

# THE INSIDE SCOPE

## IMPORTANT DATES

### August

08/19: New Rotation Starts

08/26: Recruitment Committee Applications Open

### September

09/01: Preferences Open

09/07: Admissions Committee Applications Open

09/09: Labor Day

### October

10/28: DCA Applications Open

### November

11/10: Last Day of Rotation



## A Message From Program Management

Dear Care Extenders,

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to all of our Care Extenders. Thank you for choosing to dedicate your time and energy to helping others in our community. Your generosity and compassion will make a positive impact on the lives of many, and we are grateful for your support. As a Care Extender, you are part of a team of volunteers who provide a variety of services and support to those in need. Whether you are assisting patients, families, or staff, your contributions are invaluable and greatly appreciated. We recognize that volunteering can be a demanding role, but it is also a rewarding one. Your commitment to making a difference in the lives of others is an inspiration to us all, and we look forward to working alongside you to create positive change in our community.

Thank you again for your dedication to our organization, and we are thrilled to have you as part of our team.

Sincerely,

Silva Thomas & Osanna Tosunyan



# Care Extenders of the Rotation!

Spring 2024

**U**



**Warsha  
Karasinghe**

RRH -  
Greeters B

**U**



**Kishan  
Talati**

RRH - 7WCTU

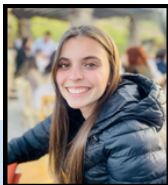
**U**



**Kyle  
Phong**

SMH - Surgery  
Center

**U**



**Athina  
Daher-  
Anenberg**

RRH - MICU-A

**U**



**Shanning  
Zhou**

RRH - NICU

**U**

**Katelynn  
Situ**

RRH - 8 North

**U**



**Isabella  
Torosian**

SMH - Peds

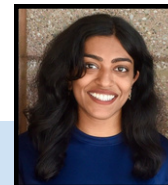
**U**



**Nina  
Do**

RRH - MICU B

**U**



**Uma  
Ram**

RRH - 6 North

**U**



**Michael  
Yacoub**

RRH - 6 West

**U**



**Raymond  
Mumar**

SMH -  
Geriatrics

**U**



**Marilyn  
Qi**

RRH -  
Postpartum

## Advice from CEs of the Rotation

Remember that as Care Extenders, our actions make a huge difference and impact within the hospital! A smile or a simple greeting towards a staff member, patient, or visitor truly gets noticed so don't hesitate to do so! - Warsha Karasinghe

Willingness to learn also determines how much you can learn. Maintaining a positive attitude towards everyone and the work you do will go a long way. Greet everyone you meet, have polite conversations with staff members, and ask about any tasks you can assist - Raymond Mumar

Build relationships with the staff; they're always willing to support your learning and involve you in various tasks. Also, visit patient rooms regularly, offer assistance, and engage in conversations; as a volunteer, these interactions provide many valuable experiences - Uma Ram

I make the most out of my experience in Care Extenders by actively asking the staff if they need any help, and I am always ready to learn from the nurses, care partners and doctors! - Kishan Talati

I would advise care extenders to interact with nurses and care partners to make the most out of their experience in the program. I would also advise them to familiarize themselves with the department early on in their rotation - Athina Daher-Anenberg

Advice that I would give to another care extender regarding how to make the most of their experience in the program is always to be proactive and ask questions because the healthcare professionals are always there to help and guide you! - Marilyn Qi

# The CE Perspective

## Q: How long have you been a Care Extender?

**A:** I started in Summer 2017 so about 7 years.

## Q: Why did you choose to join the Care Extender Program?

**A:** During the pandemic, I decided to go into respiratory therapy. So, Care Extenders was an opportunity for me to work together with my son, who is now in medical school, and gain clinical experience.

## Q: How has Care Extenders complemented your educational journey?

**A:** I find that volunteering has helped me learn medical terminology, especially since English is not my first language. In the program, you don't only memorize the terms, but you also see how the doctors and nurses use them. This has helped increase my understanding of what these words mean and I do very well in classes because I have this hands on experience.

## Q: How has volunteering helped with your career goals?

**A:** Care Extenders is a very good opportunity for anyone who is thinking about working in healthcare. To explain, during my shift today, I saw an intubation. I studied this procedure in school so I know the process; however, seeing it in person opened my mind, as it gave me insight into how they help patients in critical condition get intubated and how they use devices like oxygen tanks to assist with the procedure.

## Q: How do you balance Care Extenders with your other responsibilities?

**A:** This is something that I have thought a lot about, as I need to balance motherhood, working, school, and volunteering. So time management strategies are very important. Nevertheless one thing that keeps me going is that I genuinely enjoy being a Care Extender, which is why I've spent many years in the program. I feel like I'm coming to work, even if I'm a volunteer, as by being



I get to learn a lot. I also love becoming close with the staff and patients

## Q: What's a memorable moment you've had in the program?

**A:** I have many moments that have stuck with me but one of my most impactful ones is when I was helping with a marathon for one of my clubs and saw a patient I had worked with in Care Extenders six months before. It was a boy who had a brain tumor and I often spent shifts playing on the playground with him. So I was at the marathon handing out water and suddenly I hear my name. He was saying, "Mom, look, it's Faten!" It touched my heart that he remembered my name after all these months.

