Landmark Study on Aspirin for High-Risk Heart Patients

High-risk patients who have undergone a coronary stent procedure may not require long-term aspirin, according to a groundbreaking global study led by Roxana Mehran, MD, Director of the Center for Interventional Cardiovascular Research and Clinical Trials, Mount Sinai Heart, and the Mount Sinai Professor in Cardiovascular Clinical Research and Outcomes, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

“We showed that withdrawal of aspirin after three months in patients already on ticagrelor, a potent antiplatelet regimen, reduced bleeding significantly without the harm of increasing death or heart attacks,” says Dr. Mehran, global principal investigator of “Ticagrelor With Aspirin or Alone in High-Risk Patients After Coronary Intervention” (TWILIGHT), which was published in September 2019 in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Says Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD, Director of Mount Sinai Heart and Physician-in-Chief of The Mount Sinai Hospital, “I am proud of our team for achieving such great success with our collaborators in the continued on page 4

National Recognition—Again!—for Excellence in Nursing

Three Mount Sinai Health System hospitals have again received national recognition for excellence in nursing from the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program®. The Mount Sinai Hospital received Magnet® designation for the fourth consecutive time; Mount Sinai Queens—the Queens campus of The Mount Sinai Hospital—received its second designation; and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai received its third Magnet designation.

The announcements came in telephone calls from the ANCC to Nursing leadership at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai on continued on page 2

From left: James C. Tsai, MD, MBA, President, New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai, celebrated Magnet redesignation with Christine Mahoney, RN, MS, AGACNP-BC, CCRN; and Stacey A. Conklin, MSN, MHCDS, RN, NE-BC, the institution’s former Chief Nursing Officer, who is currently Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer at Mount Sinai South Nassau.
Joining in the celebration for Magnet redesignation at The Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens were, at center, front row, from left: Caryn A. Schwab; David L. Reich, MD; and Nancy Lamberson, MSN, RN; and center, second row, from left: Jill Goldstein, MA, MS, RN; Shirish Huprikar, MD, Chief Medical Officer, The Mount Sinai Hospital; and Frances Cartwright PhD, RN-BC, AOCN, FAAN.

Thursday, September 19, and The Mount Sinai Hospital on Monday, September 23. Celebrations immediately erupted on the three hospital campuses as joyful and boisterous nurses and staff—waving pom-poms and holding posters—cheered, clapped, and hugged, as they enjoyed this special recognition.

The Magnet designation is the highest national honor for nursing excellence. Only about 8 percent of U.S. hospitals—out of 6,300—have achieved Magnet recognition. Four Mount Sinai Health System hospitals are among them, including Mount Sinai South Nassau, which received its second consecutive designation last year.

To earn redesignation, hospitals must meet stringent standards demonstrating quality patient-centric nursing care, innovation in professional nursing, and nursing research. Hospitals must present documented evidence that the Magnet Standards have been met and have been fully enculturated during the four-year period since the last designation.

“This redesignation reflects the quality and superb outcomes provided by the nursing teams at The Mount Sinai Hospital and our Queens campus, as well as the commitment of every member of the hospital team who works to assure excellence in patient care,” said David L. Reich, MD, President and Chief Operating Officer of The Mount Sinai Hospital, and President of Mount Sinai Queens.

“Collaboration, caring, and excellence are personified by the Magnet model and this reflects our professional practice model: relationship-centered care that extends to our patients, their families, our nursing and interdisciplinary colleagues, and our community,” added Frances Cartwright, PhD, RN-BC, AOCN, FAAN, Chief Nursing Officer and Senior Vice President of The Mount Sinai Hospital and Mount Sinai Queens, Edgar M. Cullman, Sr. Chair of the Department of Nursing, and Associate Professor of Medicine (Hematology and Medical Oncology) at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

“This achievement speaks volumes to the exceptional engagement of our professional nursing staff,” said Caryn A. Schwab, Executive Director of Mount Sinai Queens. “Their skill, knowledge, and compassion are key to the high-quality patient care that the Magnet appraisers observed here.” Jill Goldstein, MA, MS, RN, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Nursing, Mount Sinai Queens, added: “I am so very proud of our nurses and their incredible commitment to excellence.” Mount Sinai Queens is the only Magnet-designated hospital in the borough.

