Three Physicians at Mount Sinai Receive Top Safety Rating for Cardiac Catheterization

For the 21st consecutive year, The Mount Sinai Hospital’s Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory or its interventionalists have received the highest two-star safety rating from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) for percutaneous coronary interventions (PCI), also known as angioplasty. PCI—one of the most common procedures for patients with coronary artery disease—opens blocked arteries and restores normal blood flow to the heart.

Mount Sinai was the only hospital at which three interventionalists received the two-star designation for safety rates significantly exceeding the statewide average. The physicians recognized were Samin K. Sharma, MD, Director of Clinical and Interventional Cardiology at The Mount Sinai Hospital, and the Anandi Lal Sharma Professor of Medicine in Cardiology; Annapoorna S. Kini, MD, Director of the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, and the Zena and Michael A. Wiener Professor of Medicine; and Pedro Moreno, MD, Professor of Medicine (Cardiology). They performed a total of 6,529 PCI procedures from December 1, 2013, to November 30, 2016.

Mount Sinai’s exceptional ratings appeared in the latest NYSDOH report, released in April 2019, on the risk factors associated with PCI procedures. The two-star rating for the PCI procedure was awarded to, from left, Samin K. Sharma, MD; Annapoorna S. Kini, MD; and Pedro Moreno, MD.

Joining Forces to Create a New Digital Health Institute

The Mount Sinai Health System and the Hasso Plattner Institute (HPI), a leading data science research and educational institution in Germany, have formed an affiliation that will combine their expertise in health care delivery, biomedical and digital engineering, and artificial intelligence. The aim is to develop digital health tools with real-time predictive and preventive capabilities that empower patients and health care providers and improve health outcomes.

The newly formed Hasso Plattner Institute for Digital Health at Mount Sinai will be led by Joel Dudley, PhD, Executive Vice President for Precision Health, Mount Sinai Health System, Mount Sinai Professor in Biomedical Data Science, and Director of the Institute for Next Generation Healthcare, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai; and Erwin P. Bottinger, MD, Professor of Digital Health-Personalized Medicine, Hasso Plattner Institute, University of Potsdam, Germany, and Head of HPI’s Digital Health Center. A $15 million gift from the Hasso Plattner Foundation will establish the new Institute, which was announced in March at the Icahn School of Medicine.

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Volunteers who serve The Mount Sinai Hospital and the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai—helping staff in areas of patient care, research, and administration—were celebrated at a breakfast on Wednesday, April 10, during National Volunteer Recognition Week. The event was held in Annenberg West Lobby.

Peter W. May, now Chairman Emeritus of the Mount Sinai Boards of Trustees, and a steadfast supporter of the Department of Volunteer Services and this annual breakfast, reflected on the volunteer legacy that exists at Mount Sinai. “The history of our institution goes back to our founding by a small group of volunteers and the spirit to give back to the community,” he said. “Today, volunteerism at Mount Sinai continues to grow, and that strengthens us.”

Addressing the volunteers, Kenneth L. Davis, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Mount Sinai Health System, said, “Currently, we have more than 1,100 volunteers in more than 250 placement areas. What exactly have you done? Among many other activities, you have helped patients take more than 1,500 walks [see story below] and engaged them in more than 1,600 active range of motion exercises. You helped nearly 1,000 patients get out of bed for many reasons, not just during mealtimes. Your work is invaluable.”

Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and President for Academic Affairs, Mount Sinai Health System, told the volunteers: “You’re optimistic, you’re welcoming, and you’re supportive. You are the foundation of the Mount Sinai community. You’re also role models for our students. This year, we also celebrate the first two volunteers who have been accepted to our School of Medicine.”

“Two words come to mind when describing the dedication of the Department of Volunteer Services and our volunteers—partnership and collaboration,” said Claudia Colgan, Vice President of Care Coordination for the Mount Sinai Health System and Vice President of Operations for The Mount Sinai Hospital. “We can always count on them to find new ways to make Mount Sinai a better place for staff and patients.”

Department of Volunteer Services Director Shari Kaplan, LCSW, told the volunteers: “You come after school, before work, and during your vacations and weekends. You come to learn, to share, and to help, and you come with your heart, and for that, and so much more, we celebrate you.”

