

HEALTH POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GW SPHHS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY

November 15, 2007

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Volunteer Opportunities</i>	2
<i>Tom Perez, Geiger Gibson Research Professor</i>	3
<i>Health Policy in the News</i>	3
<i>Patricia Gabow, Geiger Gibson Visitor</i>	3
<i>Nov-Dec DHP Calendars</i>	4
<i>New Report on MRSA</i>	5
<i>Melissa Goldstein Selected as BAP Delegate</i>	6
<i>STOP Obesity Alliance News</i>	6
<i>Calendar Resources for Health Policy</i>	7

To submit items of interest, e-mail Rick Mauery at rmauery@gwu.edu before the end of the month.

Thank you to MPH student Arista Salimi, DHP Professor Rick Mauery, DHP Public Affairs Liaison Lee Repasch, and DHP researcher Jennifer Bretsch for their assistance in producing this newsletter.

FIRST LADY OF MONGOLIA VISITS JACOBS INSTITUTE OF WOMEN'S HEALTH AND GW HOSPITAL



R. Mauery, A. Markus, T. Kelly, Mrs. Tsolmon, C. Silva, S. Dawadash, S. O'Connor, Mrs. Dawadash, J. Rapelyea, B. Williams (l-r) © GW Medical Center Communications

The First Lady of Mongolia, Mrs. Onongiin Tsolmon, visited the Jacobs Institute of Women's Health and the GW Hospital on October 26.

Mrs. Onongiin Tsolmon and her husband, President of Mongolia Nambaryn Enkhbayar, were in Washington for a state visit that included a meeting with President Bush at the White House.

Dr. Carlos Silva, GW Hospital Medical Director, and Anne Markus, Editor-in-Chief of *Women's Health Issues*, led the meeting with Mrs. Tsolmon. Also participating were: Rick Mauery, Managing Director of the Jacobs Institute; Dr. Steven Patierno, Executive Director, GW Cancer Institute; Dr. Susan Bennett, Clinical Director, Women's Heart Program; Bonnie Williams, RN, BSN, Women's Center Director; Sue O'Connor, RN, BSN, OCN, senior director, Oncology, Medicine, Psychiatry, Palliative Care and Women's Services; Jocelyn A. Rapelyea, MD; Tricia A. Kelly, MD, FACS; Mr. & Mrs. S. Dawadash, Embassy of Mongolia, and Nancy Brinker, Chief of Protocol of the U.S. Department of State. In addition to an interesting discussion of women's health issues in Mongolia and the U.S., the First Lady and her delegation also took a short tour of GW Hospital's women's health programs and the neonatal intensive care unit. Mrs. Tsolmon has a long-standing interest in women's health care and policy issues. A leading cause of death in Mongolia is maternal mortality. (cont. p. 2)

A MESSAGE FROM DHP CHAIR, SARA ROSENBAUM, JD



Greetings everyone! What an extraordinary semester it has been. In addition to the regular classroom activities, the Department has had an outstanding FDA seminar series, an extraordinary series of evening events around national health reform as part of the Chair's Seminar, Dr. Patty Gabow as a Distinguished visitor, dozens of reports publications and events in the news. I hope that you have found the time to enjoy some of these special events. In the spring, be on the lookout for two Life in Health Policy evenings, the annual Geiger Gibson Health Policy Symposium (part of the winter policy conference of the National Association of Community Health Centers), and many other meetings and events open to students. Have a most wonderful holiday season and be sure to come to the Department's Holiday Party on December 5th!

Dept. of Health Policy Professional Mentoring Program

All current SPHHS Health Policy Students and SPPPA students with a concentration in Health Policy are invited to join our Professional Mentoring Program. This program is intended to match health policy students with professionals in the field to provide career advice, networking opportunities, research ideas, and more.

