



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

GLOBAL HEALTH



# 2021 Year in Review

*Driven by the belief that everyone,  
everywhere has a right to good health*

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# WELCOME

Dear friends and colleagues of the MGH Center for Global Health,

As I write this in early 2022, we still face a high level of pandemic uncertainty, marked by the identification of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in late November, and rising cases across the United States and the globe. Despite this, we saw glimmers of hope in 2021 as massive public health campaigns delivered effective vaccines at unprecedented scale. However, since those vaccination campaigns began, the rollout of vaccines has persisted with deep inequity.

Throughout 2021, we have continued to raise our voices and join with others to call attention to vaccine inequity and its impact locally and globally. In January, we held an online seminar titled “COVID-19 Vaccine & Global Health Equity: From Action to Impact,” that featured a keynote address by Dr. John Nkengasong, the director of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and speakers from Mass General Brigham and Seed Global Health. Our continuing COVID-19 equity efforts include working with our partners in Mbarara, Uganda to elevate and amplify advocacy activities of community-based organizations in the region.

In 2021, we successfully advanced our strategic goals by growing programs in the MGH Center for Global Health that progress our mission. From the creation of new initiatives in specialty areas, to introducing new funding opportunities for Mass General staff and our international partners, we have continued to take steps in line with our belief that everyone, everywhere has a right to good health despite the challenging times.

This report offers a glimpse into the work we are engaged in at the MGH Center for Global Health. In creating this report, I have been reminded of the countless members of our global health community that make it all possible. To the physicians, research staff, administrative staff, nurses, pharmacists, community health workers, and so many others in Boston, Uganda, Haiti, Bangladesh, and in many other places we have the pleasure of partnering with, thank you. To our supporters both inside and outside Mass General: thank you for your support and dedication—it’s essential to our success.

Best wishes,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louise Ivers".

Louise Ivers, MD, MPH  
Executive Director  
Center for Global Health



# WHO WE ARE

*The MGH Center for Global Health is a central hub of expertise and support for global health initiatives across the MGH ecosystem. We increase the efficiency and effectiveness of MGH's global health engagements by securing sustainable, equitable partnership infrastructures; educating, training, and organizing global health resources; facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration; and accelerating impactful research and innovation.*

**At the Center for Global Health, we are proud to support:**

**50** Global Nursing Fellows working to provide bi-directional nursing education and advance nursing leadership.

**250** trained disaster response roster members, ready to deploy alongside our partners on the ground when disaster strikes.

**40** global educators working to mentor and exchange clinical knowledge in topics such as palliative care, oncology, nursing, and many others.

**33** faculty researchers working together to advance science in lower-middle-income countries through \$62 million in research grants.

Global partnerships in **44** countries in the areas of clinical education, research and innovation, nursing, and through our disaster response and humanitarian initiatives.

**120** faculty, nurses, trainees, and other providers actively advancing global health equity across 14 MGH departments.



# NURSING



**IN 2021**, the MGH Center for Global Health nursing program promoted the advancement of nurses globally through established specialized training programs and responding to the needs of our partners to increase clinical capacity.

The Master of Science in Nursing program, established in 2014 with the Mbarara University of Science and Technology, prepares nurses with the clinical and leadership skills necessary to succeed. Today, 17 graduates have been employed by the Ministry of Health in various health facilities across the country. In 2021, the university graduated eight students, with five additional students expected to graduate this coming year. In response to this program's success, the Uganda Ministry of Health has taken our lead and is now providing the university with 25 scholarships for local bachelor prepared nurses to obtain their Masters of Critical Care Nursing. Additionally, Mbarara University of Science and Technology nursing faculty trained 400

Photo: MGH nurses conduct COVID-19 educational session in Mbarara, Uganda, June 2021

additional nurses in critical care to better equip them with the skills necessary to meet clinical demands in communities impacted by COVID-19.

Mass General nurses also participated in disaster response work several times throughout the year, providing staffing support and clinical training to local health care teams while on medical deployments to two Native American reservations, the U.S.-Mexico border, and Mbarara, Uganda. One frequent member of the team, Catherine “Skeeter” Welder, a nurse from the MGH Medical Intensive Care Unit, received a 2021 MGH Center for Global Health Service Award in recognition of her efforts. This award is offered annually to Mass General faculty and staff who inspire, advance and improve the clinical care and capacity for underserved populations while emphasizing the importance and benefits of global collaboration in health care. We are thankful for nurses like Skeeter who step up to deliver professional care to those in need.

*With Nursing as a core strategic area, the MGH Center for Global Health answers our partners’ call for advanced nursing training with peer-driven education and mentorship tailored to each community’s unique clinical needs.*



Mary Sebert, RN, MPH,  
Director of Global Nursing

**“The pandemic has impacted nurses all over the world. As a result, global nursing knowledge has expanded as we pivoted our skills and applied innovative means of caring for patients.”**





# HUMANITARIAN ACTION

**1.6 MILLION MIGRANTS** fled to the United States in an international migrant crisis, cases of COVID-19 rose across the globe, and reports of gender-based violence increased in 2021. Our Humanitarian Action group — consisting of disaster response, asylum, and gender-based violence programs — identified opportunities to support and empower those impacted by each crisis.

