



Updates in Medicine Conference

September 18 & 19

Speaker Biographies

Steven Krager, MD

Board Cert: Preventative Medicine

Benton Franklin Health District

Kennewick, WA

Vaccine Update

1. Identify emerging and vaccine-preventable diseases and at-risk populations.
2. Explain how vaccination rates affect disease spread and herd immunity.
3. Discuss public health partnerships for communicable disease prevention and response.

Dr. Steven Krager serves as the Health Officer for several public health jurisdictions in Washington State, including Walla Walla, Mason, Benton-Franklin, and Cowlitz Counties. In his role he works closely with local leaders, healthcare providers, and community partners to protect and promote the health of residents across the region.

Dr. Krager is passionate about translating complex public health ideas and guidance into clear communication for partners and residents.

Using his background in medicine and epidemiology, he has helped guide local responses to public health emergencies such as wildfire smoke events, the COVID-19 pandemic, and avian influenza.

Dr. Krager earned his medical degree from Creighton University and a Master of Public Health from the University of Colorado. He is dedicated to making public health accessible, collaborative, and focused on helping every community thrive.

Outside of work, you'll find Dr. Krager exploring PNW forests with his three incredible kids or reading a work of science fiction.

Kara Ellingson, MD

Board Cert: Neurology

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

Seattle, WA

Understanding Common Headaches

1. Apply SNOOP4 framework to rule out secondary headache disorders.
2. Understand diagnostic criteria for migraine, tension-type and cluster headaches.
3. Differentiate between abortive and prophylactic migraine treatments.

Kara Ellingson, MD, is a board-certified general neurologist. Dr. Ellingson takes a gentle, open and compassionate approach to the care for brain and spinal conditions. She takes the time to allow patients to be heard and explains diagnoses and treatment options in a way that is easily understood. She does not shy away from difficult topics, which she handles compassionately, and allows her personality and sense of humor to shine through.

Dr. Ellingson was most recently an Army neurologist for eight years. Having grown up in Gig Harbor, she has a strong connection to the area and its residents. She sees her position as one of strong support for the work that referring physicians do, and prides herself on providing open, communicative and collaborative care.

Julie Tan, DO

Board Cert: Obesity Medicine

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

Seattle, WA

Early Identification Strategies for Metabolic Syndrome

1. Understand diagnosing and staging of obesity
2. Understand obesity stage-based interventions and behaviors to chronic disease management
3. Navigate insurance with GLP1 (Update Medicare Flex Program) based on identification strategies

Julie Tan, DO, is a family medicine physician with special medical interest in adolescent health and lifestyle management support for the control of chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol. She also enjoys women's health.

Dr. Tan strives to provide a friendly and comfortable medical home for her patients. She treats her patients with care and respect, with a focus on caring for the whole person and shared decision-making. She enjoys staying abreast of the latest medical advances and integrating what she learns into her practice.

Dr. Tan is a member of the American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Medicine and Washington Academy of Family Medicine.

Away from work, Dr. Tan enjoys baking and cooking, traveling, reading, and playing piano. She is also a West Highland White Terrier enthusiast and owner.

Christopher Baliga, MD

Board Cert: Infectious Disease

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

Seattle, WA

Tale of Two Outbreaks: Hantavirus and Ebola

1. Understand the epidemiology, clinical features, lab findings, diagnosis, and treatment of Hantavirus and Ebola
2. Recommended screening and PPE for Ebola

Christopher Baliga, MD, is an infectious disease specialist with medical interests HIV/AIDS, travel and tropical medicine, bone/joint and artificial joint infections, serious blood stream infections, infections in immunocompromised patients, heart infections and multi-drug resistant bacterial infections.

Dr. Baliga likes hiking, kayaking, traveling the world, and spending time with family.

Jason Choi, MD

Neurosurgery

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

Seattle, WA

Management of Carotid Stenosis

1. Evaluate literature to compare efficacy of optimal medical & surgical management of carotid stenosis
2. Analyze patient-specific anatomical, physiological, and demographic risk factors to formulate personalized revascularization strategies

Jason Lee Choi, MD, is neurosurgeon who specializes in cerebrovascular and endovascular neurosurgery. His dual fellowship training allows him to treat the most complex of vascular lesions affecting the head, neck or spine with open microsurgery or endovascular techniques. He also has particular expertise in cerebral bypasses and has trained under the world's experts in the treatment and management of Moyamoya disease, cavernous malformations and arteriovenous malformations. Dr. Choi has authored numerous publications on a variety of neurosurgical pathologies and continues to be passionate about teaching.

Dr. Choi takes a comprehensive, evidence-based and multidisciplinary approach to the treatment of brain and spine disorders. He offers precision, compassion and a relentless dedication to his patients' well-being.

Dr. Choi is a member of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, Congress of Neurological Surgeons and Joint Cerebrovascular Section.

Allison Bauer, MD

Board Cert: Infectious Disease

Blue Mountain Heart to Heart

Walla Walla, WA

What's New in STI's: A Provider Toolkit

1. Review current STI screening recommendations and treatment regimens for common
2. STIs Discuss biomedical prevention strategies for STIs
3. Identify emerging & re-emerging STI's in Washington State

Dr. Allison Bauer is an internist in Walla Walla, Washington and is affiliated with Providence St. Mary Medical Center. She received her medical degree from Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and has been in practice between 6-10 years. She has expertise in treating diabetes, heart failure, hypertension & high blood pressure.

