

“As I look back over my time at Mount Sinai, I am pleased to note that we were able to realize some superb research and patient care initiatives in the Division,” says Florette and Ernst Rosenfeld and Joseph Solomon Professor of Medicine Michael Iannuzzi, MD, who was appointed Division Chief in 2003 and has recently been recruited as Chairman of Medicine at SUNY-Upstate Medical University College of Medicine in Syracuse.

THE CATHERINE & HENRY J. GAISMAN

Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care & Sleep Medicine

PERCHANCE TO DREAM Center for Sleep Medicine Awarded “Gold Standard” Certification

Chronic sleep problems are not simply a nuisance—they can lead to serious illness including respiratory disorders and heart disease. Therefore, it is critical when patients seek help for sleep-related symptoms like sleep apnea or narcolepsy that diagnosis and treatment be quick, accurate, and effective.

At the Mount Sinai Center for Sleep Medicine, patients are known to get the very best care that the science of sleep medicine has to offer. This was verified when the Center received full accreditation from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM), the only national accrediting body for centers and laboratories treating sleep-related breathing disorders.

Because of its rigorous standards, AASM accreditation is considered the gold standard by which the medical community and the public can evaluate the quality of sleep medicine services.

According to Dr. Aurora, Director of the Center for Sleep Medicine, “AASM accreditation begins with a voluntary application process followed by scrupulous, multiple on-site evaluations by AASM staff. We felt that our sleep services are excellent and sought outside clinical confirmation from a top authority.”

The results of the AASM audit—an unconditional “A” report card—indicate that the Mount Sinai Center for Sleep Medicine meets all proficiency requirements for sleep-related testing, patient safety and treatment, as well as physician and staff training.

“At the same time, the entire Department of Medicine also experienced exceptional growth in research, clinical practice, and education. Overall, this created a very stimulating environment. Looking forward, I hope I can engender the same level of intellectual and clinical vitality in my new position as I have enjoyed at Mount Sinai.”

Under Dr. Iannuzzi’s leadership, the Division has grown in both clinical practice and research. Patient volume, for example, has increased by more than 40 percent, while grant support has nearly tripled.

In addition, the Pulmonary Function Testing Laboratory, Advanced Lung Disease Program, and Asthma Program have all experienced significant growth over the past year, while average patient length of stay has decreased considerably. Meanwhile, the Division’s Center for Sleep Medicine received “gold standard” accreditation, even as the program continues to expand in terms of patient volume and services offered. (See “Perchance to Dream”)

As a researcher, Dr. Iannuzzi has made significant research contributions to understanding sarcoidosis, an immune system disorder, including discovery of genes linked to the disease. Thanks in part to his work, Mount Sinai is one of only 10 Centers of Excellence for sarcoidosis research, and the largest program of its kind in the world.

Dr. Iannuzzi’s other research interests—including interstitial lung diseases and minority health issues—are well represented by thriving programs within the Division, including the Division’s comprehensive Asthma Program, which is part of the nationwide Asthma Clinical Research Center, a national network of 19 centers committed to asthma research.



The following events and achievements highlight the great vitality and clinical and research excellence exhibited by the Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine during the past year.

- Dr. Iannuzzi’s work on sarcoidosis and his membership in the Sarcoidosis Genetic Analysis (SAGA) consortium led to publication of results mapping specific genes responsible for disease development in African Americans. The study was published in *Genes and Immunity*.
- E. Neil Schachter, MD, Maurice Hexter Professor of Pulmonary and Community Medicine, is leading a study of air pollution and its effects on childhood asthma and cardiovascular health sponsored by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). The study seeks to determine the impact of air pollution on human health, particularly by determining which components of air pollution are most closely associated with negative health impacts.
- Michelle Gong, MD, Assistant Professor, has received a grant from the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute to examine Institutional Review Board practices for determining surrogate consent for research in incapacitated adults involved in critical care research. In addition, a study led by Dr. Gong on early versus late intravenous administration of insulin in critically ill patients was published in *Intensive Care Medicine*.
- Judith E. Nelson, MD, JD, Professor, an expert in end-of-life issues, received a grant from the NIH to examine how the quality of palliative care is evaluated in the ICU setting. Dr. Nelson also published an article titled, “Communication about Chronic Critical Illness,” in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.
- Timothy Harkin, MD, Associate Professor, is leading a clinical trial of a specialized lung valve for severe emphysema, wherein the valve is placed nonsurgically with a bronchoscope to reduce lung volume and improve patient comfort.
- R. Nisha Aurora, MD, Assistant Professor, is collaborating with researchers from Johns Hopkins University on a new study involving members of the Mount Sinai Traumatic Brain Injury Support Group. The researchers aim to understand the role of sleep in community-dwelling individuals with chronic fatigue and a history of traumatic brain injury.
- Adam Morgenthau, MD, Instructor, was recruited to the Division following completion of the fellowship program in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center. He is co-director of the Sarcoidosis Clinic and responsible for the educational and quality components of the clinic.
- Sakshi Dua, MD, Instructor, joined the division this year as Associate Medical Program Director for Lung Transplantation. She is responsible for coordinating clinical and educational components of the program.