## Q: What have been your favorite departments to volunteer in?

**A:** I'm grateful to have been able to volunteer in many different departments. I did MICU twice and I liked it because you get to see a lot of exciting procedures, like central lines and stents. I also loved 4ICU and my favorite now is the ER, where I've been for about three years. I like the ER because I get to see how patients in critical condition are taken care of. Also, there's always something to do in this department. The ER really is different than other departments, though I wouldn't mind volunteering in any of the departments that are offered.

## Q: What advice do you have for Care Extenders to make the most out of their experiences?

**A:** When you're a volunteer you have to show empathy and sympathy. You have to show that you are willing to do something if somebody asks you to help them out. You have to be proactive. Every time I have a shift, I have a checklist in my head. I check the blankets; if there is an empty gurney, I wipe it down and clean the surface. I always come up with something to do to keep myself busy.

**Faten Safadi graduated from Santa Monica College in 2023.**

# Department Highlights

## RRH – Postpartum



For those interested in working with new parents and their babies, there's one unit to shift in — postpartum. Here, not only are volunteers able to witness an important life event, but they are also tasked with providing valuable material and emotional support at a vulnerable time for these patients.

This significant responsibility draws many CEs to the department, including Katrina Menshutkina, who said her favorite part of volunteering at PP was the patient interaction.

"As I started volunteering more, I started noticing a lot of like social work being involved," said Menshutkina, who just finished her fourth rotation in the department. "Seeing situations like there being a lot of like single moms and teen moms showed me postpartum isn't necessarily all smooth sailing, and I just like being a part of the team and helping them out as much as I can."

Specifically, Care Extenders can aid postpartum's patients by discharging, answering call lights, assembling discharge goodie bags, and simply interacting with them, said Sarah Yang, department coordinator.

Furthermore, volunteers are also able to build relationships with staff by helping out, with Yang and Menshutkina both emphasizing the welcoming nature of the nurses.

"I've been doing the same night shift for most a year now, so I've really gotten to know

the entire staff that's been working that shift," Menshutkina said. "Gaining trust from some of the care partners and nurses makes me really feel like I'm part of the team when I'm there."

Another benefit of the department is the numerous procedures that Care Extenders may be able to observe. Yang said that, previously, her volunteers had reported watching hearing screenings, baths, head exams, and swaddlings while Menshutkina mentioned being able to feed babies and see glucose checks.

For Care Extenders shifting in the department, Yang recommended that they ask questions and talk with nurses.

Menshutkina also recommended being proactive, as the nurses are often too busy to directly tell volunteers what they need to do, adding that she personally has a routine she follows during every shift. With this consistent effort, the nurses began to trust her and invite her to watch different procedures, she said.

As for what kind of Care Extender would be the best fit for this department, Menshutkina said that anyone interested in becoming a nurse or physician would gain much from this experience, as they would be able to see how these professionals manage multiple patients simultaneously.

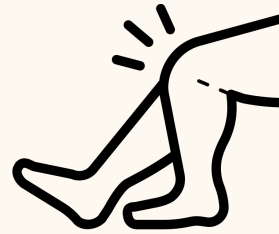
She also added that those interested in women's health should join.

"I was definitely kind of thinking about this path, but I'd never had any sort of exposure to OB-GYN or L&D," Menshutkina said. "Now, I feel like I'm pretty familiar with the ins and outs after a year and this is definitely where I want my career to go. So I'm very, very grateful for this program for kind of opening my eyes up to that. I think I'll be here for a lot longer. I just really enjoy every single one of my shifts."

**Care Extenders on their 1st+ rotation may shift in the Postpartum unit. The department is open Monday to Sunday and has shifts 7-11 am, 11 am-3pm, 3pm-7pm, and 7pm-11pm.**



# Pain Medicine



## Definition

Pain medicine is a field within medicine that deals with the prevention, evaluation, and treatment of patients with pain. A wide range of specialists can specialize in pain medicine, including anesthesiologists and emergency medicine physicians.



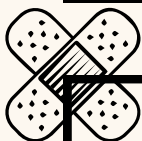
## History

The first formal training program for pain medicine was created in 1978, though there was no official curriculum. The first accredited fellowship began in 1993, under the specialty of anesthesiology. Now, there are 114 pain medicine programs.



## Current State

As of 2021, there are currently 6,227 active physicians who specialized in pain medicine, a 24.5% increase from 2016. 68% of these physicians were under the age of 55 and 80.4% were male. There were also 340 fellows training in this subspecialty.



## Education

All pain medicine specialists must have a medical degree and complete a residency in a field related to pain medicine, such as neurology. Then, they must complete a one-year fellowship and pass a board exam. Some states will also require a board certification in order to practice.

# Pain Medicine Q&A



*Jakun Ing is the director of the inpatient chronic pain service at UCLA Ronald Reagan*

**How long have you been working in pain medicine?**

I did my fellowship in 2013-2014 and have been attending since then.