Jonathan Dameworth, MD

Board Cert: Colon & Rectal Surgery

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

Seattle, WA

Colorectal Cancer Screening and Surveillance

1. Describe the trends in colorectal cancer diagnoses across different populations.
2. Discuss the best screening options for your patients
3. Characterize the challenges in colorectal cancer surveillance and survivorship

Jonathan Dameworth, MD, is a board-certified, fellowship-trained colorectal surgeon specializing in minimally invasive robotic and laparoscopic surgery. He is committed to providing compassionate, patient-centered care. Dr. Dameworth approaches every patient with respect, kindness and understanding, recognizing that each individual brings unique experiences and concerns to their care. He takes time to clearly explain diagnoses, treatment options and expectations so patients feel informed, supported and actively involved in decisions about their health.

Dr. Dameworth is a member of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons and the American College of Surgeons. He values collaborating closely with patients, their families and other providers to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Foster Chen, MD

Board Cert: Orthopaedic Surgery

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

Seattle, WA

Evaluation of the Adult and Geriatric Hip

1. Differentiate common causes of hip pain
2. Formulate an initial management plan for common hip pathologies
3. Possible treatments and modern hip replacement

Foster Chen, MD, is a board-certified orthopedic surgeon specializing in hip and knee arthritis, including surgical and nonsurgical care, and routine, complex and revision joint replacement. Dr. Chen partners with his patients to help them make informed, strategic decisions about their care. He applies his knowledge from current and well-performed research to his selection of procedures, implants and treatment philosophies that offer enhanced recovery and longevity. In particular, he is an advocate for personalized, “kinematic” hip and knee replacement, a surgical philosophy that aims to replace arthritic joints with their pre-arthritic or natural positions and contours. Advanced imaging, specialized instruments, robotics and technology all play a big part in this process, which ties in well with Dr. Chen’s college training as an engineer and his familiarity with 3D modeling, design and printing platforms.

Dr. Chen is a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (FAAOS), American Orthopaedic Association Emerging Leaders Program, American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons, and Personalized Arthroplasty Society.

Away from work, Dr. Chen enjoys a variety of activities with his two kids, including skiing, traveling, 3D gaming, the Star Wars and Marvel Cinematic Universes, and practicing Kung Fu and Chinese Lion Dance.

Salaam Sallaam, MD

Board Cert: Pediatric Cardiology

Seattle Children's Hospital

Kennewick, WA

Pediatric Sudden Cardiac Death

1. Review the epidemiology
2. Sports preparticipation evaluation
3. Cardiac disorders predisposing to pediatric sudden cardiac arrest

Dr. Salaam Sallaam is a pediatric cardiologist in Kennewick, Washington and is affiliated with Seattle Children's Hospital. He received his medical degree from Damascus University Faculty of Medicine and has been in practice between 11-20 years.

Charlotte Lewis, MD

Board Cert: Pediatrics

Seattle Children's Hospital

Seattle, WA

Fluoride: Moving Past the Myths

1. History and early research on its effectiveness
2. Understand common concerns around fluoride
3. Evidence-based approach to counter misinformation

Charlotte W. Lewis, MD, MPH, is attending physician at Seattle Children's Hospital and associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Washington School of Medicine. Her primary research interest is disparities in health and health-care access, with a specific focus on oral health and access to dental care.

Her research has involved documenting disparities in access to oral health services for low-income and special needs children as well as developing and evaluating strategies to improve pediatric oral health through expanded pediatrician and family physician involvement in these areas.

Alicia Henriquez, MD

Board Cert: Neurology w/ Special Qualifications in Child Neurology

Seattle Children's Hospital

Seattle, WA

Not Just Clumsy: Neurologic Disorders in Children with Motor Challenges

1. Recognize when a child who is "clumsy" may have an underlying neurologic disorder.
2. Identify red flags in the history/physical examination that prompt further evaluation
3. Differentiate common causes of falls, gait abnormalities, and exercise intolerance in children.

I am board-certified pediatric neurologist with a clinical focus on neuromuscular disorders. At Seattle Children's Hospital, I serve as a clinician in the Neuromuscular Program and as an investigator in industry-sponsored clinical trials for children with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and Spinal Muscular Atrophy.

I immigrated from South America as a teenager and have witnessed firsthand the challenges immigrant families face in healthcare, from language barriers to difficulties navigating complex medical systems. To address these disparities, I founded the Spanish Language Neurology Clinic at Seattle Children's Hospital, a program focused on improving patient access and experience. I am also working on a project to enhance patient portal use among Spanish-speaking caregivers, and I am collaborating on research validating a survey that assesses their healthcare experiences.

My goal is to develop sustainable strategies that improve culturally and linguistically inclusive care while addressing the social determinants of health that impact patient outcomes among the Spanish-speaking population.

Ena Nielsen, MD

Orthopedics

Seattle Children's Hospital

Seattle, WA

Evaluating the Pediatric Hip

1. Know how to do a hip exam for infants, children, and adolescents and identify red flags
2. When and what type of imaging to order
3. Improve comfort with pediatric hip disorders

Francesca Vega

External Affairs and Community Relations

Seattle Children's Hospital

Seattle, WA

Pediatric Healthcare Advocacy in a Dynamic Political Environment

1. Current federal and Washington State legislative challenges affecting pediatric healthcare
2. Identify effective advocacy strategies that healthcare professionals and stakeholders can use
3. Apply practical approaches to empower patient families in the legislative process

Francesca Vega joined Seattle Children's as its new vice president of External Affairs in February of 2023, since then leading the organization's community and government relations work. She brings extensive expertise in advocacy, building coalitions, and strengthening relationships with governments and community groups.

She started her career working in public policy in the California state legislature, and most recently led the University of California San Francisco's (UCSF) community and government relations and advocacy strategies.