Program Goals

- To provide an opportunity for students to learn from "professional advisors" who are currently working in the health policy field;
- To create a relationship with a mentor who can assist you in making choices about research projects, pro bono opportunities, career paths, future schooling, etc. during and after your time at GW;
- To establish a network of mentors who may be available for formal roles as special projects preceptors and thesis or dissertation advisors;
- To strengthen the ties between students, mentors, and the Health Policy program.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, please review the Mentor and Student guidelines available at:

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/healthpolicy/>

First Lady of Mongolia Visit (from page 1)

Mrs. Tsolmon expressed deep interest in building collaborations with the GW medical and policy community to assist in improving women's health outcomes in Mongolia, with a particular interest in reducing rates of cancer, heart disease, and maternal and infant mortality. Other health priorities in Mongolia include increasing immunization rates, reducing prevalence and incidence of STDs, and reducing the effects that unsafe water and inadequate sanitation can have on proper nutrition for pregnant women.

—————▶
You're Invited!!
◀—————



The Department of Health Policy Annual Holiday Party is on Wednesday, December 5, from 3:00—5:00 pm. This year, we have selected the inviting and elegant **GWU Inn** at 824 New Hampshire Ave. NW as our celebration venue.

So take a break from the books, shut down your PCs, cell phones, and PDAs, and join the festivities. E-mail invitations will be going out soon!



HEALTH AND MEDICAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Outreach Volunteer African American Coalition Against AIDS

Seeking energetic and enthusiastic outreach volunteers to help with community education work around HIV/AIDS. Volunteers will have the opportunity to conduct street outreach to areas that have been particularly impacted by the HIV/AIDS crisis and help staff events to help distribute factually-relevant information and free condoms. 5 hours per week, no experience necessary. Location: 707 Risa Rd., Largo, MD 20774.

Call 301-499-7178, www.stophivaids.org/

Thanksgiving Dinner, Nov. 22 Threshold Services

Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve a Thanksgiving meal for people with major mental illness. Food and staff help will be supplied for the meal, and about 20 residents will attend. Threshold Services is a nonprofit, direct care provider for people with major mental illness in Montgomery County, MD.

Contact Beth Duffin at (301) 754-1102, ext. 15 or bduffin@thresholdservices.org.

www.thresholdservices.org.

Help Workers Get Health Care! The Long Term Care Coalition

The Long Term Care Coalition, made up of consumers, advocates and health care providers work together to increase the options available to low-income DC residents with chronic care needs. Basic to the success of long term care is the development of a direct care workforce with fair wages, benefits, training and supervision. Few direct care workers have any benefits, including health care, paid vacations, or sick leave. The Coalition seeks to recruit and train volunteers in using a simple web-based program to provide benefits to home care workers. Two-hour training and any necessary materials provided. Hours are flexible. Contact Jennifer Gibson, (202) 966-1055.

For a comprehensive listing of a diverse array of volunteer opportunities in the Metro DC area, please visit:

www.volunteermatch.org

HEALTH POLICY IN THE NEWS

Iraq Veterans Experience Delayed Mental Stress, Study Finds

Soldiers who served in Iraq are experiencing much greater mental distress three to six months after leaving the war zone than when they first returned to the U.S., according to a Walter Reed Army Institute of Research/U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine study published in *JAMA*, *the Washington Post* reported on 11/14. For the study, researchers analyzed questionnaires completed by 88,235 Iraq War soldiers. About 56,000 of the respondents remain on active duty, while 32,000 are in the Army Reserve or National Guard. Ninety percent of the questionnaires were completed by men, 60% of whom were married. Overall, almost one-third of the servicemembers had signs of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, conflicts in relationships and other mental health problems six months after leaving Iraq, the study found.

According to the study, soldiers were far more likely to report problems such as PTSD and conflicts with family or friends during a screening performed three to six months after returning from Iraq compared with an assessment taken immediately upon their return.