Creating a “Circle of CARE”

On a recent Friday afternoon, patient Mohammed Choudhury was delighted to see Navjot Kaur, RN, and Wendy Chow, a recent nursing school graduate and volunteer in the Care and Respect for Everyone (CARE) program, walk into his room on the sixth floor of the Klingenstein Clinical Center. CARE is a Mount Sinai volunteer program that helps promote mobility and physical activity in patients to improve patient outcomes.

The two assisted Mr. Choudhury as he walked down the corridor, making certain he did not lose his balance. Before becoming a Mount Sinai clinical unit nurse, Ms. Kaur had been a CARE volunteer when she was a nursing student, and she was wearing an “I’m a proud CARE Volunteer Alum!” button on her uniform. Today, she is one of several CARE alumni who mentor nursing students or recent graduates interested in becoming a CARE volunteer, an effort that not only enhances the overall program for patients but strengthens the pathway for these volunteers to become Mount Sinai staff.

Ms. Kaur says CARE has helped her form stronger bonds with patients. “Talking to people and providing comfort is very important,” she says. “Some people don’t have visitors, so this also helps change their mood.” Established in 2012 in the Emergency Department, the CARE program now has more than 100 volunteers throughout The Mount Sinai Hospital. “They do an excellent job,” Mr. Choudhury said after his walk.
Faculty and staff of the Mount Sinai Health System’s Department of Urology recently celebrated the completion of a more than $3 million renovation project at Mount Sinai-Union Square. Upgrades to the 6,500-square-foot practice are being done in several phases, allowing the Sol & Margaret Berger Urology Department at Union Square to continually serve patients. The project has doubled the Department’s capacity to perform in-office procedures and features new medical equipment. Wall outlets in the waiting room allow patients to charge their phones, and soon, patients will be able to check in for their appointments while seated on a couch rather than waiting at the front desk.

Modern art, furniture with warm natural tones and finishes, special lighting, and a tank with 12 species of saltwater fish are designed to provide patients with a welcoming environment.

“All aspects of the renovation maximize the patient’s experience by reducing stress and making check-in and services more convenient and efficient,” says Ash Tewari, MBBC, MCh, Chair of the Department of Urology, Mount Sinai Health System. Plans also call for the Urology Department to launch a prostate cancer and men’s health program downtown and install a real-time location system that will enhance patient safety and improve clinical quality.

“We are excited to have this large, modern space in which to treat our patients and accommodate the more than 24,000 patient visits we receive each year,” says Michael A. Palese, MD, Chair of Mount Sinai-Union Square Urology. “World-class medicine with access to academic professionals and clinical trials in the setting of a brand new office space enhance the overall patient experience.”

Faculty and staff at the Department of Urology joined Michael Palese, MD, left, center, and Ash Tewari, MBBC, MCh, right, center, to celebrate the newly renovated facility at Mount Sinai-Union Square.

PCI at 62 hospitals across New York State. The NYSDOH began publishing PCI safety ratings in 1995, in reports designed to help patients make better decisions about their care based upon a statistical review of each hospital’s data.

“Patient safety is our top priority at The Mount Sinai Hospital Catheterization Laboratory,” Dr. Sharma says. “Our efficiency and safety outcomes are unparalleled, and we are very proud of this achievement, which is only possible because of the talented and dedicated interventional cardiology team.”

Dr. Kini says, “Our procedural outcomes data over the last several years support the statement that we have mastered the art of PCI. As a result, many patients who were considered too high-risk to receive care elsewhere are referred here. As we increasingly accept complex cases, our PCI complications continue to decline, which is a testament to the quality work this Cath Lab achieves.”

During the three-year period, The Mount Sinai Hospital had a risk-adjusted PCI mortality rate of 0.90 percent for all of its cases—emergency and non-emergency—significantly lower than the statewide average of 1.18 percent, while performing the largest number of procedures (10,888). For non-emergency cases, Mount Sinai’s PCI mortality rate was 0.58 percent, compared with the statewide average of 0.77 percent.

