



UCSF Department of Medicine ZUCKERBERG SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL

CULTIVATING LEADERS OF CARE AT ZSFG

“Right now at ZSFG, we are undergoing tremendous, transformative change,” said Beth Harleman, MD, Professor of Medicine in the ZSFG Division of Hospital Medicine and Associate Chair for Faculty Experience for the Department of Medicine. “We’re moving to a new electronic health record, undergoing new building construction, and rethinking how we deliver clinical care.”

At the same time, ZSFG leaders face a unique set of challenges by operating within two distinct organizations: UCSF and the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH). “Each of these different cultures has its own priorities, workflows, and ways of communicating,” said Dr. Harleman. And while ZSFG physicians, trainees, and many staff are UCSF employees, ZSFG’s hospital leadership, nurses, and many others are employed by SFDPH. “As a leader with very little direct supervisory capacity, you are leading laterally, by influencing, motivating, and inspiring people,” she said.

To help leaders work most effectively in this complex environment, Neil R. Powe, MD, MPH, MBA, Chief of Medicine at ZSFG and Constance B. Wofsy Distinguished Professor, and Dr. Harleman established the Clinical Leaders Professional Development Program at ZSFG. This fall, 16 leaders nominated by their division chiefs met once a month for three-hour sessions on topics including personality type and leadership, the power of inquiry, the matrix structure of UCSF and DPH, approaches to conflict, diversity and inclusion. Participants also completed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator personality inventory, participated in 360 evaluation with feedback from direct reports, peers, and supervisors, and received an executive coaching session. The training also provides resources for leadership development, including an opportunity to curate their UCSF profile page.



Elizabeth Harleman, MD, with Clinical Leaders Professional Development Program 2019 Cohort: (L to R) Anitha Toke, Heather Harris, Judy Cheng, Delphine Tuot, Lisa Ochoa-Frongia, Sarah Kim, Pallabi Sanyal-Dey, Anne Rosenthal, Neeta Thakur, Mandana Khalili, Justin Sewell, Carolyn Hendrickson, Vivek Jain, Anne Kinderman, Joshua Vasquez. Not shown: Binh An Phan, Sithu Win photo: Elisabeth Fall

“We wanted to share institutional, cultural knowledge, such as how to get people excited about change, create an environment where people feel comfortable speaking up, and ensure that you don’t exclude an important stakeholder,” said Dr. Harleman. “These are skills that we don’t learn in medical school and aren’t traditional markers of success for academic physicians, yet are so essential to being successful leaders – particularly at ZSFG at this moment.”

Leveraging Team Strengths

One of the most important leadership skills is communicating effectively with a broad range of stakeholders. “Members of our team see the patient at different times and filter the data through different lenses,” said Carolyn Hendrickson, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor in the ZSFG Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine and Co-Medical Director of the ZSFG Medical Inten-

sive Care Unit. “Setting a time to meet at the bedside with residents, fellows, respiratory therapists, nurses, and the attending to exchange information, identify any conflicts in how we want to proceed, and develop a plan to move forward helps us be on the same page.”

The leadership training encouraged her to elicit motivations and beliefs that lie beneath stated positions. “I might

say, ‘This patient doesn’t need a central line,’ but maybe my nursing colleagues feel very strongly that he does,” said Dr. Hendrickson. “I can take a step back and say, ‘You know, his daughter told me he would never want a central line. I think we can achieve these therapies through other mechanisms.’ That’s different than just saying, ‘Here’s my decision.’ The nurse might say, ‘Actually, we can’t give that medicine through a peripheral IV, so you’re wrong – we need a central line.’ We can have a conversation about the patient’s needs, our goals for therapy, and how we can achieve them.”

Those skills are critical not just at ZSFG, but in every environment. “Right now, a lot of high-impact work in infectious diseases and other fields is via team science for discovery and implementation,” said Vivek Jain, MD, MAS, Associate Professor of Medicine in the ZSFG Division of HIV, Infectious Diseases and Global Medicine. In addition to serv-

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ing as Director of the ZSFG Infectious Diseases Clinic and Co-Director of Infection Control at ZSFG, he works with large teams to improve HIV



Vivek Jain, MD

care in sub-Saharan Africa. “People have different ways of visualizing the problem, formulating strategies, looking at data, and synthesizing information,” he said. “Having a better understanding of how other people process information will make me a better communicator when it comes time for

group work, decisions, and policymaking.”

