

BRIGHAM HEALTH



BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S
Mary Horrigan Connors Center
for Women's Health and Gender Biology



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL



igniting change IN THE HEALTH OF WOMEN



Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's
Health and Gender Biology | 2020 Annual Report

Mission and Vision



Jack and Eileen Connors

The mission of the Connors Center is to ignite change in the health of women by catalyzing research, bolstering knowledge, and transforming training for the next generation of leaders in medicine. Although significant progress has been made in the past decade in women's health research, the extent to

which disease, drugs, devices, and therapeutic innovations may impact women and men differently is still unknown for the vast majority of medical conditions. Research at the Connors Center strives to change this paradigm by expanding sex-specific and sex-differentiating knowledge about novel interventions, conducting systems-based investigations, and establishing interdisciplinary collaborations for disease-based research in conditions that are exclusive, predominate, or differential in women.

To carry out this mission, we train new leaders in women's health through research fellowships and provide critical seed funding to early-career investigators. Our faculty are also advancing sex- and gender-informed curricula and other educational resources for physicians and scientists-in-training and continuing to be leading advocates for policy changes that will improve healthcare for women in Boston and around the world.

Connors Center Members

Currently, more than 70 people across multiple departments, divisions, and institutions are members of the Connors Center. These members build community with other researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital and affiliated institutions through the Center's events, research initiatives, and other activities.

GREETING FROM CONNORS CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HADINE JOFFE, MD, MSC



I am delighted to share the 2020 annual report on the activities and accomplishments of the Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology at Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH). Through the generous support of Jack and Eileen Connors, the Women's Health Advisory Board and other generous donors, we have continued the critical work of translating novel and existing scientific findings related to sex and gender into new treatments, policy changes, and clinical innovations with the goal to improve the health of women.

During the past year, the Center's major accomplishments include:

- recruiting a Scientific Director for our First.in.Women Precision Medicine Platform
- establishing the Brigham/Harvard Center for Reproductive Outcomes of Stress and Aging (ROSA Center) with funding from the NIH to investigate how stress affects women's physical and cognitive well-being after menopause
- providing critical funding and support for ten early career investigators to conduct pilot research projects
- releasing two podcasts discussing sex and gender research, and
- hosting a variety of virtual events that assembled experts from across the globe to discuss COVID-19, telemedicine, and implications on the health of women.

As we go forward into 2021, the Center will continue working to improve the health of women at the forefront of research.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Joffe'.

Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc

Executive Director

The Mary Horrigan Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology



WITH GRATITUDE TO OUR WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

We are grateful for the advocacy and generosity from the Women's Health Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is integral to the success of **the annual Women's Health Luncheon**, which provides critical philanthropic resources to our Center so that we can pursue cutting-edge science that will improve the health of women. In addition, advisory board members have helped establish and build key programs in women's health including: **The Mary Ann Tynan Fellowship in Women's Health** supporting physicians and scientists driven to improve the health of women; **the Gretchen S. Fish Fund for Women's Health Interdisciplinary Stress Program of Research (WHISPR)** advancing our understanding of how physiologic and psychological stress affect women's health and

disease; **the Beth Martignetti Award in Women's Health** providing distinguished scientists time and resources to pursue new avenues of research; and **the Casey Toolin McAuliffe Memorial IGNITE Awards** granting junior investigators with resources to explore key questions in women's health. We are also pleased to announce the **Scott Schoen and Nancy Adams Research Fund in Women's Vascular Disease** which will support women's cardiovascular disease initiatives through **IGNITE Awards** and a **First.In.Women Fellowship** that will develop the next generation of transformative researchers focused on therapeutic innovation for women with cardiovascular disease.



COVID-19 and Sex and Gender Research

2020 was a difficult year for all of us with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are extremely grateful for the perseverance, strength, courage, and support of all essential workers. We also recognize the hardships of the community, and our hearts are with those who have lost friends and family.

As a result, the Center launched new educational initiatives and reorganized its regular program of activities and events to succeed in a new, virtual space, and had to postpone some events. Though we faced many difficulties, our dedication to the mission of the Connors Center and Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) has never wavered. As such, we have continued to advocate and serve as a resource for advancing sex and gender-based research and the critical importance of conducting this research during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Center's contributions to sex and gender research on COVID-19 include our webinar, *Sex and Gender Factors in COVID-19*, which featured conversations and panels with experts from across BWH. In addition, our leadership is at the forefront of research to highlight the priority of applying a sex and gender lens to COVID-19 research. To read more about our publications, see page 12. As the pandemic continues into 2021, we will continue contributing to COVID-19 cutting edge research to ensure the representation of women in this critical work.