Paul Reickhoff, executive director of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, said that in the initial screening, soldiers might have minimized concerns so they would not be delayed in returning home. In addition, there is a "honeymoon period" upon returning home that lasts until negative experiences begin to sink in, according to the *LA Times* (Maugh, Los Angeles Times, 11/13). Stephen Jones, an Army assistant surgeon general, said, "When you come back, ... you're almost euphoric, ... you don't have any problems in the world," but after some time has passed, "the stress starts to resurface."

Researchers recommended that the Army provide mental health care services to veterans and their family members "before symptoms become chronically entrenched." Treating mental illness early can help prevent long-term problems, according to lead researcher Charles Milliken of Walter Reed. However, the study also questions the effectiveness of PTSD treatment in the overburdened military medical system, finding "no direct relationship of referral or treatment with symptom improvement."

Source: *Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report*, Nov. 14, 2007.

Welcome, Tom Perez, Geiger Gibson Research Professor!



Thomas Perez, MPP, has joined the Department of Health Policy as the first Geiger Gibson Research Professor.

Mr. Perez will lecture in health policy and civil rights and focus his research on health professions diversity.

"We are delighted that Tom Perez has chosen to become part of the Department," said Sara Rosenbaum, JD, Hirsch Professor of Health Policy and Department chair. "Tom's brilliance and accomplishments will add enormously to our Department and the Geiger Gibson Program." Perez, who serves as Maryland's Secretary of Labor, a position to which he was appointed in January 2007, will pursue his academic activities on a part-time basis.

Mr. Perez has dedicated his entire career to public service. He was the first Latino elected to the Montgomery County Council, where he served from 2002 to 2006, retiring that year. Secretary Perez was also a member of the faculty at the University of Maryland School of Law from 2001 to 2007, where he focused on the intersection of health and civil rights, and increasing access to healthcare for underserved communities. A former federal prosecutor and senior official in the Clinton administration, Perez served in the Justice Department Office of Civil Rights. During the final two years of the Clinton administration, Perez directed the Office for Civil Rights at the United States Department of Health and Human Services, where he was involved in the Clinton administration's initiative to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in population health. Perez has also served as special counsel to Senator Edward M. Kennedy, where he helped lead the effort to secure passage of landmark civil rights legislation.

Patricia A. Gabow, Geiger Gibson Distinguished Visitor



Patricia A. Gabow, M.D., is the 2007 Geiger Gibson Distinguished Visitor. The program provides an opportunity for leaders in the community health field to come to GWU's Department of Health Policy to work with our students and faculty.

Visitors may serve as guest lecturers, student advisors, and mentors. In addition, Visitors assist with the development of the Geiger Gibson Program, work on the History Project, and engage in scholarship in their areas of expertise.

Dr. Gabow is CEO and Medical Director of Denver Health and Hospital Authority, one of the nation's most efficient, highly-regarded and integrated health care systems. Dr. Gabow led the effort to convert the hospital from part of the city to an independent governmental authority. She joined the staff in 1973 as chief of the Renal Division. During her tenure in that role and as Director of Medical Services, she became internationally known

for her scientific work in polycystic kidney disease. Her current research relates to health services for the underserved and health system transformation.

Author of over 150 articles and book chapters, Dr. Gabow is professor of medicine in the Division of Renal Disease at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. She received her medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, trained in Internal Medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and Harbor General Hospital in Torrance, California and received further training in nephrology at San Francisco General Hospital and the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Gabow has been honored as one of America's "Top 25 Women in Healthcare" and one of the "50 Most Powerful Physician Executives in Healthcare" by *Modern Healthcare* magazine. She was also honored with the "2007 Unique Woman of Colorado" award by The Denver Post, The Women's Foundation of Colorado and Lockheed.