**What kind of education and training did you go through to work in pain medicine?**

I did 4 years of medical school and also did an extra year in between my third and fourth year to get a masters in public health. Then I did 4 years of residency and one year of fellowship. It's a long journey for sure.

**What is a day in your job like?**

So the thing I really enjoy about my work is that no two days are the same. One day I might be in clinic and another day I may be doing video visits via telemedicine. Another day I might be doing injections or even doing minor surgical procedures like implants. Sometimes I might be rounding in the hospital on the inpatient service.

**What are some conditions you commonly treat?**

We treat all sorts of pain, like back, neck, joint, nerve, and abdominal pain, but usually we start at the back and branch out from there.

**What is your patient population like?**

I see all sorts of different patients. Some of your patients tend to skew a little bit on the older side, but we have quite a few younger patients as well. We see people of all sorts of socio-economic backgrounds and we see people who are healthy and some people who are very sick. UCLA is a very large referral center so we get some very complex patients.

**Why did you choose this career?**

Well, originally, I was in the field of anesthesiology for my residency, which is a very, very different field. I wasn't thinking about going into pain medicine initially, but when I did my pain medicine rotation, it all of a sudden felt right. I wasn't necessarily looking for this experience but one of the things that I've noticed about anesthesiology is that while it's a wonderful and dynamic field, you don't have that longitudinal patient interaction. In pain medicine, however, you work with your patients for a very long time sometimes, so you get to know them in ways that you would not otherwise be able to in anesthesiology. And I really found it to be very rewarding to see people get better and watch them develop and have families or go through major life events right there with them.

**How has pain medicine changed in the last few years?**

It's a very dynamic field. Pain medicine has changed a lot over the last 20 years, but in some ways, it's stayed very much the same – at the end of the day we're still trying to treat patients' chronic pain. So, the conditions haven't necessarily changed, but some of the items in our toolbox have changed – in addition to using medications and multidisciplinary treatments, we also have a number of different interventional techniques, like injections in the spine joints. We also have different modalities where we can, for example, implant spinal cord and peripheral nerve stimulators and a number of things down the road as well. So it's a very exciting time to be in pain medicine.

**What advice do you have for those who may want to work in sports medicine in the future?**

I would encourage people to reach out to one of us and maybe see if there's some sort of shadowing experience that can be arranged. I also think simply reading up about our field is a good starting point as well. We're always happy to have a chat with anybody who's interested.

# MPOX

WHO declared mpox a public health emergency on August 14, 2024. What is this condition and how can you stay safe from it?



## Mpox Basics



Mpox is a virus and is in the same family as smallpox. It is zoonotic, or in other words, it can be spread between humans and animals, like monkeys. It was discovered in 1958 and the first human case was recorded in 1970.

## Recent History



In 2022, there was a global outbreak of mpox, which was the first time the virus had spread widely outside of Central and West Africa. In 2024, cases rose in DRC and the rest of Africa, with more than 17,000 cases and 500 deaths reported. The clade of mpox responsible for this more recent outbreak causes a higher number of severe infections and has a higher mortality rate.

## Symptoms



Common symptoms include fever, sore throat, headaches, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen lymph nodes. The trademark symptom is a rash, which manifests as liquid-filled blisters. This rash can appear anywhere on the body, though it commonly appears on the face first.

## Transmission



Mpox is spread through direct contact with infected skin or lesions. Methods of transmission include talking, sexual contact, breathing, and transmission of respiratory droplets. Animals can also transmit mpox through bites and scratches and humans may become infected when hunting, preparing, and eating animals.



## Avoiding Mpox



- Get the JYNNEOS vaccine if you're high risk. This is a two dose vaccine.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often.
- Disinfect high-touch surfaces.
- Cook all foods that have animal parts.
- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth



## FINDING A LAB THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

### Getting into research as an undergraduate can help you gain important skills and experience.

However, choosing the right opportunity is critical to a good lab experience. Here are some considerations to keep in mind when joining a lab.



1

**Topic Area** - Joining a lab that's in a field you're not interested in can greatly dampen your motivation. Instead, think about classes or activities you've enjoyed in the past and use that to guide your decision. Though it might be tempting to join a lab that's in a well-known or prestigious field, this may just lead to burnout.

2

**Time Commitment** - Each lab will have its own expectations for how much you work. Some may require as low as 4 hrs/wk while others may go up to 20 hrs/wk. Or, they may only require that you complete your tasks each week. Reflect on your priorities to find a commitment that's right for you.

3

**Independence** - Some labs may allow students to lead their own project after a certain amount of time while others will only let you work on a mentor's project. If this is important to you, ask about it early, so you can make an informed decision based on your goals.

4

**Mentorship** - If you're looking for a mentor in your lab, you should ask undergraduates in prospective labs how often they get to talk to their PI/mentor. Also, look at the student:grad student ratio. If the number seems high, you may not be able to form strong relationships.



### If you join a lab and you find that it doesn't fit your needs, then you may want to consider leaving and finding another.

Of course, it might be beneficial to talk to your PI/mentor about your concerns first, to see if they can accommodate you.