In addition to Dr. Cartwright and Ms. Goldstein, a number of Nursing leaders directed the Magnet redesignation effort across campuses, including Nancy Lamberson, MSN, RN, Senior Director of Nursing, Department of Radiology, and Magnet Program Director, The Mount Sinai Hospital; Christine Mahoney, RN, MS, AGACNP-BC, CCRN, Senior Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer, Mount Sinai Downtown; and Margaret M. Morales, MA, RN, ACNS, NEA-BC,
Postdoctoral Award Supports Innovative Research

Two early-career scientists—Pinar Ayata, PhD, and Shuang (Sammi) Wang, PhD—are the recipients of the 2019 Robin Chemers Neustein Postdoctoral Fellowship Award, it was announced recently. Each will receive an award of $25,000 to further their research endeavors.

Intended to encourage and support female research scientists at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, the fellowship was established in 2010 through a generous gift from Robin Chemers Neustein, JD, MBA, a former member of Mount Sinai’s Boards of Trustees. Recipients are senior postdoctoral scientists who intend to complete their training within two years, have demonstrated high-impact accomplishments in biomedical sciences, and exhibit the potential for an independent scientific career.

Dr. Ayata works in the laboratory of Anne Schaefer, MD, PhD, in The Friedman Brain Institute within the Nash Family Department of Neuroscience. She is uncovering the molecular mechanisms by which a type of cell known as microglia support health and function of the brain, and how their dysfunction contributes to neurodegenerative disease. “Pinar is an extraordinary young scientist with a knack for exciting and novel ideas and the tenacity to follow through,” says Dr. Schaefer, Associate Professor of Neuroscience, and Psychiatry. “She is firmly in the group of young investigators likely to lead the field of neuroscience in the near future.”

Dr. Wang works in the laboratory of Scott L. Friedman, MD, Chief of the Division of Liver Diseases. Her research is focused on investigating how a specialized group of chemical modifications of DNA alter the activity of scar-producing cells in the liver that contribute to cirrhosis (advanced scarring) of this organ.

“Sammi is a wonderful investigator and generous team member whose superb science and attention to detail complement great intelligence and maturity,” says Dr. Friedman, who is also Dean for Therapeutic Discovery and Fishberg Professor of Medicine. “She is a joy to have as a colleague and has a very bright future.”

National Recognition—Again!—for Excellence in Nursing

Vice President for Patient Care Services, New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai.

The process involved months of work at each of the three hospitals by nurses at all levels of practice who successfully demonstrated excellence in every aspect of health care delivery. Overall, Magnet hospitals report 10.3 percent lower fall rates, 14 percent lower mortality rates, and 5.5 percent fewer hospital-acquired pressure ulcers, among other improvements, for their patients compared to non-Magnet hospitals.

At New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai, Nursing leaders created a “Cheer Walk” for hospital leadership, nurses, and staff—applauding wildly and snapping quick pictures as they arrived for the celebration—providing a red-carpet entrance fit for celebrities. According to James C. Tsai, MD, MBA, President of the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai, and the Delafield-Rodgers Professor and Health System Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology, “This is an incredible source of pride for our nurses, and it also reaffirms the hard work and dedication of our entire staff.”

Nursing leadership also expressed their gratitude. "New York Eye and Ear nurses distinguish themselves as caregivers, educators, leaders, scholars, and innovators," Ms. Morales said. Ms. Mahoney added: “Our nurses are among the best in the nation, and I am inspired by their dedication to our patients and to each other.”

Enjoying Magnet redesignation at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai, were, front row, from left: Lilian Bayaya, RN; Henedia Sirlian, MSN, RN; Johanna Sica, MSN, RN, CEN; and Min Jeon, MBA, BSN, RN, CRNO; back row, from left: Darwin Recentes, RN; Kamilie Vega-Bryan, RN; Robin Begley, RN; and Mandy Zhao, BSN, RN.
Interns Introduced to Health Administration Careers

More than 50 high school, college, and graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds gained valuable exposure to careers in health care and medicine this summer in administrative internships spearheaded by the Mount Sinai Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI). Departments across the Health System sponsored a wide range of experiences in fields including ambulatory care, hospital administration and operations, supply chain management, finance, development, digital and social media, information technology, and real estate services and facilities.

ODI supported the internships through partnerships with organizations including America Needs You; the All Stars Project, Inc.; CUNY Summer Corps; the Greater New York Hospital Association; the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity; the New York City Department of Education’s Career and Technical Education Industry Scholars Program; and Prep for Prep. “We are grateful for our internal sponsors and external partners, which allow us to expand opportunities for the next generation of health care leaders,” says Shana Dacon, MPH, MBA, Director, Corporate Health System Affairs, Office for Diversity and Inclusion.

