

Chair's Chatter

Friday, October 29, 2021

In a little noticed, but important action [yesterday](#), the CDC announced that the blood lead reference value for children has been lowered from 5 µg/dL to 3.5 µg/dL. The BLRV is intended to identify children with higher levels of lead in their blood compared to most children, based on the 97.5th percentile of the blood lead level (BLL) distribution in U.S. children ages 1–5 years. This change reflects the substantial improvements in reducing lead exposures, but also highlights the continuing risk from any lead exposure. We are proud of the role our community has had in identifying and reducing this hazard.

Many from our EH community had fun at our hybrid trivia event on Wednesday evening. Congratulations to first place Team Sublime (Francine Laden, Sheila Tripathy, and Melissa Curran), second place Team Superb (Maitreyi Mazumdar, Shuxin Dong, and Nancy Long Sieber), and third place Team Wonderful (Frank Speizer, Kyle Colonna, and Kaitlin Breen). Winners will get department swag and, more importantly, bragging rights. It was a delightful way to spend some time and have fun with colleagues!

Don't forget the 24th annual John B. Little symposium this afternoon, Friday, October 29 from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET. This year's theme is *COVID-19: Transformative Discoveries and Emerging Research Frontiers*. You can find more information and still register [here](#).

We are looking forward to the Planetary Health Colloquium next Wednesday, November 3, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm ET. Professor Caroline Buckee will discuss the *Drivers of Malaria in Guyana: The Impact of Gold Mining*, with commentary by Dr. Sanna Sokolow. Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/95261001534>

Please join me in congratulating Lilah Rinsky Halivni, who received the 3rd place Early Career prize at the EPICOH 2021. Her presentation was entitled: *The complex association of perceived workplace safety, work environment, and national factors with the mental health of aging workers in Europe during the COVID-19 pandemic*.

In more good news, Gary Adamkiewicz received a new grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to better understand how sensors and educational models can be used to promote individual actions to address indoor environmental hazards in a randomized control trial in Dorchester. The study will use a combination of real-time in-home monitors and exposure assessment methods to estimate indoor exposures to multiple chemical contaminants.

In addition, Adam Haber received the Dean's Fund for Scientific Advancement: Acceleration Award. The project, entitled *Single-cell analysis of the role of nasal tuft cells in allergic asthma*, will examine the role of rare epithelial subtypes in immune function in mouse airways. This will help us understand the mechanism of existing biologic therapies such as leukotriene modifiers or the recently developed TSLP inhibitor Tezepelumab, which are increasingly important treatments for asthma.

This year's Harvard Chan NIEHS Retreat will be held virtually on Wednesday, November 10, 2021. This year's retreat will discuss the direction of the Center in our competing renewal. Issues such as climate change, planetary health, environmental justice, diversity, equity, and belonging will be considered. NIEHS Director Rick Woychik will be this year's featured speaker. For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

As world leaders gather starting on Sunday for the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, I would invite them to read the *Climate Optimist* newsletter put out by our Center for Climate Health and Global Environment (C-CHANGE). The newsletter is a monthly dose of good news about climate change, delivering positive tips and ways to help us stay focused on our shared mission to tackle climate change. You can see the current version and sign up to subscribe [here](#).



Last week we welcomed Sally Bedugnis back as the EH Research Operations Manager. I was delighted to see Marshall Katler visiting this week to help Sally get oriented.

We were happy to hear that Faulkner Francois in our finance team and his wife Nathanaelle welcomed their second baby, Faudnancia Francois, this week. Please join me in congratulating their family!

Witch-ing everyone in the department a spook-tacular Halloween!

Upcoming Events:

Friday, October 29 (1:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET) JBL Research Symposium XXIV
More information: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/jbl-center/jbl-symposium/>

CANCELED: Friday, October 29 (1:10 pm-1:50 pm ET) Harvard Chan Education and Research Center Grand Rounds

Optimize Recovery: Focus on Function, Minimize Work Disability!

