

Ask the Trustees

Why is Donaghue involved with the Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative? What does that have to do with the Donaghue's mission of funding medical research?

Good question — and we've been asked this before. For those who aren't aware of the newly formed Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative, it was formed in late 2013 to promote widespread adoption in Connecticut of *Choosing Wisely*[®], an initiative of the ABIM Foundation working in partnership with Consumer Reports.

CCWC is a diverse, multi-stakeholder group whose member organizations have a shared interest in seeing the goal of *Choosing Wisely*[®] — improved patient and practitioner communication, increased consumer engagement, and reduced harm and waste — are maximized in Connecticut. In addition to Donaghue, the founding members of the group's Leadership Council include Access Health CT, Connecticut Business Group on Health, Connecticut Center for Primary Care, Connecticut Health Foundation, Office of the Healthcare Advocate, Qualidigm, and the Universal Health Care Foundation.

Donaghue's Nancy Yedlin has been leading the development of CCWC, and Donaghue, as well as each founding member, has contributed \$5,000 or in-kind services to CCWC. These contributions were raised to support "start up" programmatic expenses. The Connecticut Center for Primary Care acts as fiscal administrator for the group.



An initiative of the ABIM Foundation

Even if the dollar investment is small, Donaghue is investing the time of a senior staff member to this initiative because we believe that working on *Choosing Wisely*[®] is one — though certainly not the only — way for Donaghue to learn about the realities of promoting evidence into practice while contributing to an effort to improve health. In fact, the initiative fits squarely within three of Donaghue's six goals:

- Promote knowledge uptake of health research into the realms of health care delivery, practice, and policy
- Advance the Foundation's mission by collaborating with people and organizations that have the opportunity and responsibility to improve health
- Build networks and collaborations to test innovative ideas related to grantmaking and health research

With Donaghue's mission of funding medical research that will be of practical benefit, understanding this critical step to get to benefit will make us a better funder.

In 2015, CCWC plans to take on a number of projects and will continue to work on its future organizational structure. "The amount of time that I spend on CCWC is approximately what I spent on developing and directing the eight *Beyond Eureka!* conferences that Donaghue sponsored" said Yedlin. "I see my role in getting the CCWC off the ground as that of a midwife — I'm not going to be the pediatrician! I'm confident that, given the high level of commitment by the Leadership Council members, we'll evolve the infrastructure of the CCWC over the next year so that my time commitment will be reduced and someone else will be able to take on the day-to-day role of leading the collaborative."

Focus on Antibiotic Use in Primary Care

This summer, Donaghue and other Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative members sponsored an Urban Service Track summer internship on antibiotic use in primary care settings. The Urban Health Scholars team from University of Connecticut's Pharmacy, Medical and Dental Schools and Quinnipiac's Physician Assistant program conducted background research on antibiotic use in primary care settings, including community health centers, community-based primary care settings, and dental offices. The Connecticut Center for Primary Care, one of the CCWC members and sponsor of Urban Service Track Health Scholar projects in prior years, provided day-to-day supervision of the interns along with their faculty mentors.

To get needed background for their project, the UST interns, their faculty advisers, and CCWC representatives kicked off their project by spending a day at Consumers Union in Yonkers, NY, home of Consumer Reports. ABIM Foundation, creator of the *Choosing Wisely*[®], has been working with Consumer Reports to create all the materials for the *Choosing Wisely*[®] campaign.

The interns led focus groups and interviewed providers to learn their views on antibiotic prescribing patterns in general and in their own practice settings. They also solicited feedback

on the educational materials developed to support the *Choosing Wisely*[®] antibiotic use campaign. The students documented the feedback and developed a set of suggestions.

From their work, the students learned that most providers believed overuse of antibiotics was a problem, though they believed that providers often respond to patients' expectation

that antibiotics will be prescribed. The students reported that providers liked many aspects of the *Choosing Wisely*[®] materials, including the overall messaging about available treatment options other than antibiotics. However, providers believed the language needed to be simplified and the length of the pieces shortened. — continued on page 6



The Urban Service Track students and faculty visited Consumers Union before they started their research internship.

Advisers' Transitions



Donaghue wishes the best of luck to **Lisa Davis, RN, BSN, MBA**, two-term Policy Advisory Committee member who recently accepted the position of deputy

commissioner at the South Carolina Department of Public Health. With her new responsibilities, Lisa decided to step down from her current term.



Also, many thanks to **Dennis May, MPH**, whose second term with Donaghue as Policy Adviser will end in 2014. Dennis has been an adviser since 2006 and has often

given helpful counsel to trustees and staff over the years.