LEADERSHIP



Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc
Executive Director
Paula A. Johnson Professor
of Psychiatry in the Field of
Women's Health, Harvard
Medical School



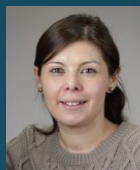
Deborah Bartz, MD, MPH
Director of Education



JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH
Scientific Advisor
Michael and Lee Bell Professor
of Women's Health, Harvard
Medical School



Lydia Pace, MD, MPH
Director of Women's Health
Policy and Advocacy
Director of the Global Women's
Health Fellowship



Primavera A Spagnolo, MD, PhD
Scientific Director of
First.in.Women Precision
Medicine Platform



Leena Mittal, MD
Director of the Women's Mental
Health Fellowship



Janet Rich-Edwards, ScD, MPH
Director of Lifecourse
Epidemiology



Alisa Goldberg, MD, MPH
Director of the Fellowship in
Complex Family Planning

STAFF



Aleta Wiley, MPH, MSc
Senior Project Manager



Mathena Abramson, BA
Research Assistant



Alexandra Sosinsky, MSc
Research Trainee



Natasha Minor, MPH
Project Manager



Athena Erickson, BA
Research Assistant



Julianna Coraccio
Senior Administrative
Assistant



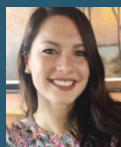
Winnie Ng, MA, MPH
Project Manager



Elkhansaa Elguenaoui, BS
Research Assistant



Anna Michelsen, BA
Project Assistant



Kathleen Moloney, MPH
Program Coordinator



Monica Bennett Fonseca, MS
Research Specialist



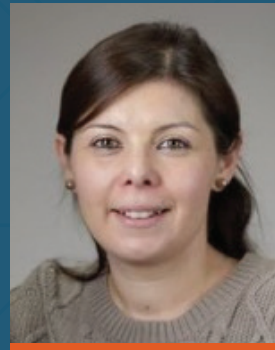
Anna Joseph
Health Communications
Intern

CATALYZING RESEARCH

The two major pillars that define the scope of research at the Connors Center fall under the **First.in.Women (FiW) Precision Medicine Platform** and **Stress and Women's Health Research**. FiW is a translational research structure that helps fund and promote research within Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) that studies treatments across all diseases that affect the health of women. Through FiW, we aim to educate, inform and engage a range of stakeholders to ensure novel therapeutics are optimally understood in both women and men. The second pillar of research focuses on different types of stress, their effects on the physical and mental health of women, and how this stress is processed by the brain.

FIRST.IN.WOMEN PRECISION MEDICINE PLATFORM (FiW)

FiW advances the inclusion of women in developing and utilizing new drugs, devices, and digital therapeutics and aims to uncover sex-differentiating knowledge about newly developed treatments in order to transform therapeutics for diseases that are exclusive, predominate or differential in women. As part of the platform, FiW conducts clinical trial research on therapeutics, consults and supplies researchers to incorporate sex-specific knowledge in study design and treatment development, hosts educational fellowship programs to promote advancement in the field, and maintains sex and gender health databases to support clinical trial investigators. In addition, a research fellowship program is currently in development.



Primavera A. Spagnolo, MD, PhD

In August 2020, the Connors Center welcomed Dr. Spagnolo as the new Scientific Director of the First.in.Women Precision Medicine Platform. Originally from Italy, Dr. Spagnolo worked for years with patients with alcohol and drug use disorders. She launched an OB/GYN service for women with addictive disorders and conducted several research projects assessing the consequences of alcohol use during pregnancy. In 2012, Dr. Spagnolo moved to the United States to complete her post-doctoral fellowship at the National Institutes of Health where she continued working for several years as a Research Fellow, then a Research Scientist. Her research mainly focused on the mechanisms underlying altered stress responsivity as an endophenotype of several stress-related disorders. Dr. Spagnolo is bringing these skills to her work as a Tynan Research Scientist at BWH and will help build a research program for the First.in.Women Precision Medicine Platform.

IGNITE Research Awards

The IGNITE Awards, a component of FiW, advance understanding of female-specific and sex-differentiated effects in novel therapeutics. IGNITE awards are one-year, \$50,000 grants to BWH investigators and are funded by gifts from the annual Women's Health Luncheon Program and by other generous donors. IGNITE investigations leverage FiW to help shape the scientific focus of the study, to utilize Connors Center and FiW resources, and to assess project goals, milestones and deliverables to ensure that the emerging clinical translation remains aligned with the FiW mission.

The Center supported four IGNITE awards during the 2019-2020 academic year, providing seed funding for proof-of-concept projects.