ODI also introduced LGBT-identified youths to careers in health care in the second year of its Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Young Queer Urban Teens for Health in Medicine program. “In addition to year-round outreach events, we were able to welcome 18 LGBT students and allies to this year’s Saturday at Sinai event on April 27,” says Edgar Vargas, MPH, LMSW, LGBT Program Manager, Office for Diversity and Inclusion.

Ive Chowdhury, a Bard High School student, participated in the one-day program and completed a summer internship with ODI. “This has been such a rewarding experience,” she says. “I enjoyed speaking to medical students, meeting new people, and seeing health care from a different perspective.”

From left, interns Hasib Mia and Ive Chowdhury, with Tristan Fehr, a PhD candidate in Neuroscience.

Landmark Study on Aspirin for High-Risk Heart Patients (continued from page 1)

United States and around the world on this pioneering clinical trial.”

The study addresses longstanding questions about the treatment of high-risk patients after percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), also known as angioplasty, which opens blocked arteries and restores normal blood flow to the heart. “The same patients who are at high risk for ischemic events—such as heart attack or stroke caused by blocked blood vessels—are also at high risk for bleeding events,” says Dr. Mehran. “You have to find the right balance in therapies, and it is not easily found.”

In the current standard of care, high-risk patients who have received a cardiac stent are advised to take dual antiplatelet therapy (DAPT)—both aspirin and a drug from a class of strong antiplatelet medications called P2Y12 inhibitors, of which ticagrelor is one. DAPT combines two drugs with similar effects, with the aim of preventing heart attack or stroke by reducing the risk of blood clots. TWILIGHT examined the impact of taking ticagrelor alone versus ticagrelor plus aspirin on clinically relevant bleeding among high-risk patients. Investigators enrolled 9,006 patients at 187 sites in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia. They were high risk, meaning they met criteria such as having long or complex lesions in coronary arteries, or disorders such as diabetes or chronic kidney disease. All patients had undergone PCI with at least one drug-eluting stent and were prescribed aspirin and ticagrelor. After a three-month course of DAPT, the 7,119 patients without major adverse events were randomized to take either DAPT or ticagrelor with a placebo for 12 months.

Among patients who took DAPT, 7.1 percent had major bleeding, compared with 4 percent of those who took ticagrelor and a placebo, and there was no difference in the risk for heart attack, death, or stroke between the groups. “This simpler approach saved many bleeding events and preserved the benefit of the single potent blood thinner,” says Usman Baber, MD, MS, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Cardiology), Icahn School of Medicine, who was lead author of the study with Dr. Mehran, and Chair of the TWILIGHT Clinical Coordinating Center.

The results were corroborated by a sub-study led by Juan J. Badimon, PhD, Professor of Medicine (Cardiology), and Director of Atherothrombosis Research at Mount Sinai Heart. Using a tool he is renowned for developing, the Badimon Chamber, researchers measured the thrombogenicity or “stickiness” of the blood in a group of 42 TWILIGHT patients, testing samples taken before and after they completed the 12-month treatment. Like the clinical study, the study of blood samples found that withdrawing aspirin caused no additional clot formation.

Dr. Mehran expressed profound gratitude to Mount Sinai, which was the global sponsoring organization of TWILIGHT. “This study gives you an idea of the things we are able to do as an institution,” she says, “bringing together all of our resources to answer important questions for physicians and enhance the outcome for patients.”

The drug ticagrelor is made by AstraZeneca, which provided Mount Sinai with an unrestricted grant to perform the investigator-initiated study. Dr. Mehran has received financial compensation as an advisory board member for AstraZeneca in the past, and she and Dr. Baber have received consulting fees from AstraZeneca in the past.
Chinese Consul Visits Mount Sinai

Ambassador Huang Ping, Consul General of China in New York, took a wide-ranging tour of The Mount Sinai Hospital, sponsored by Mount Sinai International, an organization within the Mount Sinai Health System that is dedicated to advancing health care around the world. Ambassador Ping, who is the second-ranking Chinese official in the United States; his wife, Madame Zhang Ai Ping; and a group of consular officials were hosted on Tuesday, September 17, by Arthur A. Klein, MD, President of the Mount Sinai Health Network, and Szabi Dorotovics, MD, MBA, President of Mount Sinai International. The group also met with David L. Reich, MD, President and Chief Operating Officer, The Mount Sinai Hospital; and Shirish Huprikar, MD, Chief Medical Officer, The Mount Sinai Hospital.