In 2021, we dispatched seven medical teams to communities in the U.S. and abroad. When India faced a COVID-19 surge in May, we worked closely with Mass General faculty and trainees to set up virtual case conferences with Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in New Delhi and to support two non-profit organizations — Mission Oxygen and Direct Relief — to get critical medical supplies to the subcontinent. Over the summer months, we dispatched two teams to Mbarara, Uganda to supplement the local staff and operationalize a new COVID-19 treatment center, built to increase the hospital's capacity to safely care for COVID-19 patients. Later in the year, two teams traveled to support our non-profit partner Health Equity International in Fond-des-Blanc, Haiti, after a magnitude 7.2 earthquake struck the country. We also deepened our relationship with Global Resource Management, a non-profit organization assisting with the care of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border,

Photo: Global Disaster Response team assisting in earthquake response efforts in Haiti, August 2021

by dispatching four teams to Matamoros, Mexico where they supplemented the clinic's staffing and supported ongoing public health initiatives.

In Boston, we complemented the work at the border by providing over 100 free forensic medical and psychological evaluations to Massachusetts-based survivors of persecution who are seeking asylum in the United States through our asylum clinic. We expanded the clinic's evaluation services to include social service support to connect individuals with critical health care resources such as insurance, psychotherapy support, nutrition, and housing. We also partnered with the MGH Immigrant Health Coalition to host the inaugural community stakeholder meeting which welcomed 27 individuals from local legal, health care, and community

## **7 Deployments**

To support disaster relief efforts at home and abroad

## **100 Forensic Medical Evaluations**

For clients seeking relief in the United States

service organizations to understand the challenges faced by immigrants, refugees, and those seeking asylum, and inform how Mass General can better serve these populations.

As gender-based violence cases increased worldwide due to pandemic challenges, our team of experts hosted several trainings throughout the year aimed at helping clinicians identify and support victims of gender-based violence.

*With Humanitarian Action as a core strategic area, the MGH Center for Global Health is committed to providing well-trained personnel and resources to immediately respond to a full spectrum of humanitarian emergencies by maintaining the highest standards in clinical care, organizational management, and ethical practice.*



# EDUCATION

## RESIDENTS



Hatem Abdallah, MD



Titilayo Afolabi, MD



Cody Cichowitz, MD



Hanna Elmongy, MD



Jacob Fox, MD, MPH



David Lee, MD, MPH, MMSc



Suellen Li, MD



Gabrielle Mezochow, MD



Katelyn Pastick, MD



Mary Raddawi, MD



Miranda Ravicz, MD



Ya Haddy Sallah, MD, MPH



Rupali Sood, MD, MPH



Jimmiti Teysir, MD



Gregory Zahner, MD, MS

## FELLOWS



Radhika Jain, MD



Pooja Yerramilli, MD

**TO EXPAND** opportunities for medicine trainees and advance global partnerships focused on medical education and clinical capacity building, the MGH Center for Global Health launched the MGH Global Clinical & Educational Collaborative and assisted in the development of a reimagined MGH internal medicine residency program concentration in global health.

Since 2011, the Mass General department of medicine Global Medicine Residency Program has attracted top talent across the country to Mass General and provided opportunities for junior physicians to meaningfully engage with Mass General's established global partners with the goal of developing the next generation of global health leaders committed to health equity. In 2021, the department of medicine expanded the opportunity for Mass General trainees to participate in a global health concentration. This allows them specialized training opportunities and clinical rotations throughout their residency, in Rosebud, South Dakota; Mbarara, Uganda; and KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This year, the concentration welcomed 11 residents.

Our new MGH Global Health Clinical & Educational Collaborative sought to identify synergies and accelerate educational impact by gathering over 40 faculty, nurses, pharmacists, and other members of the Mass General community who engage in global education, health care delivery, clinical mentorship, and innovation. The group seeks to advance the shared goals of clinicians and educators in global health. To meet these goals, we issued the 2021 MGH Global Health Service Awards and the Global Medical Education and Innovation Development Award.

**"The insights I've gotten and the ground level experience that I was able to gain through these rotations abroad has really informed the lens through which I see the rest of my career heading."**

**-Pooja Yerramilli, MD, Global Medicine Fellow**

*With Education as a core strategic area, the MGH Center for Global Health is committed to training global health trailblazers by empowering caregivers, scientists, nurses, and researchers to build knowledge and community in global health through frontline service and bi-lateral learning.*



# RESEARCH & INNOVATION

**TO ADVANCE** interdisciplinary science in the pursuit of global health equity, the MGH Center for Global Health is focused on accelerating, supporting, and mentoring researchers through research collaboration and fostering of innovative global health research.

The MGH Global Health Research Collaborative, established in 2020, fosters innovative bench, clinical, and population health research partnerships. The Collaborative brings together the research expertise of 33 faculty researchers at Mass General and international institutions including those from the Makerere University College of Health Sciences, Uganda; the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh; and University of Cape Town, South Africa. The Collaborative's faculty had their research cited more than 25,000 times and were responsible for 488 new publications in 2021. For example, one member, Alex Tsai, MD, produced two high-profile publications that outlined policy priorities for the Biden-Harris Administration to address inequality, economic opportunity, and public health.

