

HPM HIGHLIGHTS

HPM IN ACTION

- ❖ Benjamin Sommers and Arnold Epstein published a Perspective article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Feb 7, [U.S. Governors and the Medicaid Expansion — No Quick Resolution in Sight](#).
- ❖ Bob Blendon, John Benson, and Mandy Brule, in collaboration with the Kaiser Family Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, released findings on January 24, 2013, from the survey [The Public's Health Care Agenda for the 113th Congress](#), revealing that “a majority of Americans put the creation of state-based health insurance exchanges at the top of the priority list for health policy in their state this year.”
- ❖ Academy Health awarded its [Health Services Research \(HSR\) Impact Award](#) to work that used for the first time a randomized, controlled study design to answer questions about how access to public insurance affects health, health care use, and other outcomes. HPM's Kate Baicker is a co-principal investigator of the study.
- ❖ Ashish Jha and Karen Joynt co-authored a [research letter](#) in the January 23-30 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, further supporting their earlier concerns that a federal policy that penalizes hospitals where patients are more often rehospitalized within 30 days of being discharged, unfairly targets hospitals that care for the greatest numbers of poor patients.
- ❖ Michelle Mello co-authored an article sharing study findings that indicate the public is supportive of government action toward changing lifestyle choices that can lead to obesity, diabetes, and other noncommunicable diseases. Read more details [here](#).

HPM Bake Off

HPM held its annual bake-off on **Thursday, February 7, 2013**. Congratulations to the following winners.

Best in Show First Place – Nancy Turnbull with an almond cake with almond cream and raspberry mascarpone frosting

Best in Show Runner-Up – Cristin Martineau with a red wine cake

Royal Baby First Place – Maura Fulton and Richard Kwong with an outrageously shaped cake to match the theme

Royal Baby Runner-Up – Katie Jahreis with crown royal cupcakes with crown royal cream cheese.



HPM Comings and Goings

Welcome new HPM team members

- ❖ Jennifer Nadelson, Deputy Director for Internal Operations, Kristina Vitek, Executive Assistant, and Steven Ringer, BetterBirth Project, Ariadne Labs (Center for Health System Innovation), Atul Gawande's Team
- ❖ John Quelch, Professor (Secondary) from the Harvard Business School

Student Spotlight – Winter Session

Winter Session, by Claire Perkins, SM2 2014

A unique aspect of attending HSPH is that the students, both graduate and undergraduate, participate in “WinterSession”. This time, often referred to as J-Term (for January term), consists of an approximately one-month period between the official holiday vacation time and the start of spring classes. WinterSession provides an opportunity for students to break out of their normal routine of required coursework and engage in some activity they might not have time for during the regular semester. Whether for-credit or not, students must participate in WinterSession in some fashion. HPM students do a wide variety of WinterSession activities, from traveling abroad on Global Health Program trips to Chile, Geneva, Cyprus, and beyond, to taking classes at other Universities and in other HSPH Departments. Many second-year and MPH students choose to work on their practicum requirement, while others create independent study projects or do skill-building workshops. Many of them also chose to spend the last week of their break in a highly popular and intensive four-day public health leadership course. No matter what the activity, most students felt exhilarated by the chance to focus their energy for a short time on something intellectually stimulating that at another point might be too time consuming, experimental, or simply outside the scope of their official degree program. In general J-Term is just another innovative way the University promotes creativity and fosters academic exploration for its students.

Faculty Spotlight – Ashish Jha, Professor of Health Policy and Management

Congratulations to Ashish Jha who was promoted to Professor of Health Policy and Management on February 1, 2013! As we all know, this is a major accomplishment representing years of dedication and outstanding contributions to the field of health policy. Recently, we sat down with Ashish to learn more about him, his work and his vision for the future.

Ashish received his MD from Harvard Medical School in 1997. While there, he realized “how bad we were at delivering high quality care.” He realized that this was not about the doctors and nurses, who generally worked very hard and were very dedicated. That realization motivated him to want to find a way improve care. To him, what seemed to be missing was good data on how to make the health care system work better. But, he also recognized that having good data wasn’t enough. “We need to engage with the people who use the data – policy leaders, clinical leaders, and hear their concerns. This helps me figure out what kind of research will be most relevant.” Being a practicing physician, while pursuing his academic research, keeps Ashish grounded in the concerns of clinicians and patients. His commitment to doing research that makes a difference has shaped his vision for the future, motivating him to think creatively and globally about the challenges that exist in health care systems, both in the U.S. and in other countries.

Ashish is currently building a research team to launch a new initiative, the Program on Global Health Quality, which is committed to discovering and translating knowledge on how best to improve the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of health care systems around the globe. The program will focus on identifying, and synthesizing evidence from major international and domestic health care quality initiatives to better understand what works, what doesn’t, and how to improve the quality of healthcare that is delivered. A major focus of the Program will be on educating clinicians, organizational leaders, health ministers and other key policymakers on what initiatives work to improve quality, and the contextual factors necessary to optimize the chances for success.

While his work certainly keeps him busy, Ashish also knows how to play hard. He and his wife Deb have a blast with their three beautiful children, ages 7, 6 and 1. Ashish finds time to also coach kindergarten soccer, and he and his family are enjoying learning to ski. Learn more and follow Ashish’s blog: [An Ounce of Evidence | Health Policy](#).