



BIOSTATISTICS SEMINARS

Streaming online

- ❖ May 26th, 2021 Jonathan Kimmelman
McGill University
- ❖ June 2nd, 2021 Mithat Gonen
MSK
- ❖ June 9th, 2021 Zhigang Zhang
MSK
- ❖ June 16th, 2021 Service meeting
- ❖ June 23rd, 2021 Kathy Panageas
MSK

COMPUTATIONAL ONCOLOGY SEMINARS

Streaming online

- ❖ May 25th, 2021 Hugo Aerts
Dana Farber

EPIDEMIOLOGY SERVICE MEETINGS

Streaming online

- ❖ May 24, 2021 Gordon Watt
MSK

POPULATION SCIENCES RESEARCH PROGRAM SEMINAR SERIES

Streaming online

- ❖ May 18, 2021 Eric Garland
University of Utah College of Social Work
- ❖ June 15, 2021 Otis W. Brawley
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

HEALTH OUTCOMES RESEARCH GROUP SEMINARS

Streaming online

- ❖ June 25, 2021 Sharon Manne
Rutgers

CULTURE COMMITTEE JOURNAL CLUB

Streaming online

- ❖ June 17, 2021 Volunteers wanted!
Please contact
heonn@mskcc.org

We invite departmental colleagues to complete our [interest survey!](#)



DEPARTMENT CHAIR - Colin Begg, PhD
EDITORS
Narre Heon
Lauren Rogak, MA
Amethyst Saldia
Prusha Patel
Richard Koppenaal
Shireen Lewis, MPA
Niti Trivedi
Renee Gennarelli
Julianna Reitz
Joseph Kanik

A YEAR OF WORKING REMOTELY

The past year has been full of unexpected challenges and unprecedented situations for the MSK community. While we have continued to work tirelessly during the pandemic, many of us shifted to working from home in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. The shift to telecommuting has allowed us to remain safe, and to think of creative solutions to the unique set of circumstances that arise when working remotely. We've persevered through the last year of the pandemic by redefining the very way we approach teamwork. From converting HORG and Biostatistics seminars to online seminars and hosting virtual celebrations and happy hours, the Epi/Bio department has transformed the way we interact with our co-workers, while still ensuring a collaborative environment. Thank you to everyone who shared the following pictures of how we've managed to adapt to working from home in various ways!



PUBLICATIONS

Anne Reiner, Gordon Watt, Xiaolin Liang, Meg Woods, Jonine Bernstein, and WECARE colleagues recently published an article in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute entitled "[Smoking, Radiation Therapy, and Contralateral Breast Cancer in Young Women](#)". They found that scatter radiation to the contralateral breast during radiation treatment for a first primary breast cancer did not further increase subsequent contralateral breast cancer risk in smokers or young women with smoking history. Smoking history should not influence the development of radiation therapy plans for young women with breast cancer.

Angela K. Green, Michael Curry, Niti Trivedi, Peter B. Bach, and Sham Mailankody recently published an article in JAMA Oncology entitled "[Assessment of Outcomes Associated With the Use of Newly Approved Oncology Drugs in Medicare Beneficiaries](#)". This retrospective cohort study looked at real-world outcomes for Medicare patients with metastatic cancer receiving recently approved oncology drugs and compared those with pivotal clinical trial outcomes. Authors found that the median duration of therapy and overall survival among treated Medicare patients were generally shorter than among trial participants, and dose reductions were common among Medicare patients. The study findings suggest that cancer clinical data relevant to newly approved drugs lack generalizability to Medicare beneficiaries with cancer; therefore, these agents should be used with caution.

Arshi Arora, Venkat Seshan and **Ronglai Shen** published a paper in Genome Biology entitled, "[Pan-cancer identification of clinically relevant genomic subtypes using outcome-weighted integrative clustering](#)". They developed survClust, an outcome-weighted statistical learning algorithm for integrative molecular stratification focusing on patient survival. Here, they analyzed over 6k tumors across 18 cancer types, elaborating how their supervised clustering approach outperforms canonical unsupervised clustering approach and discovering indolent versus aggressive subgroups which may be useful toward patient stratification in clinical trial designs. survClust is currently being used to study characteristics of pre-treatment peripheral blood immune cells that may correlate with clinical outcomes in patients with immune checkpoint blockage therapy.