J. David Sterns, MD, MPH

Jennifer Christian, MD, MPH, FACOEM

Register: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTr1y0pZfyMQZfw

Monday, November 01 (1:10-1:50 pm ET) ERC Seminar Series

Global Occupational Disease, Climate, Pandemics and Planetary Health – Universal Occupational Health Coverage, A Roadmap

Thomas Gassert, MD

Register: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_863BUThp8TByNa6

Tuesday, November 02 (9:30am- 10:30 am) MIPS Works-in-Progress Seminar
Targeting DNA Repair to Improve Treatment Response to Glioblastoma

Dan Lavery, PhD

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/99893080868?pwd=L0M2ZHYvU2t3aFE4YWl2YnRsbHlwdz09>

Tuesday, November 02 (1:00-2:00 pm ET) Lee Kum Sheung Center for Health and Happiness
Positive Health Interest Group Series: Green Spaces and Health

Peter James, ScD

Kresge 202A

Wednesday, November 03 (1:00- 2:00 pm ET) The Planetary Health Colloquium

Drivers of Malaria in Guyana: The Impact of Gold Mining

Caroline Buckee, PhD

Sanna Sokolow, DVM, PhD

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/95261001534>

Thursday, November 04 (1-2:30 pm ET) Biostats Seminar

Tools and Methods for Understanding Human Behavior and Interactions

Jukka Pekka Onnela, PhD

Register: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/biostatistics/seminars-events/>

Friday, November 05 (1:10-1:50 pm ET) Harvard Chan Education and Research Center Grand Rounds

The multi-level complexity associated with the mental health of aging workers in Europe during the COVID-19 pandemic

Lilah Rinsky, MD, PhD, MOccH

Register: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0MJdBgZfaWFsUMC

Chair's Chatter

Friday, October 22, 2021

We are delighted to welcome back to our department Sally Bedugnis as our new Research Operations Manager. Sally replaces Nicole Patterson, and will serve as a resource to all EH lab groups. Sally may be familiar to many of you, as she was in our department from 2007 through 2020, mostly as a lab manager in Les Kobzik's lab. She has most recently been working in Michael Mina's lab in Epi. Sally starts with us on Monday, October 25. Her office will be in Building 1, room G3; feel free to stop by and say hello to her!

The 24th Annual John B. Little Symposium will be held next Friday, October 29th. The Symposium is sponsored by the John B. Little (JBL) Center for Radiation Sciences and Environmental Health. Both the Symposium and the Center are named for the late John B. Little, who was the James Steven Simmons Professor of Radiobiology Emeritus, one of the first scholars to characterize problems in public health as interactions between environmental stressors and humans' response to those stressors. This year's theme is *COVID-19: Transformative Discoveries and Emerging Research Frontiers*. The Symposium will feature talks by leading investigators whose research is focused on the biology, virology, and public health science of SARS-CoV-2. You can find more information and register here: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/jbl-center/jbl-symposium/>

Remember to RSVP to join us at the Department's Halloween-inspired games/puzzles and trivia hybrid/virtual event on Wednesday, October 27th from 5:30 pm – 7:30pm. Go to https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efgDf5AcsTkLTCu to RSVP today.

We have created a new mailbox for submissions to the weekly Chair's Chatter. Please send your news to eh-chat@hsph.harvard.edu by 5:00 pm on Wednesdays. We will try to include as many items as possible.

Upcoming Events

Friday, October 22 (1:10-1:50 pm ET) Occupational and Environmental Health Research
Parental Preconception and Maternal Prenatal Environmental Exposures and Child Behavioral Outcomes

Jordana Leader, PhD Candidate

Register: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eFAuM5MRzFcr08u

Monday, October 25 (3:00– 4:00 pm ET) MEMCARE-SRC Speaker Series
The Role of Genes and Environmental Toxicants in Parkinson's Disease: from Pathogenesis to Therapeutic Development

Kim Tieu, PhD

Professor and Chair, Department of Environmental Health Sciences

Robert Stempel College of Public Health & Social Work, Florida International University