For example, Dr. Jain has been in ongoing discussions with hospital leadership about securing dedicated funding for a program which allows select patients who need daily IV antibiotics to be discharged from the hospital and self-administer infusions for the remaining weeks of their treatment. This allows patients to return to work and family responsibilities, frees up hospital beds, and saves the health system thousands of dollars a day. “It’s a complex topic because of the way money flows in the system, and who pays for what,” said Dr. Jain. “When we’re trying to improve systems of care, we have to consider multiple facets, including clinical, administrative, and regulatory aspects, as well as finance. To really have an impact in infectious diseases, you need to find strategies for treating diseases in the broader health care system.”

Claiming Your Style, and Adapting It

The training also helps participants find their voice as a leader. “I used to think that I couldn’t be a good leader until I was a different person,” said Sarah Kim, MD, Associate Professor in the ZSFG Division of Endocrinology. She directs the ZSFG Adult Diabetes Clinic, ZSFG Adult Weight Management Clinic, and UCSF Diabetes Teaching Center, and co-directs the ZSFG Healthy Lifestyles Clinic.

“I’m not the kind of person who stands up and says, ‘This is what we’re going to do – this is a great idea, trust me!’” said Dr. Kim. “I am much more collaborative. After my 360 coaching session, I

realized that just because I have some differences in how I lead doesn’t mean I’m a bad leader. I can elicit visions from team members and help make that happen – it doesn’t all have to be my idea. That was an eye-opening moment, and helps me go forward with more courage.”

Dr. Kim also said that the training gave her a greater appreciation for different communication styles. “I just want to know the upshot, but some colleagues are really detail-oriented and want to be copied on every email,” she said. “I used to think, ‘Do they not trust me?’ But now I realize that it’s just their style, and I need to stop projecting my style onto them. I’m learning that people are different, and not to take things personally.”

Similarly, Dr. Hendrickson said that as a strong introvert, she learned she might need to adapt her



Carolyn Hendrickson, MD

communication style when talking with extroverts. “I may be giving someone my undivided attention and listening quietly, but some people perceive me as looking disinterested or judgmental,” she said. “In the training, people told me, ‘You’re just staring at me. I need some more head-nodding and ‘Uh-huhs.’ That was really informative.”

Investing in the Future

Another goal of the leadership training is building a strong network among the participants. “It’s so valuable to do this training with people I hope to be working with for a long time,” said Dr. Hendrickson. “I’m getting to know my colleagues who are also in leadership roles, and what their styles and preferences are. Even if we’re not interacting around something specific now, I hope there will be an opportunity to collaborate with them in the future, and we’ll have a connection.”

“It’s really valuable to see how my colleagues are solving problems in all corners of the hospital,” said Dr. Jain. He mentioned a panel discussion with ZSFG leaders Claire Horton, MD, Chief of Staff, Jeffrey Critchfield, MD, Chief Medical

Experience Officer and Medical Director of Risk Management, and Hemal Kanzaria, MD, MSc, Department of Care Coordination Medical Director. “My biggest takeaway was the importance of seeking out collaboration and discussion with a broad variety of people, and to not be siloed inside an issue,” said Dr. Jain.

“I’m very grateful for this opportunity,” said Dr. Kim. “I know the training takes time and effort to coordinate, and it just shows how invested the ZSFG Department of Medicine is in me. I appreciate feeling like the department cares about how I’m doing, and is in this for the long run.”



Sarah Kim, MD

“I feel really fortunate that we have such humble, creative, responsible people involved with leading clinical activities at ZSFG,” said Dr. Harleman. “I have a lot of trust and confidence in them, and that they are working to do the very best for patients.”

Elizabeth Chur

Editors: Neil Powe, Laurae Pearson

SPOTLIGHT

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND WELL WISHES FOR A JOYOUS NEW YEAR!

On November 13, the University of California Regents approved the budget, scope, external financing and design of the approximately 175,000-square-foot, five-story **ZSFG Research and Academic Building**, which is projected to cost \$275 million. The start of construction is planned for early 2020, pending obtaining permits for the City.

The UCSF Center for Vulnerable Populations welcomes **Cynthia Nagendra** as the Executive Director of the UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative. Ms. Nagendra most recently served as Director for Capacity Building at the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Paula Lum, MD, MPH, received the Norman E. Zinberg Award for Achievement in the Field of Medicine at the International Drug Policy Reform Conference and was awarded the W. Anderson Spickard, Jr. Excellence in Mentorship Award from the Association for Multidisciplinary Education and Research in Substance use and Addiction (AMERSA).

John Imboden, MD, received the Medical Award of Excellence from the Northern California Arthritis Foundation.