STAFF PROMOTIONS

Cristina Radu promoted to Program Assistant

Ken Seier promoted to Research Biostatistician II

STAFF FAREWELLS

After three years working as the Administrative Assistant for the Epidemiology group, **Kim Hubbard** accepted a new position at MSK Strategy & Innovation Division as a Project Coordinator. Her last day with the Department of Epi/Bio was Friday, April 9th. We are all very happy for this next step in Kim's career and wish her all the best. We will miss her dedication, friendliness, and professionalism and know that she will make great contributions in her new role.

CULTURE COMMITTEE

Please check out the departmental Teams page for updates from the Culture Committee! You can find slides from our first Journal Club meeting, resources, and links to events of interest. Please also feel free to post items you would like to share as well. Link to the channel is [here](#).

AACR WELLNESS CHALLENGE

The American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Annual Meeting hosted a Wellness Challenge on April 10-13 to help raise funds. Irene Orlow's team, 'The MSK Molecular Epidemiology Awesome Lab', was among the 14 teams and 76 participants. Members included **Emily Ali, Isidora Autuori, Jessica Kenney, Irene Orlow** and **Keimya Sadeghi**.

ARNOLD and MARIE SCHWARTZ
International Hall of Science for Cancer
MEMORIAL SLOAN-KETTERING CANCER CENTER



GRANTS

Aaron Mitchell was awarded an R03 grant for his project titled "Understanding the Guideline-Discordant Use of Bone Modifying Agents in Prostate Cancer." Other investigators include **Allison Lipitz-Snyderman, Kathy Panageas,** and **Peter Bach**.

Aaron Mitchell received an NIHCM award for his project titled "Can Conflict of Interest with the Drug Industry Harm Patients?"

Andrew Vickers is a subcontract PI of an R01 grant titled "Evaluation of Transperineal Biopsy under Local Anesthesia, a Novel approach to Decrease Post-Biopsy Infections and Improve Cancer Detection" with James Hu (Weill Cornell).

Andrew Vickers is a site PI on a PCORI award titled "Prostate Cancer Comparative Outcomes of New Conceptual Paradigms for Treatment (PC CONCEPT)" with James Hu (Weill Cornell).

Chaya Moskowitz is a subcontract PI of an R01 grant titled "The ASPIRES Study: Activating Cancer Survivors and their Primary Care Providers to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening" with Tara Henderson (University of Chicago).

Colin Begg and **Ronglai Shen** were awarded an R01 grant for their project titled "Harnessing Rare Variants for Tumor Classification."

Elli Papaemmanuil received an MSK Mind award for her project titled "Development of multimodal classification framework for myeloid neoplasms."

Kevin Boehm received an F30 award for his study "Multimodal computational models to stratify ovarian cancer patients."

Marc Williams was awarded a K99 award for a project titled "Single cell quantification of genomic instability in cancer as a determinant of therapeutic response."

Margaret Du is an MPI of a U01 grant titled "Comprehensive molecular characterization of endometrial cancer, etiologic heterogeneity, and racial disparities" with Immaculata De Vivo (Harvard University) and Veronica Setiawan (USC). Other investigators include **Colin Begg, Ronglai Shen,** and **Audrey Mauguen**.

Sigrid Carlsson and **Behfar Ehdai** received an MSK Department of Surgery 2021 Faculty Research Award for their study "Telemedicine Shared Medical Appointments for men with prostate cancer on active surveillance." Other investigators include Andrew Vickers.

Talya Salz was awarded an internal MSK grant from the Department of Medicine Geriatrics Service for her study "The role of primary care in opioid prescribing for older cancer survivors."

STAFF CONGRATULATIONS

Geula Cunin and Zalmen Bernstein welcomed Meir Bernstein on February 23rd, 2021. Geula, Zalmen, Meir and big brother Ruvy are doing well!



Prusha Patel and Karthik Senthil would like to introduce Camae Senthil, their newest addition to the family born on February 18th, 2021. The Senthil Family are all doing well and big sister Cyree is especially excited!

