



Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research

April - June 2024

Spotlight Feature

PANDORA LUCREZIA “LUKE” WANDER, MD, MS, FACP



Pandora “Luke” Wander, MD, MS, FACP, is a general internist and an epidemiologist. She is a core investigator with the VA Puget Sound Health Care System (VA Puget Sound) Metabolism Research Group and an affiliate investigator with the Seattle Epidemiologic Research and Information Center (ERIC). She is an associate professor of medicine and adjunct associate professor of epidemiology at the University of Washington (UW), as well as an affiliate faculty member in the UW Institute for Public Health Genetics. Dr. Wander received her MD from the UW, where she also completed a residency in internal medicine, a Master of Science degree in epidemiology, and post-doctoral training in cardiovascular and metabolic disease epidemiology. Before embarking on her training as a physician-scientist, she went to art school and has a BFA in graphic design and computer animation.

Dr. Wander conducts translational research that uses basic science, clinical research, and epidemiology to understand heterogeneity in type 2 diabetes (T2D). With co-PI Sakeneh Zraika, she is the PI of a National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) R01 grant that aims to identify circulating microRNAs—a class of short non-coding RNA that regulate genes controlling insulin secretion and cell survival and may participate in inter-organ crosstalk—that are related to preservation or improvement in pancreatic islet β cell function in prediabetes or early T2D. She recently completed a series of analyses, funded by a VA Clinical Science Research & Development COVID “rapid research” grant and a VA Puget Sound seed grant, to examine the contribution of diabetes to COVID outcomes and to examine the long-term impacts of SARS-CoV-2 on metabolic outcomes such as glycemia, glucose-lowering medication use, and diabetes remission. She also co-leads the VA Long COVID Field Advisory Board and is a member of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health Long COVID Clinical Practice Workgroup. In this role, she is co-leading a national group of VA Long COVID clinicians to develop a rapid, pragmatic evidence-to-decision framework and to create evidence-informed recommendations for the care of Veterans with Long COVID.

Dr. Wander is a teaching attending physician with the inpatient medicine service at VA Puget Sound. She is the director of the new UW General Internal Medicine Clinical Investigator Fellowship and is the assistant director for enrichment at the UW Nutrition Obesity Research Center. Last year, she taught a public health course to UW undergraduates in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Finally, she serves as IRB chair at both VA Puget Sound and UW, where she has been an IRB member for 18 years.

UPCOMING EVENTS

National VA Research Week is May 13-17, 2024 - Local events and the SIBCR Annual Members’ Meeting are Thursday, May 16, 2024 in Seattle VA Building 101 Room 1E80-90 (and Virtual). The Members’ Meeting is 10-11 AM.

SIBCR Employee Appreciation is May 30, 2024 at 10 AM in VA Building 101 Room 1E80-90.

R&D Seminar Seminars, 12-1 PM VA Seattle Building 101 Room 1E80-90 (and Virtual Option)*

- **Heather H. Cheng, MD, PhD**, Director, Prostate Cancer Genetics Clinic, Clinical Research Division, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center; Associate Professor, Division of Hematology and Oncology, University of Washington School of Medicine - **June 27, 2024**, Title: TBD
- **Catherine A. Blish, MD, PhD, FIDSA**, Professor of Medicine – Infectious Diseases, Stanford University School of Medicine; Associate Dean for Basic and Translational Research, Stanford University School of Medicine; Co-Director, Stanford MD-PhD program; Associate Director, Stanford Medical Scientist Training Program; Fellow, Stanford Center for Innovation in Global Health (CIGH) - **August 6, 2024**, Title: TBD

***Junior Investigator Q&A Sessions 1:30-2:30 PM - after R&D Seminars, Room 1E80-90 (and Virtual Option)**