More information: <https://memcare.sph.harvard.edu/event/memcare-src-speaker-series-2>

Tuesday, October 26 (9:30 am – 10:30 am ET) MIPS Works-in-Progress Seminar

Regulation of Airway Smooth Muscle Contractility by Micro RNA's

Bo Lan, PhD

<https://harvard.zoom.us/j/99893080868?pwd=L0M2ZHYvU2t3aFE4YWI2YnRsbHlwdz09>

Wednesday, October 27 (1:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET) Harvard Chan NIEHS Chalk Talk
Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Novel Approaches to Understanding How Exposure to Nature Influences Human Health

Peter James, PhD

<https://harvard.zoom.us/j/93854403999?pwd=L3NvbmI2bnQyT3ZObi9BQmxGN3VZZz09>

Wednesday, October 27 (5:30 pm – 7:30 pm ET) Department of Environmental Health Game Night

RSVP: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_efgDf5AcsTkLTCu

Friday, October 29 (1:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET) JBL Research Symposium XXIV

More information: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/jbl-center/jbl-symposium/>

Friday, October 29 (1:10 pm-1:50 pm ET) Harvard Chan Education and Research Center Grand Rounds

Optimize Recovery: Focus on Function, Minimize Work Disability!

J. David Sterns, MD, MPH

Jennifer Christian, MD, MPH, FACOEM

Register: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cTr1y0pZfyMQZfw

Chair's Chatter

Friday, October 15, 2021

We were sad to hear of the passing of Eileen Storey. An MPH alumna of the department, Eileen was a dedicated physician and public health advocate; she devoted her career to improving health and safety in the workplace. She was an adjunct EH faculty member, co-teaching our course on the “Epidemiologic Basis of Occupational and Environmental Health Regulations,” and a mentor to our occupational health medicine residents. She came to us after a long and distinguished career at NIOSH, where she was the Chief of the Surveillance Branch, Respiratory Health Division, and at the University of Connecticut Health Center, where she was Professor of Medicine. Dr. Storey was the 2017 recipient of the Harriet Hardy Award from the New England College of Occupational Medicine. You can read her obituary [here](#).

Francine Laden and I recently were named Inaugural Fellows by the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE). As Inaugural Fellows, we were interviewed and shared our passion for environmental health and our career paths over these past years. You can view these interviews on the ISEE website [here](#).

Since going remote over 18 months ago, one challenge that the department has faced is continuing to build and strengthen our EH community connectedness. This past Tuesday, the department hosted a virtual ice breaker for 30+ students, postdoctoral fellows, principal research scientists, and faculty to get to know one another in a more informal, small group gathering. Our thanks to everyone who participated and to Kaitlin Breen, Shaun Heller, Francine Laden, and Barbara Zuckerman for organizing and facilitating this event.

Please mark your calendar for the next department event – a Halloween-inspired puzzles, games, and hybrid trivia gathering on October 27th (5:30 pm – 7:30 pm ET). Check your email for additional details coming soon.

Upcoming Events

Friday, October 15 (1:10 pm – 1:50 pm ET) Occupational and Environmental Medicine Grand Rounds

Healthcare Worker Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Considerations in a Pediatric Patient Population

James Medeiros, DO, MPH

Deborah N. Barbeau, MD, PhD, MSPH

Register: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7WWzBnoC0FBF610

Tuesday, October 19 (9:30 am – 10:30 am ET): MIPS Works-In-Progress Seminar

Apoptotic Regulation of COVID 19

Zintis Inde, PhD, Research Fellow

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/99893080868?pwd=L0M2ZHYvU2t3aFE4YWl2YnRsbHlwdz09>

Wednesday, October 20 (2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET): Harvard Chan-NIEHS Colloquium Series
Introducing Planetary Health with Some Case Studies of Research in the Field

Sam Myers, PhD

More details: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/niehs/event/hsph-niehs-colloquium-series-sam-myers/>

Zoom: hsph.me/colloquium2021

Wednesday, October 20 (3:00 pm – 5:00 pm ET): Harvard Chan-NIEHS SPARC
Social Media for Environmental Scientists