DHP NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Events are at DHP, 2021 K Street, Suite 800 unless otherwise indicated

- Fri., 11/2—Speech on obesity by former Surgeon General Richard Carmona, MD. 12:00-1:30 pm, Jack Morton Auditorium
- Mon., 11/12—Chat with the Chair. 12:00-1:00 pm
- Mon., 11/19—FDA Seminar. Regulation, intellectual property and follow-on biologics—what are the issues? 12:00—1:00 pm
- Mon., 11/19—Nat'l Health Reform Seminar. National health reform and the states (Alan Weil, President, National Academy for State Health Policy). 6:00—8:00 pm
- Mon., 11/26—Nat'l Health Reform Seminar. National health reform: quality, workforce, health care infrastructure, and medically underserved populations (Professors Carolyn Clancy, Fitzhugh Mullan, Bruce Siegel, Daniel Hawkins, Professorial Lecturer in Health Policy and Senior Vice President, National Association of Community Health Centers). 6:00-8:00 pm

November 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2 Richard Carmona, MD, Speech	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Chat with the Chair	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 FDA & NHR Seminars	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 NHR Seminar	27	28	29	30	

December 2007

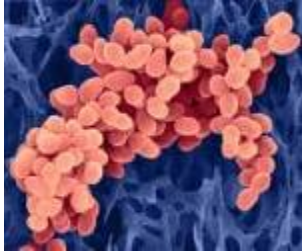
SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

						1
2	3 FDA Seminar	4	5 DHP Holiday Party	6	7	8
9	10 Chat with the Chair	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

DHP DECEMBER CALENDAR

- Mon., 12/3—FDA Seminar. FDA oversight of nanotechnology. Mike Taylor and Randy Lutter. 12:00—1:00 pm
- **Wed., 12/5—DHP Holiday Party, 3:00-5:00 pm at the GWU Inn, 824 New Hampshire Ave., NW**
- Mon., 12/10—Chat with the Chair. 12:00-1:00 pm.

Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA): What Can Be Done to Control Infection?



www.mrsaresources.com

A new report prepared by the SPHHS Rapid Public Health Policy Response Project indicates that MRSA infection, which does not respond to many common antibiotics, is much more prevalent and much more dangerous than previously recognized. DHP researchers **Alexandra Stewart, JD**, and **Marisa Cox, MA, MPH**, assisted the preparation of the report.

always fully respected. Among them are strategies for hand hygiene, contact precautions, environmental decontamination, judicious use of antimicrobial agents, active surveillance for high-risk patients, and staff education.

Broader surveillance techniques are more controversial. Two states - Illinois and New Jersey - now require all patients to be tested for MRSA when they are admitted to the hospital, but several professional associations oppose such legislative mandates. They argue that decisions about how to assess risk and use limited resources to maximize infection control should be left to individual facilities.

In 2005, an estimated 94,360 cases of invasive diseases caused by MRSA occurred in the United States and 18,650 of those cases - almost 20 percent of the total - were fatal, according to the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* (Oct. 17, 2007). Once confined largely to hospitals and other health care settings, MRSA infection is spreading. Almost 14 percent of the estimated invasive disease cases occurred in the community, with reports coming from schools, day care centers, and prisons. The MRSA strains that originate in the community are genetically distinct from those in health care environments, suggesting that new and possibly more virulent strains are emerging.

Basic infection control and prevention measures in health care settings are well-characterized and widely known, if not

Strategies for gaining control in the community are only beginning to be considered. Some educational materials are available and broader initiatives to reduce the use of antibiotics, which contribute to the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, may be relevant. But as invasive MRSA infections in community settings grow, much more will likely be needed. As they follow unfolding events, public health officials and health care experts will need to identify new strategies and act with an appropriate sense of urgency.

A copy of the report can be downloaded by visiting:

www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/about/rapidresponse/index.cfm



Research!America and the [American Public Health Association](#), the [Association of Schools of Public Health](#), the [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials](#), and the [National Association of County & City Health Officials](#) ask Americans to give special thanks to their state and local "public health heroes" who protect the nation's health throughout the year.