Our current IGNITE Scholars: **Katherine Burdick, PhD**, (*top*), *The role of neurosteroids and Inflammation in Depression and Cognition among Older Women and Men*, **Dawn DeMeo,**



MD, MPH, (*second from top*), *Network Medicine Approaches to Sex Differences in Lung Disease for the Identification of Novel Therapeutics*, **Laura Huang, PhD**,



(*third from top*), *The Impact of Language and Communication in the Engagement and Treatment of Female Patients*, and **Jessica Lipschitz, PhD**, (*bottom*), *A technological-based, biobehavioral approach to inform precision medicine for women with migraines*.



Women in Clinical Trials

Historically, women have been underrepresented in clinical trials and medical research. In 2020, Alexandra Sosinsky, MSc, Aleta Wiley, MPH, MSc, and Monica Fonseca, MS, conducted two studies assessing women's participation in clinical trials at national and local levels, using a national database of clinical trials and reports of women and men who participated in Mass General Brigham clinical studies. At the national level, an examination of over 1400 cardiovascular, cancer, and psychiatric trials revealed that 41.2% of participants were female. At the local level, over 2,000 Mass General Brigham protocols were examined, showing that the average percentage of women enrolled was 50.3%. The results of both of these studies indicate that the proportion of women participating in clinical trials is increasing; however there are still gaps between the genders, for example, trials evaluating treatments focused on heart disease, a leading killer among women, are still disproportionately conducted in men.

“We want to learn directly from women what barriers they encounter in participating in clinical trials. This first-hand information will be critical to design targeted interventions to ensure adequate participation of women in clinical trials and optimize treatment interventions.”—Dr. Spagnolo

To further understand factors influencing women's perception and participation in clinical research and in clinical trials, Dr. Spagnolo is developing a national survey, polling 1000 women between the ages of 18 and 65. The survey aims to investigate the demographic, knowledge, attitudinal, and accessibility factors influencing health behaviors, medications use and participation in clinical trials in US women.

STRESS RESEARCH

Our second research pillar is on Stress and Women's Health Research, which focuses on how stress affects the health of women, including accumulated lifetime stressors, environmental stress, and physiological stress. The recently established ROSA Center investigates neural processing of stress in postmenopausal women. Our Women's Health Interdisciplinary Stress Program of Research (WHISPR) examines the impact of stress on the health of women and has convened a community of stress investigators at Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH).



**ROSA
CENTER**
REPRODUCTIVE OUTCOMES
OF STRESS & AGING

The Brigham/Harvard Center for Reproductive Outcomes of Stress and Aging (ROSA Center)

The ROSA Center is an National Institutes of Health (NIH) funded research center that assembles a network of leading investigators across BWH and Harvard Medical School (HMS). Investigators from the Connors Center were awarded the NIH Specialized Center of Research Excellence (SCORE) U54 grant for a

five-year, multi-project investigation of neural processing of stress and adverse health outcomes in aging women.

The ROSA Center is one of eleven national SCOREs on Sex Differences research supported by the NIH. The Center is led by Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc, principal investigator, and JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH, Leadership Administrative Core Co-leader. Investigators from across BWH and HMS lead three major research projects and three cores (sleep resource, leadership, career enhancement). Project and core leaders include **Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc; JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH; Jorge Chavarro, MD, ScM, ScD; Ursula Kaiser, MD; Elizabeth Klernman, MD, PhD; Pamela Mahon, PhD; Victor Navarro, PhD; Kathryn Rexrode, MD, MPH; Janet Rich-Edwards, ScD, MPH, and Emily Oken, MD, MPH.**

Investigators will study the role of stress and its neural mechanisms in reproductive aging health outcomes that are associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease and dementia in women as they age. Research from this Center seeks to reduce adverse health consequences of reproductive aging among postmenopausal women.

The ROSA Center has funding opportunities available to amplify and expand the research focus of the Center. The ROSA Scholar program equips early-stage faculty or established investigators who wish to refocus their careers on sex-differences and women's health translational

Scientific results from the ROSA Center will contribute significantly to our understanding of women's health by elucidating the role of stress during midlife in health outcomes later on such as cardiovascular disease and dementia. The Center also catalyzes research in the fields of women's health and sex and gender differences by growing the next generation of investigators.

research with critical tools to becoming leading researchers in the field through a mentored research project with the successful Scholar going on to receive NIH K- or R-level funding. Scholars will participate in robust educational and career development programming which will enable them to develop an understanding of women's health and how to incorporate sex as a biological variable (SABV) when planning, analyzing and reporting data. Scholar programming will leverage the robust research infrastructure and expertise in women's health, sleep medicine, neuroscience, dementia and cardiometabolic disease at BWH and HMS.

The ROSA Pilot program is for early-stage investigators, such as postdoctoral students and junior faculty, who are seeking to obtain preliminary data in order to facilitate applications for future NIH K- or R-level awards.