Kelli O'Connell and Andrew Yang welcomed Naomi Catalina Yang on January 20, 2021. She surprised the family 5 weeks early and they are all doing well!



NEW STAFF

Marygrace Corral, Clinical Research Coordinator

Marygrace joins us having previously worked as the Office Coordinator for Dr. Christopher Barker, the Director of Clinical Investigation in the MSK Radiation Oncology Service. She is now the Clinical Research Coordinator for the MSK Pancreatic Tumor Registry (#02-102), a large-scale study to collect and analyze data from people with pancreatic cancer and their family members. She will support the research efforts of Margaret Du to learn more about the genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors that increase a person’s risk of developing pancreatic cancer. Marygrace earned her Associate of Applied Science in Biology from Hudson County Community College and a dual BA in Biology and Psychology from New Jersey City University in 2019.



Maribel Hernandez, Clinical Research Coordinator

Maribel joins our department to work as a Clinical Research Coordinator on projects in the Health Outcomes and Epidemiology Services. Maribel will be working with Sankeerth Jinna to recruit patients in Talya Salz’s Cannabis Study, and also with Meg Woods to support Jonine Bernstein’s Head and Neck Cancer Radiation Study and other research. Maribel joined MSK in 2019 as a Clinical Care Coordinator, and assisted with the piloting of telehealth clinic in response to COVID-19 over the past year. We thank Maribel for her front-line support and are excited to have her on our teams!



Sene Martin, Clinical Research Coordinator

Sene joined Memorial Sloan Kettering in 2019 as a Patient Financial Coordinator. In her new role as Clinical Research Coordinator, her goals include developing synergistic relationships and ensuring data monitoring accuracy. Driven by her passion for health outcome studies, she takes pride in her ability to connect with potential participants. She holds a Master’s degree in Healthcare Informatics from Capella University. Sene will be working with Andrew Vickers and other investigators in the Health Outcomes Service.



Gabriel C. Ogbennaya, Clinical Research Coordinator

Before joining MSK, Gabe worked in the theatre department at Lehman Stages of CUNY Lehman College, where he also graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Biology. He then attended York College and obtained a Master’s in Clinical Trial Management while interning at Jacobi Medical Center as a research coordinator. Gabe will be joining the Health Outcomes group as a Clinical Research Coordinator supporting Andrew Vickers and his team.



Talia Pireta, Data Analyst

Talia joins MSK as a Data Analyst on Andrew Vickers’ team in the Health Outcomes Research Group. She recently graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with Bachelor’s degrees in French and Bioinformatics. While pursuing her degrees, Talia also did research in the University’s Department of Computational Biology. Please join us in welcoming Talia to the Department and to MSK!



Shaun Porwal, Data Analyst

Shaun joins us as a Data Analyst on Andrew Vickers’ team in the Health Outcomes Research Group. He recently graduated with a Master’s degree in Biomedical Data Science from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. While completing his degree, he simultaneously worked at and did his thesis as a project for Sema4 (a healthcare and genomics company) as a Bioinformatics Intern. In his role at MSK, Shaun hopes to use data to make a difference in the lives of cancer patients.



TIPS TO BE A PRO AT ZOOM MEETINGS

Shine your face!

Adjust angles!

Use mute!

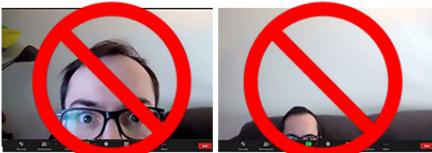


Make sure the light in the room is shining on your face. Light behind you will cast a shadow making your face hard to see while on a video call.

Consider moving where you sit or using a selfie light to brighten up your screen.



Be mindful of your laptop’s camera angles in relation to your streaming feed. It’s very easy to have an unflattering camera angle on Zoom. Make sure the camera isn’t tilted too high or too low. Try to keep the focus on your face and not under your chin or the top of your head. You want to keep your face centered.



In larger meetings, be respectful of the speaker and make sure to use the mute button so as to not accidentally interrupt anyone. Keep in mind that background noise on your end can also interfere with noise-cancellation software and cause your voice to be harder to hear for others.



All of these tips apply to Microsoft Teams too!