Mary Jane Koren, MD, MPH, chair of Donaghue's *Another Look* review committee, has recently been honored for her "outstanding contributions to

improving care in nursing homes and other settings at The Commonwealth Fund, The Fan Fox & Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, The NY State Department of Health and in her research and other work" by the Long Term Care Community Care Coalition.



Snack Packages for our Reviewers

Our science reviewers work hard for Donaghue, and we really appreciate their participation in our grant programs. When the review meeting is held at our office, we provide plentiful snacks or a meal, depending on what time of day the meeting is held. For our most recent review meeting, which was held by conference call, we mailed each reviewer their own snack pack to enjoy during the call. Please mute while crunching!

2014 Another Look Awardees — continued from page 1

nursing home residents to attempt to answer this question. The main outcome will be injuries documented by validated emergency room or hospitalization ICD-9 codes. Using Medicare Part D data, we will create a cumulative central nervous system medication dosage measure for antidepressants, antipsychotics, benzodiazepine receptor agonists, anticonvulsants, opioids and skeletal muscle relaxants by dividing the total daily dose for each agent by the minimum effective geriatric daily dose and aggregating these standardized doses across medications. The effect of potential demographic and health status confounders will be controlled via propensity score matching.

The results of this study will provide health professionals with a more useful and practical way to assess central nervous system medication risk and to reduce injuries in nursing home residents. Working with their stakeholders, the investigators will deliver an educational outreach program to six local nursing homes to improve prescribing of central nervous system medication. These same educational materials will also be made available nationally for use by other nursing homes.

Yue Li, PhD

University of Rochester Medical Center

Stakeholder organization: Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency

Emergency room visits and hospitalizations of nursing home residents are common, and at least 40% of them are for conditions that could have been prevented or safely managed in nursing homes. Recently, New York State proposed a Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment plan to reduce avoidable hospital use. The plan identified "Long Term Care Transformation" as one targeted area to achieve this goal. In response, the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency established a Healthy Seniors and Long Term Care Work Group to promote region-wide collaborations and system transformations to reduce avoidable hospital transfers originating from long term care settings.

The overall goal of this study is to inform these efforts by developing and disseminating evidence-based performance measures regarding

nursing home-to-hospital transfers for all Finger Lakes nursing homes. Existing nursing home and hospital data will be analyzed to develop nursing home-level structural and care-process measures that may impact hospital transfers, and risk-adjusted outcome measures of overall and potentially-avoidable hospital utilization for all nursing homes in the region. The investigators will also perform in-depth analyses to identify specific areas of nursing home care that contribute to hospital transfers, and identify the subset of nursing homes with particularly problematic transition patterns in order to inform actionable priorities and targeted interventions. Performance data for all Finger Lakes nursing homes and research findings will be disseminated through the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency. Other stakeholder input on dissemination will also be sought. Results from this project can be extended to other regions in New York or the U.S.

Kimberly Van Haitsma, PhD

The Pennsylvania State University

Stakeholder organization: The Pennsylvania Culture Change Coalition

The goal of this study is to use data from a National Institutes of Nursing Research-funded study of assessing preferences for everyday living in a nursing home to advance understanding of how to deliver person-centered care. Specifically, four key questions will be answered with this data:

- What types of people are most likely to report consistently on their preferences over time and what types of preferences tend to remain stable?
- How accurate are family members and friends in reporting the preferences of another person living in a nursing home?
- How are resident choice, preference importance ratings and preference satisfaction related?
- How can staff perceptions of residents' preferences be used to advance the delivery of care based on those preferences?

The project will collaborate with the Pennsylvania Culture Change Coalition, a longstanding statewide stakeholder partnership, to interpret empirical results and develop practice-based recommendations for long-term care providers.

Antibiotic Use in Primary Care — continued from page 3

One observation the students made was that all professionals needed to work together to provide a consistent, coordinated message about appropriate antibiotic use to address this multifaceted issue.

Reports from the scholars' work were shared with their faculty mentors and UST program directors, CCWC members, and interviewees and focus group participants at a presentation in August and with the National *Choosing Wisely*® Consumer Reports team in September. This fall, the student team is working on finalizing

an executive summary of the project and a formal report for the UST program. Future UST projects with a *Choosing Wisely*® focus are being considered for next summer.

This internship provided a valuable opportunity for students to get a hands-on experience working as an inter-professional collaborative team. For Donaghue it's also been another hands-on experience in what it takes to link evidence, which is the basis of the *Choosing Wisely*® recommendations, and practice.