In 2020, the ROSA Center awarded two Scholar awards and two Pilot awards to investigators carrying out this critical work.



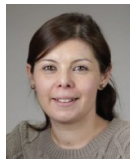
Our current ROSA Scholars are **Carrie Mahoney, PhD**, (*top*), *Orexins as mediators of the effects of low estradiol on fragmented sleep and stress responses*



and **Jennifer Stuart, ScD**, (*second from top*), *Preeclampsia, mental health conditions, and cardiovascular health across the life course*. Our Pilot awardees



are **Rajae Talbi, PhD**, (*third from top*), *Deciphering the role of Tacr3POA neurons in the regulation of hot flushes in female mice* and **Primavera A. Spagnolo, MD, PhD**, (*bottom*), *Interaction between Gonadal Steroids and the Endocannabinoid System as a Novel Mechanism Underlying Dysregulated Stress Response in Aging Women*.



WHISPR

The Women's Health Interdisciplinary Stress Program of Research (WHISPR), funded by the Gretchen S. Fish Fund for Women's Health and Stress Research, is aimed at advancing understanding of the relationship between physiologic and psychological stress and women's health and disease. WHISPR supports pilot projects, facilitates collaboration between investigators, and hosts an annual scientific symposium. Proposed research includes clinical, translational, population, and basic research studies that will investigate interactions of physiologic indicators of stress and stress exposures with women's health and disease. The program involves investigators from across BWH to develop new research and foster synergy among investigators in this interdisciplinary and cross-cutting field.



Our current WHISPR awardees are **Margo Nathan, MD**, (*top*), *Evaluating Stress Response Dysregulation as a Link Between Depression and Nonobstructive Coronary Artery Disease in Women* and **Jennifer Stuart, ScD**, (*bottom*), *Preeclampsia, mental health conditions, and cardiovascular health across the life course*.



2020 NIH Annual SCORE Meeting

Investigators from the newly formed ROSA Center joined together with investigators from the National SCORE Consortium in an engaging networking event where they presented their innovative research and promoted the exciting initiatives of the ROSA Center. Featured flash talk speakers included Dr. Joffe and Dr. Rexrode, Dr. Bertisch, Co-Investigator of the Sleep Resource Core, and Dr. Navarro, Co-Leader of the Basic Science arm of the ROSA Center.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In order to bolster knowledge in the field of women's health research, the Connors Center hosts educational events, programs and symposia that convene academics, physicians, scientists, industry and community partners to share their knowledge. We aim to transform training by integrating and applying knowledge of women's health and sex and gender-based differences to care delivery to develop a generation of women's health research trainees through fellowships and training programs.

ANNUAL RESEARCH MEETINGS

2nd Annual Research Retreat: 2019 Data Blitz, November 19, 2019

The annual Connors Center Data Blitz provides an opportunity for the Connors Center to showcase the exciting and important work being carried out to advance the health of women by the Center's leaders, fellows, and seed funding awardees. This event featured talks from 12 Connors Center leaders, fellows and awardees, and was open to the entire BWH/HMS academic community.



3rd Annual Research Retreat: 2020 Research Symposium: Stress, Sex and Gender, September 22, 2020

The Connors Center hosted the Virtual Research Symposium: Stress, Sex, and Gender featuring

distinguished keynote speaker **Kerry Ressler, MD, PhD**, Chief Scientific Officer, Chief of the Center of Excellence in Depression and Anxiety Disorders and the James and Patricia Poitras Chair in Psychiatry at McLean Hospital, and Professor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. Moderated by **JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH**, the event showcased recent achievements from each of the Center's primary research programs. Additional speakers included **Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc**, **Dawn DeMeo, MD, MPH**, **Cindy Liu, PhD**, and **Le Min, MD, PhD**.

CONNORS CENTER CONVERSATIONS: WEBINARS

Sex and Gender Factors in COVID-19

The Connors Center hosted its first webinar on June 10, 2020, focused on sex and gender factors in the context of COVID-19 research and care, featuring conversations and panels with experts from Brigham Health. With over 6,000 views on YouTube in 2020, the webinar discussed sex and gender differences, pregnancy and perinatal considerations, and translation of sex and gender research approaches with regard to COVID-19.

Telemedicine for Women: Challenges, Promises, and the Road Ahead

On November 13, 2020, the Connors Center hosted Telemedicine for Women: Challenges, Promises and the Road Ahead, a webinar that included panels of experts discussing how telemedicine has evolved since the COVID-19 pandemic and how to adequately provide quality virtual healthcare to women. The webinar discussed clinicians' perspectives on telemedicine for women, telemedicine implementation and insurance coverage, pharmaceutical companies' interest in telemedicine and how the pandemic impacted clinical trials.