In response to input from the Collaborative, and with the generous support of our donors, we created two new funding opportunities for

the research community: first, financial support to Mass General global research partners who require additional funding to finish their research projects, and second, a substantive career development award for Mass General investigators who are beginning careers in global health research. The first development award was provided to Sushmita Sridhar, PhD, in the Mass General division of infectious diseases for her project “Genomic and phenotypic characterization of invasive *Klebsiella pneumoniae* in Bangladesh.” The project aims to build capacity with the International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh, and expand the lab’s scope to address antimicrobial resistant bacterial infections, an emerging area of need. `

**488**

## **New Publications**

by MGH Global Health Research Collaborative  
faculty

**25,000+**

## **Citations**

of MGH Global Health Research Collaborative  
faculty publications

We welcomed Teressa Sumy Thomas, MB, BCh, Mmed, to Boston from South Africa, with support from a Discovery Foundation fellowship. The Discovery Foundation, which has partnered with Mass General since 2013, seeks to develop the next generation of leaders in academic and clinical medicine in South Africa through a fellowship program that links medical scientists based at South African medical schools with leaders in clinical science at Mass General. Thomas serves as an internist specializing in endocrinology at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa and is currently conducting research focusing on HIV and metabolic disorders in partnership with faculty in the MGH Metabolism Unit.

*With Research and Innovation as a core strategic area, the MGH Center for Global Health catalyzes groundbreaking health research and technology using innovation frameworks to harness cross-cultural ideas and perspectives that revolutionize patient care, health systems, and policy.*



# PARTNERSHIPS



**THE MGH CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH** is a hub for Mass General faculty and staff who engage in initiatives in more than 40 countries. The following provides a glimpse of this vast work by highlighting a few of our institutional partnerships in Uganda, Bangladesh, and Haiti.

In 2021, the MGH Center for Global Health's 10+ year partnership built with Mbarara University of Science and Technology and Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital in Mbarara, Uganda continued to advance education, research, and training opportunities within the region, thanks to the generous support of our donors and through new and renewed research grants. Together we opened a new COVID-19 treatment center, a resource whose infrastructure has played a critical role in the region's ability to care for COVID-19 patients. To address the critical problem of ensuring access to lifesaving vaccines, we launched an initiative to work collaboratively with community-based organizers

in Uganda to advance vaccine equity; this will be a major part of our work together in 2022.

In South Asia, we formalized our relationship with Ayat Education, a Bangladesh-based organization that provides services to increase provider education and health care resources. Since 2008, we have worked with Ayat Education and Dhaka Medical College and Hospital to complete several projects aimed at improving cancer care and training in Bangladesh. Some of these areas include increasing capacity as it relates to bone marrow transplants, palliative care, nursing, and gynecologic cancer screening services.



In Haiti, we strengthened relationships with local Haitian health care leadership. Working alongside the Haiti Ministry of Health, Build Health International, and Health Equity International's St. Boniface Hospital, we dispatched two global disaster response teams and helped build capacity in research, biomedical engineering, and laboratory testing.



# PARTNERSHIPS CONT.

**AS WE ADVANCE** global partnerships, the MGH Center for Global Health believes building a strong community within Mass General is critical to advancing our five strategic focus areas. In 2021, we formally launched global programs in cancer care, palliative care, and gastroenterology in coordination with respective division leadership.

Led by Aparna Parikh, MD, MS, the Global Cancer Care Program harnesses the talent of Mass General oncology clinical support services in the areas of education, research, and clinical care. We work closely with previously established partnerships in Bangladesh, Uganda, and elsewhere, to create synergies and develop new strategies to address global disparities related to cancer care and treatment.

Bethany-Rose Daubman, MD, and Mark Stoltenberg, MD, MPH,



Aparna Parikh, MD, MS,  
Director of the Global  
Cancer Care Program



Bethany-Rose (BR)  
Daubman, MD, Co-  
Director of the Global  
Palliative Care Program

MA, were named co-directors of the MGH Global Palliative Care Program. Launched this year, the Global Palliative Care Program works towards the realization of the human right of universal access to palliative care services around the world, focusing on the patients and populations most in need, with current projects in Belize, Chile, and Jamaica.

Finally, we welcomed Akwi Asombang, MD, as the newly appointed director of the Global Health Program in Gastroenterology. Joining Mass General faculty this year, Asombang currently leads two programs that expand gastroenterology and endoscopy training in Nigeria and Zambia.

*With Partnerships as a core strategic area, the MGH Center for Global Health develops institutional global partnerships to deliver excellent patient care and craft effective health solutions. We believe diverse, equitable partnerships are the foundation of transformative global health solutions.*



Mark Stoltenberg, MD,  
MPH, MA, Co-Director  
of the Global Palliative  
Care Program



Akwi Asombang, MD,  
Director of the Global  
Health Program in  
Gastroenterology





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## HOW TO ENGAGE WITH CGH

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