Emily Copeland, Science Communication Network

More details: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/niehs/event/sparc-session/>

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/91296681878?pwd=Y1hsbDV0RmczSEY2Z2pISTNCaXprQT09>

Chair's Chatter
Friday, October 8, 2021

We are now in our most glorious season here in New England. The weather turns crisp and clear. The leaves are starting to turn to their brilliant fall colors. The fish have been fattening up all summer, and are feeding heavier in preparation for winter locally or their migration south. It is by far my favorite time of year. It is such a treat to have a holiday on Monday, and the forecast of great weather, to give us a chance to enjoy this special time.

Monday is doubly special, in that we will also have the 125th running of the Boston Marathon. This annual event is normally held in mid-April. It was run virtually in 2020 and postponed this spring. Thousands of racers, runners, walkers, and wheel-chair competitors, will start in Hopkinton and race 26.2 miles to Boston. The course, lined by hundreds of thousands of cheering spectators, runs down Beacon Street just a block from our Landmark (401 Park) offices. This is a unique Boston experience, and I suggest you head to the course and cheer on the racers. Please let me know if you are racing, so we can celebrate with you.

As we take a break on Monday, we should also reflect on our mission in public health. Since 2018, in response to calls from the Harvard Chan School Native American Student Organization, the School has designated this holiday as *Indigenous Peoples Day*. As Dean Williams wrote in announcing that change, we should use this “occasion to raise awareness of historical and continuing injustices faced by indigenous peoples and seek opportunities to partner with these resilient communities in their efforts to improve the health of their populations.”

We were happy to see the announcement of Tamarra James-Todd's promotion to Mark and Catherine Winkler Associate Professor of Environmental Reproductive Epidemiology. Tamarra's research centers on the impact of environmental chemicals and metals on maternal cardiometabolic health during pregnancy, the postpartum period, and in the decades following the perinatal period. You can learn more about her work [here](#). Her promotion is a well-deserved acknowledgment of her scientific contributions and her importance to our department and school. Join me in congratulating her!

Congratulations also to Anny Maza who was promoted to Grants and Contracts Manager. Anny has been an integral part of our finance team for seven years. Anny wears many hats and is always willing and able to help when needed. In her new role, she will provide post-award support to the JBL Center Investigators. Thanks for all you do Anny!

In other news, this past week our department welcomed Professor Howard Frumkin as the first speaker of the Planetary Health Colloquium Series. Professor Alan Brandt from the History of Science Department at Harvard University was the meeting discussant. Dr. Frumkin's talk, *Planetary Health: Environmental Health 4.0?*, introduced economics and sustainability and their relationships with Planetary Health. A recording of this event can be found [here](#).

Enjoy this long weekend and come back refreshed.

Upcoming Events

Friday, October 08, 1:10 pm – 1:50 pm ET

EOME Grand Rounds

Marissa Hauptman, MD, MPH, Associate Director, Pediatric Environmental Health Center

Environmental Justice: Addressing Lead Exposure in Times of Crisis

Registration is required to join by ZOOM. Pre-register with link below

https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cO6BlMJgPEeFRoq

Tuesday, October 12th, 9:20 am – 10:30 am ET

MIPS Work-in-Progress

Adam Haber, PhD. *Tuft Cell Derived Cysteinyl Leukotrienes Mediate Regeneration of Olfactory Neuroepithelia After Allergic Inflammation*

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/99893080868?pwd=L0M2ZHYvU2t3aFE4YWI2YnRsbHlwdz09>

Wednesday, October 13th, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm ET

Clearing the Air: Why Now Is the Time to Tackle Global Air Pollution

[Read More](#)

Thursday, October 14th, 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm ET

Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center, Specific Aims Session

The Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center offers to review your *Specific Aims* for upcoming grant submissions. For more information please email niehsctr@hsph.harvard.edu