Connors Center Conversations

Igniting Change
for the Health of
Women

CONNORS CENTER CONVERSATIONS: PODCASTS

The Connors Center started a podcast, Igniting Change for the Health of Women, featuring distinguished speakers who explore the

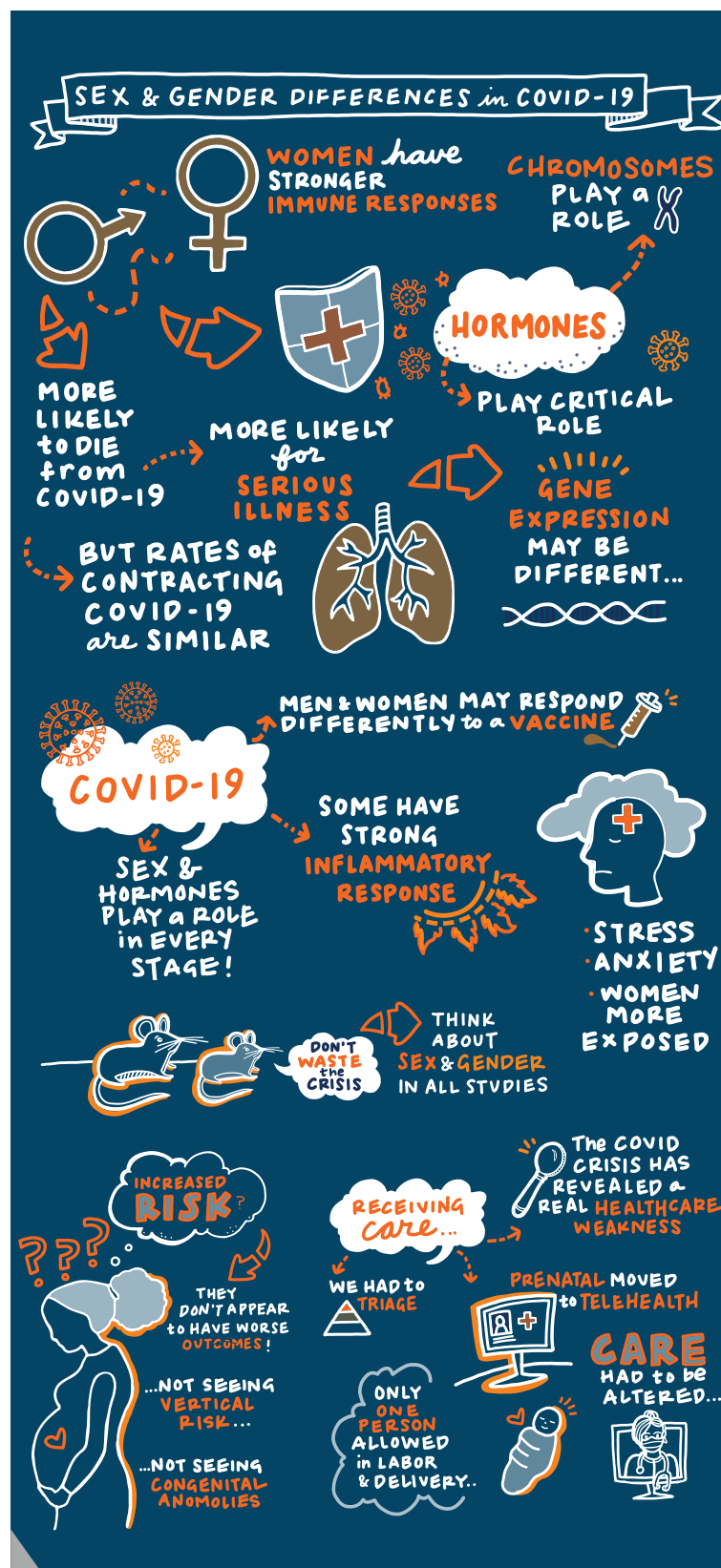
cutting edge in sex- and gender-informed research and how to translate these discoveries into better and more precise care for women.

Episode 1: The Fundamentals of Difference with Dr. Hadine Joffe

On the first episode of Connors Center Conversations, Executive Director Dr. Hadine Joffe provided an overview of the Connors Center's ongoing efforts to engage the broad academic and bioscience ecosystem to ingrain a sex- and gender lens across all medical research. Dr. Joffe described the upcoming launch of the First.In.Women Precision Medicine Platform, which will transform the development of new treatments for diseases that affect women exclusively, predominately, or differentially.

Episode 2: The Effects of Stress and Trauma Over the Lifespan with Dr. Kerry Ressler and Dr. Cindy Liu

The second episode featured conversations with Dr. Ressler and Cindy Liu, PhD, about the long-term impact of stress and trauma over a lifetime. Dr. Liu is the Director of the Developmental Risk and Cultural Resilience Laboratory at BWH, and an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at HMS. She has a joint appointment within the Departments of Pediatric Newborn Medicine and Psychiatry.



from the Connors Center Conversations Webinar: Sex and Gender Factors in COVID-19. *Collective Next* designed a series of graphic illustrations to facilitate topics covered.