Every year, prevention and public health research save millions of lives by giving people the information they need to avoid injuries, illnesses and chronic diseases such as diabetes, arthritis and heart disease. But because prevention isn't something we can usually see, we often take it for granted. Prevention also has huge economic benefits by keeping Americans out of hospitals and on the job.

Who knows how much more could be done if prevention and public health research received more than one cent of every health dollar? Even so, agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that lead the prevention effort must continue to protect the health of our nation. As Thanksgiving approaches, join us in thanking your state and local public health professionals for protecting what's important to you. Now more than ever America's commitment to protecting our nation through prevention is essential.

For more information about your public health heroes and for ways to say thank you, visit www.researchamerica.org.

Your Student Representatives on the DHP Student Affairs Committee

*Do you have an idea for a DHP event?
Suggestions you would like to offer the
DHP to improve your experience as a
student in the Department?*

Please contact the following individuals who serve on the DHP Student Affairs Committee:

MPH: Arista Salimi
asalimi@gwu.edu

DrPH: Saqi Maleque
saqi@gwu.edu

PhD: Emily Jones
emilybjones@gmail.com

DHP Professor Melissa Goldstein Selected as 2007 Delegate to the British American Project

Melissa Goldstein, JD, associate research professor, Health Policy, has been named a 2007 Delegate to the British American Project. The Project was created to perpetuate the close relationship between the U.S. and the U.K. established by an earlier generation during the Second World War.

The Project meets annually for a four-day conference on a topic of current concern to both countries: ideas and experiences are exchanged, and friendships cemented. Each year, 24 new participants are selected from either side of the Atlantic, on the basis of service to their communities and professional achievement, and sponsored to attend the conference as Delegates. At the end of each confer-

ence, Delegates are elected Fellows of the Project. Fellows from past years attend the annual conferences at their own expense, many returning year after year. Delegates come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and include rising stars from the world of business, government, the voluntary and non-profit sector, medicine, the media, and the armed forces.

Delegates are funded in their first year to ensure the broadest possible cross-section of talent. In subsequent years, Fellows meet their own conference costs, often supported by their company. Since its first conference in 1985, BAP has built an influential Fellowship of more than 1000 members.

Visit www.baponline.org for more info.

STOP Obesity Alliance Releases New Report

Re-Visioning Success:

How Stigma, Perceptions of Treatment, and Definitions of Success Impact Obesity and Weight Management in America

On Nov. 2, the Strategies to Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance released a research report prepared by Anjali Jain, MD, Christine Ferguson, JD, D. Richard Mauery, MS, MPH, Fouad Pervez, MPH, and Mark Gooding, BA of the Department of Health Policy. The research examines the disconnect between the mounting scientific data demonstrating the negative health and economic results of overweight and obesity, and insufficient public and private sector efforts to combat those results.

According to the authors, "The gap between society's ability and success in responding to obesity and obesity's known serious economic and health consequences is wide. Whether rooted in the belief that overweight and obesity is a matter of personal responsibility or that treatments are ineffective, this paper looks at factors contributing to the disconnect and proposes possibilities for bridging it as a way of improving health and productivity in America."

A copy of the report can be found at:

<http://www.stopobesityalliance.org/research.htm>

The Alliance is also pleased to announce that Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS, will serve as Health and Wellness Chairperson of the Alliance. Dr. Carmona was the 17th U.S. Surgeon General (2002-2006), and is vice chairman of Canyon Ranch, president of the non-profit Canyon Ranch Institute, and distinguished professor at the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health at the University of Arizona.



Richard Carmona, MD

Dr. Carmona addressed the GW community on Nov. 2 at the Jack Morton Auditorium. Calling obesity "the terror within," Carmona said, "Prevention is still a radical concept to most Americans." "But as a nation, we must join together and move from being a treatment-oriented society to being a prevention-oriented society." Health literacy — understanding of what foods are healthy and unhealthy — a more active lifestyle and living by the motto do "everything in moderation" are the best ways to prevent childhood and adult obesity, Carmona said. He also noted that the poor need better access to nutritious foods and fitness facilities.

