Alumni Update: Dr. Kristin Ito

From earning more degrees to leading a community health center, find out what Dr. Ito has been up to since completing residency in 2004.

What are you doing now?
I work at Lincoln Community Health Center (LCHC) in Durham as the Chief of Adult Medicine. I lead LCHC’s Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) program and run the school-based health center we operate inside of Hillside High School, which allows me to see adolescents, one of my favorite patient populations. Many of you will remember rotating through LCHC during your time as a resident. LCHC is uniquely situated as the only federally qualified health center in Durham County and serves 33,000 predominantly economically disadvantaged Durham residents. More than 10% of the population of Durham walks through the doors each year providing an amazing opportunity to work to improve the health of a population burdened with significant health inequities.

How did you get to where you are now?
Like many of us, my career path did not seem to follow a straight line while I was in the process of making choices along the way but in retrospect every step was important in leading to where I am now. I came to the Duke Med-Peds program interested in adolescent and women’s health. After residency, I pursued a Masters in Public Health and focused on adolescent health research as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at UNC where I developed an interactive multimedia STI prevention program and conducted a small RCT of its effectiveness. Although fellowship prepared me for a career in research and academics, I chose to work in the community as the Medical Director of Wake Teen, a clinic providing comprehensive care to adolescents in Raleigh. I wore three hats at that time - working at Wake Teen, serving as the director of the adolescent rotation for the Duke Pediatric and Med-Peds residents, and serving as the Principal Investigator for a Duke-community partnership grant called the Adolescent Health Initiative aimed at improving adolescent health in Durham. In 2010, my career shifted as I moved to Germany with our family (three children at the time) after my husband’s company offered him the opportunity to live abroad. I left Durham without a job in Germany but soon after arriving, I called the Army...
Kristin Ito, continued

base in nearby Wiesbaden and started working as a full time family medicine clinician caring for active duty soldiers, their families and military retirees. Working in family medicine was excellent training in the spectrum of med-peds primary care and I had opportunities to learn multiple new procedures including LARC insertion and management. When we returned to Durham, I took a position at Lincoln. Lincoln at that time did not provide any LARC services which I felt was an important missing component of their primary care services. When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced grant funding for public health centers to target reductions in teen pregnancy for vulnerable populations, I reached out to a state-wide organization based in Durham, SHIFT NC (Sexual Health Initiatives for Teens), and encouraged them to apply using Durham as a base and LCHC as one of the sites for the application. This 5 year $3.5 million SHIFT NC grant has enabled LCHC to improve adolescent-friendly services and train providers in LARC procedures. Duke and multiple Durham-based youth-serving organizations also partner with SHIFT NC on this community-wide grant. We have also secured another grant in collaboration with the Health Department to provide $60,000 a year in no-cost LARC devices for uninsured patients at LCHC and now run a robust LARC program at LCHC.

How did combined med-peds training help you?
One of the benefits of med-peds training is learning flexibility and how to evaluate issues from different perspectives. You need to be flexible to follow the ways things are done on the pediatric wards one day and then be able to switch to the adult wards or various outpatient settings the next day. You need to be comfortable in different environments and with different ways of thinking. I think med-peds providers are more comfortable thinking outside of the box (perhaps because non of us wanted to be shoved into a medicine or pediatric box initially!). Being trained in med-peds has provided me with a chameleon-like ability to fit in most clinical environments. Med-peds is a great fit for adolescent medicine. When I went to work at the Army family medicine clinic after 5 years of working mostly in adolescent medicine, they assigned me all the military retirees because they were excited to have an internist available to see the geriatric patients – I don’t think they actually read my resume! But thanks to the excellent clinical training I received as a Med-peds resident at Duke, I was able to jump in right away seeing adults again. In my current position, I am able to combine my passion for adolescent, reproductive and women’s health and caring for underserved populations.

What are your other non-clinical activities and how did you get involved in these?
I am now the Board Chair for SHIFT NC, formerly the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina. SHIFT NC does amazing work preventing teen pregnancy and improving sexual health education across the state. I had the great fortune to be chosen as a Presidential Leadership Scholar in 2017. The Presidential Leadership Scholars Program is a 6-month program sponsored by the presidential libraries that teaches leadership through the lens of the presidential experiences. Like residency, one of the best parts of the program was developing a strong cohort of friends and colleagues. It was also invaluable to hear lessons learned from former administration officials and the Presidents themselves.

What had attracted you to Duke Med-Peds and/or Durham?
After growing up in the Northeast and suffering long winters in Boston, I was attracted to the great weather and more affordable living in Durham combined with the rigorous training offered by the Duke Med-Peds Program. I also loved the international health opportunities available through the program and spent three months working in Moshi, Tanzania during residency. My husband attended Duke Business School while I completed residency. After nearly 20 years living and working here, Durham is definitely home! We have four children aged 6, 9, 11 and 14 who were all born here – and have grown up in Durham except for our few winters living in Germany.