FELLOWSHIPS

Through our clinical and research fellowships, we train a new generation of leaders in women's health and provide critical seed-funding for early-career investigators. Our fellowships demonstrate a commitment to the discovery, dissemination, and integration of knowledge on women's health and sex and gender-based differences and the application of this knowledge to the delivery of care.

Mary Ann Tynan Faculty Research Fellowship

The Mary Ann Tynan Faculty Research Fellowship is endowed in the name of Mary Ann Tynan, a pioneer in her field as the third woman elected partner at Wellington Management Company and an exceptional leader in her volunteer roles. It is awarded to BWH physicians and scientists who are driven to improve the health of women.



Our current Tynan awardees, **Cindy Liu, PhD, (top)** and **Primavera Spagnolo, MD, PhD, (bottom)** are working to advance the necessity for sex- and gender-specific factors to be included in biomedical research and incorporated into clinical care. Dr. Liu's research focus is on the impact of stress and mental health of women and their families and Dr. Spagnolo's research focus is on sex-differences in stress- and trauma-related disorders and on female-specific factors influencing health-related behaviors.



Global Women's Health Fellowship

The Global Women's Health Fellowship Award promotes research pertinent to the advancement of the health of women worldwide, elevates the visibility of the field of global women's health, and trains clinicians, research fellows, and early-career clinical investigators for successful careers that further the health and well-being of women globally through innovative and meaningful research. The program aims to train leaders who achieve successful careers dedicated to furthering the health and well-being of women globally, conduct clinical and field research based on robust quantitative and analytical research skills, and obtain fundamental knowledge and understanding of global health issues that uniquely affect the health of women within the context of social, cultural, and political environments. In July 2020, **Dr. Lydia Pace**, Connors Center Director of Women's Health Policy and Advocacy and former Global Women's Health Fellow, was appointed as the Director of the Global Women's Health Fellowship award program. Dr. Pace took over the position from previous Fellowship Director Hanni Stoklosa, MD, MPH. Janet Rich-Edwards, ScD, MPH, provides mentoring in research methods to Fellows in her role as Director of Lifecourse Epidemiology.



Our current Global Women's Health Fellowship awardees are **Isioma Okolo, MBChB, MRCOG, DTMH, (top)** and **Samia Osman, MD, MPP, (bottom)**.

Dr. Okolo's research focus is in clinical decision-making around mode of delivery in Uganda: understanding variation in caesarean section practices. Dr. Osman's research focus is sex and gender differences in surgical outcomes and diagnostic metrics.



Women's Mental Health Fellowship

The Women's Mental Health Fellowship in the BWH Department of Psychiatry trains expert clinicians in the psychiatric care of women and in the assessment and treatment of psychiatric symptoms linked with female reproductive cycle transitions. Fellows are mentored and trained by Fellowship Director Dr. Leena Mittal and Associate Fellowship Directors Drs. Polina Teslyar and Margo Nathan.



Our 2019-2020 Women's mental health fellowship awardee is **Priya Kumar-Kaparaboyana, MD**, with a research focus in perinatal psychiatry and mother-baby dyadic attachment, women's health policy, gender and sex disparities in healthcare, and reproductive sexual health. Our 2020-2021 awardee is **Jennifer Okwerkwu, MD, MS**. Her research focus is in perinatal psychiatry, infertility, and reproductive trauma.

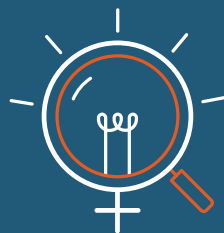


Family Planning Fellowship

The two-year Family Planning Fellowship provides obstetrician-gynecologists across the nation with the opportunity to build on their clinical skills in abortion and family planning and to develop research expertise in these areas. Fellows benefit from the training and mentoring of Fellowship Director Dr. Alisa Goldberg, Associate Fellowship Director Dr. Kari Braaten, and faculty members Drs. Deborah Bartz and Elizabeth Janiak.



Our current Family planning fellowship awardees are **Lauren Sobel, MD, MPH**, (*top*) and **Sara Neill, MD** (*bottom*).



NATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE HEALTH OF WOMEN

INNOVATING TO OPTIMIZE TREATMENTS

2021 Virtual Summit on the Health of Women Innovating to Optimize Treatments | June 16-17, 2021

The Connors Center is currently planning the 2021 Virtual Summit on the Health of Women, which will be held June 16-17, 2021. The Summit will be an interactive and educational forum and community building event to celebrate progress in women's health research, connect with the broader women's health bioscience ecosystem, engage with the sex- and gender-precision medicine community, and meet experts from relevant disciplines in women's health research.