Chair's Chatter
Friday, October 1, 2021

Earlier this week, we caught up with EH alumni from across the globe during the Harvard Chan Alumni Week. Over 40 alumni attended from as far away as Taiwan, Australia, and Singapore, and from classes over each of the past five decades. I was particularly thrilled to see some of my classmates from the mid-1970s. Three of our faculty members Gary Adamkiewicz, Joe Allen, and Carmen Messerlian, gave wonderful overviews of their work. One of the benefits to this Zoom age is that alumni are welcome to participate in our seminars either in real-time or by viewing recorded versions. We also noted that we had added an Alumni News section to our quarterly *Environmental Health Newsletter*, and many attendees have provided updates on their latest accomplishments. Thank you to all who planned or attended this gathering; we look forward to continued connections with our alumni!

This is the final reminder to submit your own updates for our upcoming *Environmental Health Newsletter*. To submit your items, please complete the Qualtrics survey [here](#) by Monday, October 4th.

While some community members are returning to campus, many are choosing to continue to work from home. Mail is piling up in our mailboxes, and some of it is important. To help ease the burden of sorting mail and dealing with clogged mailboxes, we ask that people who are not regularly on-site suspend the delivery of journals to the School. Instead, please have them mailed directly to your home or cancel your subscriptions. Also, please have your personal mail sent to your home, not to the School. Thank you!

This week, Dr. Giang T. Nguyen, the Executive Director of Harvard University Health Services (HUHS), sent a reminder on ways we can *Keep Harvard Healthy*. We would like to reiterate that our behaviors matter in protecting ourselves and others. While we can't yet assume life as usual, with each person's efforts, we can inch closer to normal. With that in mind, please find tips from HUHS below. And, as always, please continue to check the EH website, [COVID Updates: Your Health, Our Tips](#), for departmental updates.

Much of our work focuses appropriately on the local, personal, cellular, or even molecular scale. Two upcoming events will invite us to view environmental health more broadly. On Wednesday, we will have the first of our *Planetary Health Colloquium*. Next Wednesday, the Harvard Chan Forum on *When Public Health Means Business* will have a panel on *Clearing the Air: Why Now Is the Time to Tackle Global Air Pollution*. See details of these two events below.

Upcoming Events

Friday October 1

1:10 – 1:50 pm

Seminar in Occupational and Environmental Health Research

Joseph G. Allen, MPH, DSc, CIH

Associate Professor of Exposure Assessment Science; Director, Harvard Health Buildings Program; Deputy Director, Harvard Chan Education and Research Center for Occupational Safety and Health.

Buildings that Make Us Sick, Or Keep Us Well: A Paradigm Shift to Combat Indoor Respiratory Infection

Zoom registration: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b16fsPsrDezCTYO

Room Kresge 502

Monday October 4

12:00 pm

The Mahalingaiah Lab

Lynae Brayboy, PhD

Adjunct Professor Alpert Medical School.

Dysfunctional MDR-1 Disrupts Mitochondrial Homeostasis in the Oocyte-A Model for

Diminished Ovarian Cancer

Zoom

registration: https://harvard.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYufu6hqj8sH9OMmLTt4sWp74J_5RrKNP4J

Tuesday, October 5

09:30 – 10:30 am

MIPS Work-in-Progress Seminars

Scott T. Weiss PhD Department of Environmental Health

Vitamin D, Chromosome 17q and the origins of Asthma

<https://harvard.zoom.us/j/99893080868?pwd=L0M2ZHYvU2t3aFE4YWl2YnRsbHlwdz09>

Wednesday, October 6

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Planetary Health Colloquium

Planetary Health: Environmental Health 4.0

Presenter: Howard Frumkin MD, DrPH, Professor Emeritus, University of Washington School of Public Health, Senior Vice President, Trust for Public Land

Discussant: Allan Brandt, PhD, Amalie Moses Kass Professor of the History of Medicine.

Professor of the History of Science, Department of the History of Science, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/94929936993>

Wednesday, October 13th

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Clearing the Air: Why Now Is the Time to Tackle Global Air Pollution [Read More](#)