Who were your mentors throughout training?
There is no shortage of teachers and mentors at Duke. From Dr. Ralph Corey who was the Med-Peds Program Director when I came to Duke, I learned how to unwaveringly pursue rigorous diagnostic skills and evidence-based treatment and put the patient above all. From Dr. Suzanne Woods and Dr. Tom Owens who later took over as Med-Peds Directors, I learned the importance of teamwork and collaboration while providing top-notch medical care. Although not always appreciated at the time after every 3rd on-call nights in the MICU, I now appreciate Dr. Peter Kussin having us read writings by physician-poet William Carlos Williams before rounding (does he still do that?). YES!

The Duke Med-Peds Residency Fund

This fund supports our current Med-Peds residents in a variety of educational experiences, including participation in research projects, attendance at national meetings, preparation and presentation of scholarly work, global health opportunities and involvement in community outreach programs.

Your contributions helped Courtney Lamberton (MP4) to present her poster at the Med-Peds Poster session at the National AAP meeting on November 3rd! (see picture to left)

Please consider making a contribution online at SupportMedTraining.duke.edu and clicking Combined Medicine-Pediatrics Residency Program from the list, or send a check to Duke Health Development Office, Attn. Duke Med-Peds Residency Fund, 710 W. Main Street, Suite 200, Durham, NC 27701.
Graduate Updates

Kully Woodruff (2017) who works with Doctors Without Borders returned from Sudan briefly and is now working in Kibondo, Tanzania at the Nduta Camp.

Dana Clifton (2016) was selected to be the Associate Director of Pediatric Medical Student Education.

Rebecca Sadun (2014) was selected for the 2018 cohort of the Duke AHEAD 2018 Certificate in Health Professions Education and Teaching. She and Colby Feeney (2015) were both accepted into the Department of Medicine Faculty Development Academy.

Dan Ostrovsky was promoted to Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics.

Tacy Downing (2011) is now working at Children’s National Medical Center as an interventional and adult congenital cardiologist.

John Paul Shoup (2018) presented his poster at the Medicine Resident Research Grand Rounds which won Best QI Poster (See Photo!)

Tim Mercer (2015) was featured in this article about how he is improving the care of Austin’s homeless population.

Kristin Ito, continued

What do you like to do in your free time?
With four kids and a busy job, I end up not having much free time! Evenings and weekends are filled with spending time with family and lots of kids activities. Running and going to the gym help me keep my sanity. I am also a certified teen yoga instructor but do not have time to teach any classes currently.

Any words of wisdom for current trainees?
I would say that although the field of medicine seems like a well-defined path (medical school then residency, etc), chance still plays a role in where you will end up in your career. For me, that was very reassuring and allowed me to make some choices and take some chances that may have seemed perhaps a little off the path at the time. I would also say never turn down leadership opportunities. I have always learned from leadership opportunities and if they are not a good fit, you can always transition to something else. Finally, although residency is often all encompassing it is important to avoid the tyranny of the urgent and continue to pay attention to your long-term goals and ideals. If there is something you feel strongly about, make sure you nurture some kernel of that during residency to maintain your passion and inspiration. *

New Additions to the Med-Peds Family

Carolyn Avery (2013) and husband Lars had a baby boy, Toby, on November 2nd with big sister, Evie (photo above).

Doran Bostwick (2016) and her husband Adam welcomed baby girl, Frances Lyle, this past summer.
Meet the Class of 2022

Sam Dizon is from Mohegan Lake, MD and earned her undergraduate and medical degrees from the University of Maryland. She was a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha and Gold Humanism Honor Societies. While in Baltimore, she was a long-time (and long-distance running) volunteer for a non-profit organization called Back on My Feet which promoted running as a way to help community members fight homelessness and addiction. She is enjoying checking out all the restaurants in Durham and ran the Bull City Half Marathon in October.

Erin Frost grew up in Buffalo, NY. She attended Canisius College for her undergraduate studies and University of Buffalo for medical school. There she was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. She was co-president of her school’s American Medical Women’s Association and was a regular volunteer at local health clinics and programs for refugees. She is interested in advocacy work and global health. In her free time, she likes to cook (including baking from scratch), listen to live music, and cheer on the Buffalo Bills!

Grace Lee is from Potomac, MD. She attended the University of Maryland for her undergraduate degree where she dual-majored in music performance and biology. She also attended University of Maryland for medical school, where she was a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha and Gold Humanism Societies.