CENTER PUBLICATIONS, HONORS, AND AWARDS

INTERNAL BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S COVERAGE

The Connors Center team was featured in the Brigham's Awards & Honors website for our SCORE grant. In addition, a Q&A with Dr. Joffe was featured in the Brigham's Clinical and Research News, in which Dr. Joffe discussed the Connors Center's mission, COVID-19 and sex differences, and the importance of studying women's health. The Center was also one of several stories shared with the clinician and researcher audience at BWH, highlighting the innovative thought leadership work happening within our team. **Deborah Bartz, MD, MPH,** and **Alisa Goldberg, MD, MPH,** were featured in Brigham Health On a Mission in a piece discussing contraception care for women with complex medical needs.

The Center thanks the input and efforts of the BWH's Office of Strategic Communications. OSC works closely with our team to share Connors Center news and updates.

NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS

Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc; JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH, and **Primavera Spagnolo, MD, PhD,** published a paper on sex and gender differences and COVID-19 in *Annals of Internal Medicine* that calls for the inclusion of sex- and gender-specific factors in COVID-19 response (PMID: 32384135).

Deborah Bartz, MD, MPH, published a paper in *New England Journal of Medicine* on the importance of abortion care delivery as an essential service (PMID: 32272002). Dr. Bartz also published two papers in *Contraception*. The first found dilation and curettage

and dilation and evacuation as reasonable methods of uterine evacuation in women with transabdominal cerclage (PMID: 31927025), and the second found that deep sedation without intubation during surgical abortion is safe for low-risk patients in a community clinic setting (PMID: 32006537).

Deborah Bartz, MD, MPH, Janet Rich-Edwards, ScD, MPH, Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc, and JoAnn Manson, MD, DrPH, published a paper in *JAMA Internal Medicine* that demonstrated the importance of considering sex and gender in the practice of precision medicine (PMID: 32040165).

JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH, published a paper in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* that found high insulin resistance identifies postmenopausal women as higher risk for cancer-specific and all-cause mortality (PMID: 31184362). Dr. Manson also published a paper in *Clinical Oncology* which showed that a low-fat dietary pattern with increased fruits, vegetables, and grains, may reduce the risk of death as a result of breast cancer in postmenopausal women (PMID: 32031879). In a paper published in *Cardiac Failure*, Dr. Manson found that postmenopausal hormone therapy did not alter risk of hospitalization for heart failure during the intervention or the years of follow-up (PMID: 31536806). Dr. Manson also published a paper in *Bone Mineral Research* which found that supplemental vitamin D3 did not benefit bone density or strength (PMID: 31923341).

Primavera A Spagnolo, MD, PhD, published a commentary in *American Journal of Psychiatry* on the challenges COVID-19 places on patients with substance use disorders (PMID: 32660296).

Cindy Liu, PhD, published a paper in *Clinical Pediatrics* that stressed for health providers to address how psychosocial stressors affect the health of children and their families during the pandemic (PMID: 32462929).

Hanni Stoklosa, MD, MPH, published a paper in *Surgery* that discussed the ethics of reallocating ventilators during the pandemic (PMID: 32616345). Dr. Stoklosa also published a paper in *Annals of Emergency Medicine*

demonstrating the need for emergency departments to be equipped for human trafficking and providing trafficked persons with adequate resources (PMID: 32362432).

Lydia Pace, MD, MPH, published a literature review in Health Affairs summarizing how the Affordable Care Act impacts women's health care, improving coverage, access, and affordability (PMID: 32119612). Dr. Pace also published a paper in JAMA Internal Medicine that found an increase in long-acting reversible contraceptives in the 30 business days following the 2016 U.S. presidential election (PMID: 30715075). Finally, Dr. Pace published a paper in Women's Health Issues that argued for affordable access to safe and effective contraception, and for the importance of individuals, rather than their employers, making personal decisions about contraception in consultation with their healthcare providers (PMID: 30630666).

PRESS COVERAGE OF CENTER

Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc, was featured in articles in the Boston Globe and Milwaukee Journal Sentinel discussing sex and gender factors related to COVID-19 deaths. Dr. Joffe was also featured in Harvard Women's Health Watch and the NPR segment Morning Edition to discuss menopause and mental health. She was also in The Science Times discussing perimenopause, featured in a piece in Healio News on how menopause impacts sleep.

Michelle O'Donoghue, MD, MPH, was featured in American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) in an article about the difference between heart disease in women and men.

Deborah Bartz, MD, MPH, was featured in a New York Times article discussing the ethics of medical students conducting pelvic exams on unconscious patients.

