All of us have heard the term “confounding” or confounder variable. But, are you confounded about what confounding really means?

1. Confounders are a type of “third variable” that can interfere in our investigation of the relationship between an exposure and a disease. A confounder may inflate, deflate or negate any association between the exposure of interest and the disease.
2. To be a confounder, the variable must:
 1. be a risk factor (not necessarily a cause) for the disease;
 2. be associated with the exposure under study; and
 3. NOT be an intermediate step in the causal path between the exposure and disease.
3. The simplest way to assess whether a variable is a confounder is to do a **stratified** analysis. Assess the association between the potential confounder and the disease, stratified by the exposure of interest. After stratification, if the odds ratio for the association between the potential confounder and the outcome is 1.0 for each stratum, then the variable is a confounder.
4. When you do the stratified analysis, however, you may find that the odds ratio between the third variable and the disease is not equal to 1.0 and it is different in the different strata. This is an example of effect modification.
5. Effect modification occurs when the third variable has a different effect depending upon the level of the exposure of interest.
6. When a variable is a true confounder, we use statistical methods to remove the effect or “control for” the effect of that variable. When the third variable is an effect modifier, we design our statistical models to account for the synergistic effect of the exposure of interest and the effect modifier.

Still confounded? Contact Dr. Szpunar for further explanation!



Did you know that Michigan is the cherry capital of the world?
Traverse City 100th Annual Cherry Festival, July 4-11, 2026.

<https://www.traversecity.com/events/>



2026 Research Day Winners

Research Presentations

First Place (tie)

Alexander Johnston, MD. The Incidence of Immune-Related Adverse Events (irAEs) Based on PD-L1 Expression Levels in Patients with Stage II-IV Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) on Immunotherapy. Dept. of Internal Medicine.

Barat Kotha, MD. Improving Safe Sleep Compliance in a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: A Quality Improvement Project. Dept. of Pediatrics.

Second Place: (tie)

Shahrzad Zavoshi, MD. A Historical Cohort Study to Develop a Predictive Model For Early Identification of Bloodstream Infection in Acute Leukemia Patients with Febrile Neutropenia. Dept. of Internal Medicine.

Gregory Lee, MD. A Comparison of the Initial Dosage of Dexamethasone vs. Methylprednisolone in Treating Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in Patients with Stage II-IV Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) on Immunotherapy. Dept. of Internal Medicine.

Third Place:

Annie Savka, MD. The Association of Internal Medicine Resident In-Training Examination Scores with Residency Educational Benchmarks. Dept. of Internal Medicine.

Honorable Mention (tie):

Samer Dubaisi, DO. Early Discharge Orders and Hospital Length of Stay. Dept. of Internal Medicine.

Yaqian Liao, MD. Aggressive Temperature Control in Patients with Nontraumatic Intracranial Hemorrhage Admitted to the Adult Intensive Care Unit with Fever: Does it Improve Outcomes? Dept. of Internal Medicine.

Track II (Scholarly Activity)

Honorable Mention:

John Lewis, MD. Pediatric Trauma for the Resident Clinician. Dept. of Emergency Medicine.



Dr. Dabaja, the Research Dept. and several of the winning residents.



Congratulations are in Order!

The winners of our annual Resident Research Day went on to present at the Southeastern Michigan Continuing Medical Education (SEMCME) Research and Quality Improvement Competition. We are pleased to share that three of our residents won awards at this forum.

First Place (SEMCME Oral Research category)

Barat Kotha, MD. Improving Safe Sleep Compliance in a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: A Quality Improvement Project.
Dept. of Pediatrics.

Third Place (SEMCME Oral QA/QI category)

Alexander Johnston, MD. The Incidence of Immune-Related Adverse Events (irAEs) Based on PD-L1 Expression Levels in Patients with Stage II-IV Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer (NSCLC) on Immunotherapy.
Dept. of Internal Medicine.