Pediatric Hospital Medicine Board Updates

Quick Facts

- 2 Pathways to Certification
  1. Training Pathway: Complete a 2 year Pediatric Hospital Medicine Fellowship
  2. Practice Pathway: >/= 4 years of practicing peds HM with >/= 25% direct patient care
- Exam Offered in 2019, 2021, and 2023 (must accrue practice by June 30 of year of exam). See more at https://www.abp.org/content/pediatric-hospital-medicine-certification
Grace also founded and served as president of the Korean American Medical Student Association. She served as musical director of the a cappella group through which she sang and played the flute. Grace is interested in congenital cardiology. She enjoyed the hot Durham summer by the pool (when she wasn’t in the hospital!) and is learning to play the guitar.

Kevin Prier grew up in Huntsville, TX. He attended Brigham Young University where he studied Mandarin. He went to UT Southwestern at Dallas for medical school where he was inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society. During medical school, he participated in numerous volunteer and research opportunities and was his class representative in Global Health. He enjoys playing basketball, golf and tennis and also plays the guitar and organ. He moved to Durham with his wife, Lana, and two daughters, Bella and Violet.

Zach Sutton is a North Carolina native, growing up in Pink Hill, NC. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina and medical degree from East Carolina University. Zach was a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. During medical school, he was active in community outreach through the Brody Scholars Program, and he spent a month in India where he helped organize free health care and screening for underserved populations. Zach wants to pursue a career in hospital medicine. He likes to playing golf and the guitar.

Christopher Zheng grew up in Dolyestown, PA. He completed his undergraduate studies at Cornell University and medical school at Ohio State University where he was inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha and Gold Humanism Honor Societies. In medical school he served as coordinator of the Asian Free Health Clinic and established hepatitis B risk assessment screening there. Chris is interested in a career in Hematology/Oncology, and he enjoys cooking (rumor has it that if he weren’t in medicine, he would be a chef!), working out, hiking and wine tasting in his free time.
Congratulations

Austin Wesevich and Megan Lynch were married in October!
Matt McCulloch was selected for the 2018-19 Learning Health Systems Training Program.
Katie Wood started the Medical Education Leadership Track within GME.
Sarah Cohen was awarded a travel grant through the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to attend the North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference and Pediatric Resident Roundtable in Oct 2018.
E-beth Ockerman was nominated by medical students for the Clinical Skills Foundation Professionalism Award.

Other scholarly activity:
- Sarah Cohen, Ashley Naughton, and Rebecca Ruf collaborated with former grad, Jamie Fox to present their work Close the Loop: Resident perceptions of feedback on the diagnostic process at the Duke Internal Medicine Resident Research Grand Rounds (Poster Session) in Durham, NC on May 18, 2018 and present 2 posters: Emergency Medicine Physicians Use an Electronic Tool to Solicit Diagnostic Feedback More than Inpatient Pediatricians and Close the Loop! Emergency Medicine Physicians Long for Feedback on Their Diagnostic Accuracy at the Diagnostic Error in Medicine 11th Annual International Conference in New Orleans, LA in November, 2018.
- Wesevich A, Jeffe DB, Andriole DA. Do Medical Students’ Procedural Skills Experiences Predict Their Specialty Plans? Learn Serve Lead 2018: The AAMC Annual Meeting; 2018 Nov 2-6; Austin, TX.

NC Pediatrics Society Annual Meeting Accepted Posters
- Bonello K, Wood K. Bordley C. WHEN BRONCHITIS BECOMES PLASTIC. *TOP 10 POSTER*
- Greene E, Cohen S, Bensimhon A, and Parente V. SWADDLING THE DIAGNOSIS: A RARE CAUSE OF EXCESSIVE WEIGHT LOSS IN NEWBORNS.
- Doshi RS, Feeney CD, Jooste KR. A CASE OF CLINDAMYCIN ASSOCIATED DRUG ERUPTION.
- Wood K, Trinh J. SYPHILIS: THE GREAT PRETENDER THAT IS TILL AMONG US.
- Ruf R, Cohen S, Naughton A, and Fox J. CLOSE THE LOOP: EMERGENCY MEDICINE AND PEDIATRIC PHYSICIAN PERCEPTIONS OF FEEDBACK ON THE DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS.
- Doshi RS, Shoup JP, Izatt S. A CASE OF NEONATAL GLUTARIC ACIDURIA TYPE II.
- Cohen S, Foote H, Das S. HOSPITALIZATION FOR ELEVATED LEAD LEVEL – BUT IS IT TRULY ELEVATED?.
- Ruf R, Sexton S, Avery C, Trinh J. “WHO IS THIS PATIENT’S PCP?” – A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE THE ACCURACY OF THE EMR PCP FIELD.

2018 END OF YEAR AWARDS

Best SAR Talk Award (Pediatrics)
John Paul Shoup

Department of Pediatrics Medical Student Appleseed Teaching Award
Haley Hostetler

James A. Stockman Award (Pediatrics)
John Paul Shoup