Primavera A Spagnolo, MD, PhD was featured in an article in Government Executive discussing the role of sex and gender factors in relation to the mental health consequences of COVID-19.

Cindy Liu, PhD, (*below*) was interviewed by CNBC on dealing with the psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on children.



AWARDS AND PROMOTIONS

JoAnn Manson, MD, MPH, DrPH, became Editor-in-Chief of Contemporary Clinical Trials, a journal devoted to the design, methods, and analysis of randomized trials. Dr. Manson was also one of Web of Science's Highly Cited Researchers of 2019.

Hadine Joffe, MD, MSc, was promoted at Harvard Medical School to the Paula A. Johnson Professor of Psychiatry in the Field of Women's Health. Dr. Joffe was recognized as a Distinguished Clinician by Brigham and Women's Hospital and was also awarded one of Boston's Top Doctors in 2020 by Boston Magazine.

Nawal Nour, MD, MPH, Connors Center Scientific Advisory Board Member, was appointed chair of OB/GYN. Dr. Nour is the first Black department chair, first chair of Sudanese descent, and third woman to assume this chair role.

Lydia Pace, MD, MPH, received the Society of General Internal Medicine's award for Excellence in Clinical Investigation.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Connors Center is devoted to continuing to advance diversity and equity. We are committed to increasing diversity at all levels, fostering a culture of respect and belonging, and recognizing and removing inequities for both staff and our patients.

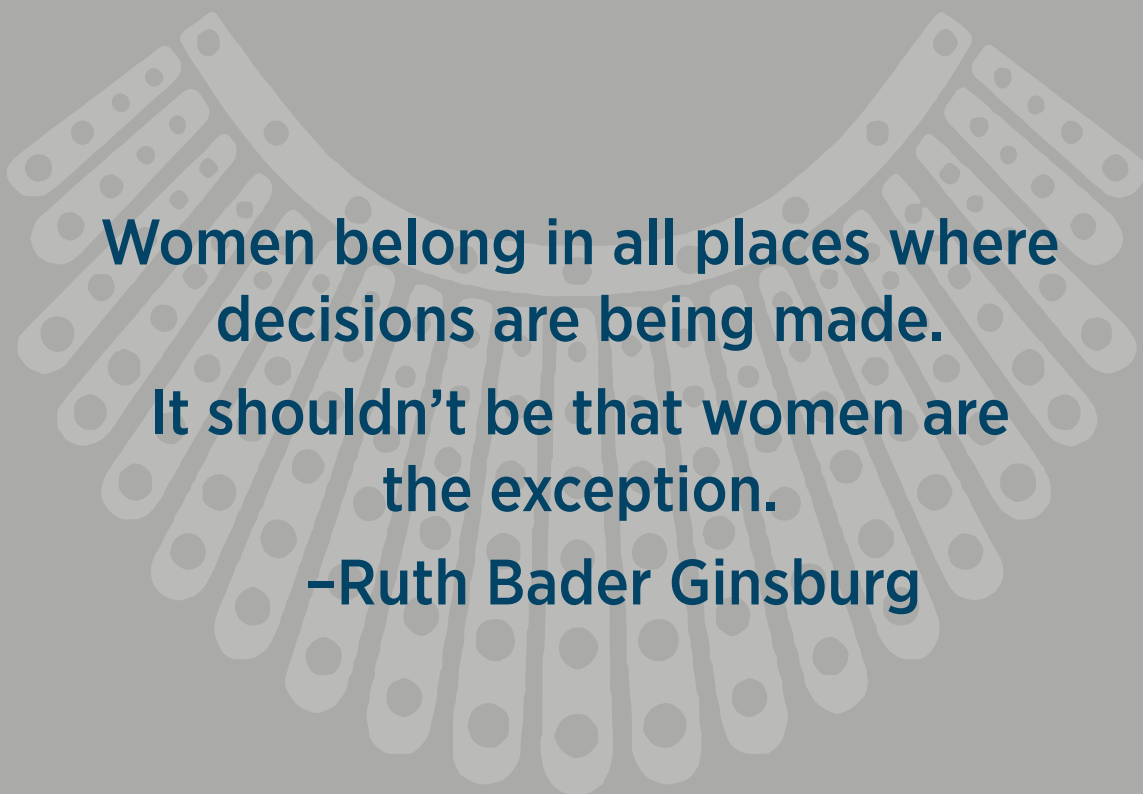
BRIGHAM HEALTH



BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S
Mary Horrigan Connors Center
for Women's Health and Gender Biology



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL



**Women belong in all places where
decisions are being made.
It shouldn't be that women are
the exception.**

–Ruth Bader Ginsburg

To learn more about how to support the Connors Center

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