Dr. Kotha and Dr. Nazee

Second Place (SEMCME Poster competition category)

Marla Nazee, MD (presenting in place of Niki Moftakhar, MD). Artificial Intelligence in Diapers: Evaluating ChatGPT Accuracy and Readability for Newborn and NICU Patient Education – A Pilot Study.
Dept. of Pediatrics.

At the American College of Physician's (ACP) Michigan Chapter Resident and Student's Day 2026, two of our Internal Medicine residents were awarded Second Place for their case reports.

Second Place tie (Clinical Vignette Poster category):

Puneet Razdan, DO. Rhythm Roulette: Norepinephrine Induced Multifocal Accelerated Idioventricular Rhythm (AIVR).

Rohan Chippada, MD. When Viridans Streptococci Go Beyond the Heart: *Streptococcus sanguinis* Endocarditis with Renal Complications.



Dr. Saravolatz and Dr. Hilu with our Internal Medicine ACP presenters.



Recent Publications

- Ammar A**, Fardoun H, Hart E, Cagadas E, Tatar B, **Ng TH**, Janzen KM, Addison J, **Giuliano C**. Closing the Gap: Evaluating the Safety and Effectiveness of Diabetic Ketoacidosis Nomograms. *Ann Pharmacother*. 2026 Jun;60(6):537-545. PMID: 41235596.
- Ammar A**, **Sorochak N**, **Paxton R**, **Lipari M**, **Giuliano C**. Association Between the Use of Long-Acting Insulin and Hypoglycemia in Critically Ill Patients with Diabetes. *J Intensive Care Med*. 2026 May;41(5):421-426. PMID: 40888642.
- Dunne R**, Goodloe JM, Augustine JJ, Begres T, Crowe RP, Carney E. Intravenous Hydroxocobalamin for Cyanide Poisoning from Smoke Inhalation: A Comprehensive Scoping Review. *J Am Coll Emerg Physicians Open*. 2026 Feb 27;7(2):100340. PMID: 41799837
- Gidda H**, **Ng TH**, **Szpunar S**, **Bhargava A**, **Franco R**. Implications of Lung Compliance Phenotypes in COVID-19-Induced Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome. *Cureus*. 2026 Mar 17;18(3):e105397. PMID: 42005117.
- Hafeez MS**, Chaer RA, Smith KJ, Eslami MH, Sridharan ND. Mechanical Venous Thrombectomy May Provide a Cost-Effective Treatment Option for Patients with Iliofemoral Deep Vein Thrombosis. *J Vasc Surg Venous Lymphat Disord*. 2026 May 26:102535. doi: 10.1016/j.jvsv.2026.102535.
- Jannette AM**, **Lunde A**, **Siblini T**, **Hagglund K**, **Aslam MF**. Does the Use of a Rigid Catheter Guide During Midurethral Sling Placement Impact Cystotomy Rates? A Retrospective Cohort Study. *J Obstet Gynaecol Can*. 2025 Jul;47(7):102927. PMID: 40383181.
- Klamer KS**, **Bhargava A**, **Johnson L**, **Sharma M**, **Saravolatz LD**. *Candidozyma auris* Susceptibility from Michigan Hospitals to Manogepix, Rezafungin and Nine Other Antifungal Agents. *JAC Antimicrob Resist*. 2026 May 27;8(3):dlag089. PMID: 42211724
- Pena ME**, Mace SE, Bleecker G, Girard KK, Mital P, Suri P, **Takla RE**. Can Magnetocardiography Decrease ED Overcrowding, Increase Hospital Bed Capacity, and Save Hospitals Money? *Am Heart J Plus*. 2025 Dec 27;62:100705. PMID: 41624397.

Upcoming SEMCME Programs

Mastering Time in Medicine

Henry Ford Warren & Madison Heights
August 19, 2026
12:00-1:30pm, Virtual over Zoom
[Click Here to Register!](#)

Upcoming CME Programs

Family Medicine Symposium

November 18th, 2026 (save the date)
For more information: nderita1@hfhs.org
*Sign into EEDS for conferences.



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