“I believe Mount Sinai is a leader in PCI for a few reasons,” says Dr. Moreno, Director of Cardiac Catheterization and Interventional Cardiology, Mount Sinai St. Luke’s. “Primarily, we have an extremely talented group of interventionalists and supporting staff. Second, we strictly abide by protocols and standards of care, while embracing new technologies and techniques, and finally, compassion and genuine concern for our patients’ health are our top priorities.”

Faculty and staff of the Mount Sinai Union Square Urology Department recently celebrated the completion of a more than $3 million renovation project at Mount Sinai-Union Square. Upgrades to the 6,500-square-foot practice are being done in several phases, allowing the Sol & Margaret Berger Urology Department at Union Square to continually serve patients. The project has doubled the Department’s capacity to perform in-office procedures and features new medical equipment. Wall outlets in the waiting room allow patients to charge their phones, and soon, patients will be able to check in for their appointments while seated on a couch rather than waiting at the front desk.

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The Mount Sinai Hospital Welcomes New Facility Dog

The Mount Sinai Hospital recently welcomed Moby as its newest four-legged employee in the Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department. The young, sweet-natured golden doodle now serves as the hospital’s third facility dog—along with Professor Bunsen Honeydew and Amos—offering attention and affection to faculty, staff, and patients.

“Animals create a therapeutic environment for patients, parents, and staff,” says Diane Rode, MPS, Director of the Child Life and Creative Arts Therapy Department. When one of the facility dogs is at a child’s bedside, she says, doctors and nurses often take a moment to sit down, too, and the atmosphere surrounding the patient becomes calmer and more harmonized.

Like Professor and Amos, Moby visits patients and their families. But his main emphasis is supporting faculty and staff, and helping clinical units de-stress during the course of a normally hectic week or during times of sadness. Ms. Rode says she has seen the dogs have a profound effect on grieving staff members.

To some degree, Moby’s schedule for the first year will be open-ended. But, accompanied by his handler, Jaclyn Damiano, MPS, a licensed Creative Arts Therapist, he does have structured time with certain units at The Mount Sinai Hospital and during visits to Mount Sinai Queens.

Ms. Rode credits the Mount Sinai Health System’s leadership for recognizing the value of facility dogs and says she is grateful for the support of David L. Reich, MD, President of The Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens, and Jonathan Kyriacou, MPH, Vice President, Hospital Operations, who helped bring Moby to Mount Sinai.

Joining Forces to Create a New Digital Health Institute (continued from page 1)

“This endeavor will usher in a new era of digital health at Mount Sinai that advances the field of precision medicine,” says Dennis S. Charney, MD, Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz Dean, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and President for Academic Affairs, Mount Sinai Health System. “By leveraging our shared knowledge and academic excellence, Mount Sinai and HPI are positioned to find solutions that will revolutionize health care and science, and improve health nationally and globally.”

The Hasso Plattner Institute for Digital Health at Mount Sinai joins more than 20 institutes launched at the Icahn School of Medicine. Its goals include building a digital health population of engaged participants to collect comprehensive and longitudinal health data from wearable devices, genetic sequencing, and electronic health records; creating a cloud-based health data platform for research and care using machine learning and artificial intelligence; and researching and testing prototype digital health solutions for patients, providers, and health systems.

Mount Sinai’s expertise in genomics, big data, supercomputing, and bioinformatics—along with a large and diverse patient population and an ability to translate from the lab directly to the clinic—provides a foundation for the Institute.

For example, the Institute for Next Generation Healthcare (INGH), under the leadership of Dr. Dudley, has developed a translational biomedical research model using advances in clinical medicine, digital health, and artificial intelligence, and INGH’s Lab 100 is leveraging data and technology to redesign the way health is measured and health care is delivered. In another innovative effort, the BioMe™ BioBank Program, housed at The Charles Bronfman Institute for Personalized Medicine at Mount Sinai, is enabling researchers to conduct genetic, epidemiologic, molecular, and genomic studies on large collections of research specimens linked with electronic health records. Until 2015, Dr. Bottinger was Professor of Medicine (Nephrology), and Pharmacological Sciences at the Icahn School of Medicine, and he helped lay the groundwork for the BioBank Program and The Institute for Personalized Medicine.

“Investigators at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and the Hasso Plattner Institute have been publishing groundbreaking work in the areas of genome diagnostics, precision medicine, digital health, biomedical data science, artificial intelligence, and information technology,” says Dr. Dudley. “We believe the new Institute will help turn the promise of digital health into reality at the front lines of next-generation health care.”