The Taikang Xianlin Drum Tower Hospital in Nanjing, China, recently began a 10-year strategic collaboration with Mount Sinai International. “The United States and China face many common challenges in medicine and health,” Dr. Klein said. “Mount Sinai and China have extensive and long-lasting relationships in clinical care, scientific research, and medical education.”

Run for Research Raises Funds for Brain Aneurysm Foundation

Brain aneurysms are life-changing, or even fatal if they rupture. To raise awareness of the disorder, and funds for research, the Department of Neurosurgery at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai partnered with TeamCindy, a fundraising arm of the Brain Aneurysm Foundation, to present the Sixth Annual 5k Run for Research. During the event, on Saturday, September 14, at Riverside Park, 30 physicians, staff, family, friends, and former patients joined the Mount Sinai team, raising $3,000 for the Foundation. More than $60,000 was raised in total.

Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Fair

More than 500 participants learned about self-care and cancer risk factors at the Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Health Fair in Guggenheim Pavilion. The event, on Thursday, September 19, was sponsored by Women’s Services at The Mount Sinai Hospital and included nutrition tips, music, spiritual care, yoga, and information about support groups. This year, about 100,000 cases of gynecologic cancer will be diagnosed in the United States, says Godsfavour Guillet, BSN, RN, Nurse Manager, who organized the fair with the Women’s Health team on Klingenstein Pavilion 4. Stephanie V. Blank, MD, Director of Gynecologic Oncology, Mount Sinai Health System, and Director, Women’s Cancer Program at the Blavatnik Family – Chelsea Medical Center at Mount Sinai, says, “By learning about symptoms, and measures that can reduce risk, you can empower yourself to make health decisions that can literally save your life.”
Confronting Addiction: Science, Policy, Care

Join the Addiction Institute of Mount Sinai for a full day of lectures and discussions by prominent scientists, clinicians, and policymakers—luminaries in their fields of epidemiology, policy, neurobiology, neuroimaging, big data, prevention, treatment, and more. Keynote speaker Nora Volkow, MD, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, will give a presentation on “The Role of Science in Substance Abuse Policy and Care.”

Discussion topics will be centered around four themes: Taking Addiction Policy Into the 21st Century; Early Predictors of Addiction; Objective Assessment of Addiction Symptoms and Treatment Outcomes; and New Frontiers in Addiction Treatment. Lunch will include poster presentations, and a networking reception will follow the day’s events.

To RSVP, please visit bit.ly/aims2019.

Wednesday, October 30
Lectures and discussions: 8:30 am - 5:30 pm
Networking reception: 5:30 - 7:30 pm
New York Academy of Medicine
1216 Fifth Avenue

“Spirituality, Health, and the Artist” Exhibition: Call for Art

The Second Annual Art Exhibition on Spirituality, Health, and the Artist is requesting photographs, paintings, small sculptures, and poetry that celebrate the integration of the spirit and health as seen through the eyes of Mount Sinai Health System faculty and staff. The exhibition will take place Tuesday, December 3 – Thursday, December 5, in the Annenberg West Lobby. For questions, or to send a jpeg or gif of your work, email Hayley.Gardiner@mountsinai.org. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday, November 5.

About your art: include medium, dimensions, and its relevance to spirituality and health. Your piece, if selected, will need to be professionally framed and/or ready for display by Tuesday, November 12.

Submitted by Mary Presciutti, NP, Department of Neurosurgery

October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The Mount Sinai Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Program (SAVI) provides free and confidential services and advocacy for all those directly impacted. Learn more about SAVI's role in preventing this kind of violence and supporting survivors. Stop by an informational table for giveaways, literature, and opportunities to meet SAVI staff and volunteers. SAVI will be joined by members of Mount Sinai’s Brain Injury Research Center, who will have information and resources on intimate partner violence and traumatic brain injury. For more information about SAVI or domestic violence resources, email savi@mssm.edu or call 212-423-2140.

Friday, October 25
10 am – 3 pm
The Mount Sinai Hospital
Guggenheim Pavilion
Outside Plaza Café

10 am – 2 pm
Mount Sinai Queens
Hospital Lobby

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