The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy

is a special initiative of The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. This program was established in 2004 to honor Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, pioneers in community health practice and tireless advocates for civil and human rights.

<http://www.gwumc.edu/spbhs/healthpolicy/ggprogram/>

Online Jobs Lists

GW and the SPHHS maintain online job lists as a way to connect students with job opportunities throughout the world of Health Policy (and elsewhere). You may search by key words and view the jobs by job category, as well as all at once:

- Full-Time jobs
- Part-Time jobs
- Internships
- Fellowships

For more information, visit:

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/career/>

and

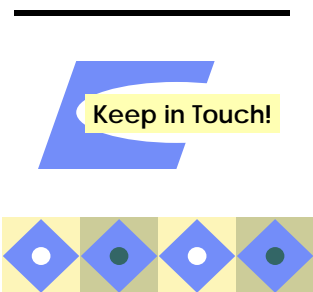
<http://www.gwumc.edu/spbhs/studentres/careers/jobs/>

**GW SPHHS
Department of Health
Policy**

2021 K Street NW
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20006

Phone: 202-296-6922
Fax: 202-296-0025

www.gwhealthpolicy.org



*We're in touch, so
you be in touch!*

Please keep the
DHP informed of
your most current
contact informa-
tion.

If your mailing ad-
dress, telephone,
or e-mail address
changes, please
send an e-mail to:

Professor
Taylor Burke
taylorb@gwu.edu

The **Department of Health Policy** is the home for health policy studies and research at The George Washington University and its School of Public Health and Health Services. The Department focuses on virtually all phases of U.S. health policy -- both public health and health services -- and emphasizes preparing students to understand and analyze health policy matters in a broad, cross-cutting, and real-world context. Among Schools of Public Health, the SPHHS Department of Health Policy is unique; it has been created to take maximum advantage of our location in Washington D.C., the nation's health policy-making epicenter. The Department offers lectures and symposia on emerging issues in health policy throughout the academic year for students, graduates, and DC's health policy community. The Department's courses are taught by both core faculty, as well as faculty drawn from Washington D.C.'s health policy leadership. The curriculum is structured to train students in the methods and tools of health policy analysis, including qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques, legal analysis, economic analysis, and the preparation and presentation of research results and policy options to health policy makers.

Suggestions?
*Do you have a suggestion for a DHP activity
or for newsletter content?*
We'd love to hear from you!
*Please send an e-mail to Rick Mauery
rmauery@gwu.edu.*

Valuable Calendar Resources for Health Policy Events

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation's **Kaisernetwork.org** provides a searchable list of events in health policy, HIV/AIDS, women's health policy, global health and health disparities. It also offers complete listings for HealthCasts -- live and archived online video coverage of key meetings, conferences and other health policy events in Washington, D.C. and across the globe. Users can choose to view all events or select from various topics such as:

- HIV/AIDS
- Women's Health Policy
- Health Policy
- HealthCast
- Global Health
- Health Disparities

Calendars can be viewed for specific days, weeks, or months.

This is a particularly rich resource for those looking for opportunities to fulfill professional enhancement requirements for a degree, or for obtaining an insider's view on a topic that you are writing about.

Visit:
<http://www.kaisernetwork.org/calendar/calendar.cfm>

Hearings on the Hill

The schedules of House and Senate hearings and committee meetings is maintained at <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/schedules.html>. Here you can view congressional floor schedules:

- House Floor This Week
- House Committee Hearing Schedule
- Senate Committee Hearing Schedule
- Senate Floor Schedule
- Senate Majority Schedule
- Senate Minority Schedule
- Days-in-Session Calendars
- Senate Executive Calendar
- Current and Previous House and Senate Calendars
- Current and Previous Senate Calendars