Dr. Bottinger says, “We know we can save lives, prevent disease, and improve the health of patients with artificial intelligence in real-time analysis of health data from electronic health records, genetic information, and mobile sensor technologies.”
Events Honor a Commitment to Care

Staff throughout the Mount Sinai Health System were honored for their commitment to patient care during Patient Experience Week special events, held from Monday, April 22, through Friday, April 26. The annual celebration included free snacks, a panel discussion on self care, informational tables, award ceremonies, opportunities to tell stories about exceptional care, and an “Empathy Olympics” to help staff learn the perspective of patients with impaired vision, hearing, or mobility. “During this week, we were pleased to recognize the hard work and dedication of our employees,” says Erica Rubinstein, LCSW, CPXP, Vice President, Patient Experience, Mount Sinai Health System. “We are also deeply grateful to the Joseph F. Cullman, Jr. Institute for Patient Experience for their ongoing support of the work we are doing to continuously improve the employee and patient experience.”
**Spiritual Health Symposium:**

*Cultivating and Sustaining Compassion in the Practice of Health Care*

Hosted by the Nursing Department and the Center for Spirituality and Health, this one-day symposium—with a focus on cultivating and sustaining compassion in health care—will feature keynote speakers Roshi Joan Halifax, PhD, and Shane Sinclair, PhD.

Dr. Halifax, Founder, Abbot, and Head Teacher at the Upaya Institute and Zen Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico, will present “Exploring a Vision of Compassion, Challenges, and Edge States.” Dr. Sinclair, Associate Professor and Cancer Care Research Professor at the University of Calgary, will present “Cultivating and Sustaining Compassion in the Practice of Health Care.”

Moderators and panelists will include Mount Sinai Health System leadership and Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai faculty. All Mount Sinai staff are encouraged to attend. Staff can register for the event at no cost at peak.mountsinai.org. For questions, contact Lindsay Katz at 212-659-8093.

**Register Now!**

**Health Care Inclusion Summit**

The Office for Diversity and Inclusion will host its inaugural Health Care Inclusion Summit, a program aimed at advancing a culture of inclusion in the health care environment. Discussion of trending topics, along with an interactive session structured to encourage an exchange of ideas, will explore “Inclusion Strategies to Enhance the Patient Experience and Improve Health Outcomes.” All Mount Sinai Health System faculty, staff, and students are welcome to attend. For more information and to register, visit diversity@mountsinai.org.

**Friday, June 7**
8 am - 2 pm
Corporate Services Center
150 East 42nd Street
Fourth Floor, Room 4-A.8-12

**SinaiPRO (Postdoctoral Research Opportunities) Symposium: Celebrating Diversity in Science**

Hosted by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, this symposium is designed to provide senior-level graduate students from underrepresented groups with insight about training as a postdoctoral fellow at Mount Sinai. Participants will learn about Mount Sinai’s innovative research; present their own research among peers; meet with faculty during poster presentations, lunch, and a closing reception; hear from current trainees about their experiences; and tour the campus. To learn more and to register, go to http://gradschool.mssm.edu/sinaipro/.

**Monday, June 24**
9 am - 5 pm
Annenberg Lobby and West Lobby

**“BREAKING OF THE FAST” OFFERED DURING RAMADAN**

Ramadan, the most important annual religious observance in Islam, marks a month of fasting, introspection, and prayer until Tuesday, June 4. During this period, those observing will rise early to eat before sunrise and not eat or drink until after the sun has set. Observers may participate in a free iftar, a daily “breaking of the fast,” at The Mount Sinai Hospital. Staff and visitors are also encouraged to visit the temporary Prayer Room located in the southeast corner of the Annenberg Lobby, near the Patricia and Robert Levinson Student Center, for prayer times. To learn more, email ejaz.siddiqui@mountsinai.org. Fast-breaking meals will be served daily, except on weekends, until Tuesday, June 4.

**Plaza Café**
Guggenheim Pavilion
Monday - Friday (sundown)
The area is reserved beginning at 7:30 pm.

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The Mount Sinai Health System complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate, exclude, or treat people differently on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.