



Minority-Serving Hospitals as Clinical Trial Sites: The Opportunities and Challenges

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Biographical Sketches

Lori Abrams

Lori Abrams is the Director of Advocacy in Global Development Operations at Bristol-Myers Squibb (BMS). Over the past two years she has built a Team that develops innovative and unique advocacy approaches that bring BMS clinical trial awareness and accessibility to patients, physicians, and caregivers. The Team has developed many relationships with minority-focused health and community-based organizations, in order to increase diversity in our clinical trial population. Ms. Abrams came to BMS in 1998 as a Sr. Clinical Scientist in the Virology Group. During her first six years she was the Clinical Working Group Lead on both Videx EC and Reyataz. She joined the Drug Development Learning & Collaboration Team in 2003 managing a team of learning professionals. Her group was responsible for the development and implementation of many of the R&D learning programs, including: the Drug Development curriculum; SciX where one of the sessions she created was the Patient Advocacy session; Yale Summer Seminar Program; and, State of the Science. Additionally, she managed the Talent Programs (PCC, NGLT), Regulatory Compliance Learning, and other learning programs relating to drug development. Prior to joining BMS, Ms. Abrams was both a study coordinator in HIV/AIDS related clinical trials and a patient advocate at the National Institutes of Health and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for Military Medicine. She partnered with many patient advocacy organizations to bring the plight of the military's HIV program to the public and integration into the HIV/AIDS overall arena. Ms. Abrams completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Maryland, and received a Graduate Certificate in Organization Development from the NTL Institute for Applied Behavioral Sciences.

Richard Beswick, PhD, MBA

Dr. Beswick is the Senior Vice President for Research at Scott & White Healthcare where he oversees the development and execution of clinical trials and clinical programs for the development of new chemical entities. He is also responsible for the assessment of external and internal clinical research proposals, financial management of the research enterprise, research strategic planning and outreach efforts to the clinical research community in an effort to promote excellence in clinical research methods and practice. He also serves as medical-clinical contact for the Food and Drug Administration and other worldwide health authorities concerning clinical research issues. Dr. Beswick earned his PhD in molecular renal physiology in 2001 from the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor. He went on to earn an MBA from the Crummer Graduate School of Business of Rollins College in 2006. Among his many committee appointments, Dr. Beswick serves on the Emerging Technology Fund Governor's Oversight Committee for Central Texas and the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute CenTex Clinical Trials Steering Committee.

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Rose Blackburne, MD, MBA

Dr. Blackburne is a Senior Medical Director and Global Medical Head for US/Latin America and India Immunology/Internal Medicine Group at Quintiles where she leads a team of 10 global physicians and serves as a Medical Advisor on clinical trials across a range of disease areas. Dr. Blackburne is Board Certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology, and, has a special interest in health policy as it relates to women and minorities. She has expertise in reproductive health, urology, menopause management, HPV, cervical cancer and health policy. Dr. Rose Blackburne is the Chair of the Physician Executive Section of the National Medical Association, and has served as the Vice Chair of the Physician Executive Section from 2010-2013. Dr. Blackburne is committed to impacting health inequities and has been instrumental in educating the medical and lay community regarding health care reform and the Affordable Care Act, and increasing the participation of minorities and women in clinical trials. Prior to joining Quintiles, Dr. Blackburne was in clinical OB/GYN practice for over 10 years in Maryland and Washington, DC. Dr. Blackburne received her medical degree at the Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia and completed an Obstetrics and Gynecology residency at Columbia University in New York. She attended the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, has a Master of Business Administration from the Darden Graduate School of Business, and completed her undergraduate studies at University of Virginia, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Dr. Blackburne is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS (NBLCA), member of the Society for Women's Health Research, a member of the American Public Health Association and Links, Incorporated. She is also currently an adjunct professor at Sojourner Douglass College, Edgewater, MD where she teaches Anatomy and Physiology.

Jonca Bull, MD

Dr. Jonca Bull joined the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in August 2012 as the Director of the Office of Minority Health. Dr. Bull brings extensive public and private sector experience in dealing with a range of product development and diversity issues to this important position. Dr. Bull previously served in FDA in a variety of positions in both CDER and the Office of the Commissioner spanning 12 years. Beginning as a CDER clinical reviewer, Dr. Bull's leadership roles ranged from Director of the Office of Drug Evaluation V to Deputy Director of the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology. In the Office of the Commissioner as a medical advisor, her work focused on issues affecting minority health matters, and she also served as acting Director of the Office of Women's Health. During her former tenure at FDA, Dr. Bull received several awards for her diversity-related work. Dr. Bull has now returned to FDA after most recently serving as Vice President for US Drug Regulatory Policy at Novartis and, prior to that, as Director of Clinical Regulatory Policy at Genentech. She brings industry experience across a diverse therapeutic portfolio, covering both product development and post approval risk evaluation and mitigation strategies, in a global environment. Dr. Bull also previously spent eleven years providing clinical care in a multi-specialty group practice, and she currently serves as an Assistant Clinical Professor at George Washington University Medical Center. Dr. Bull is a graduate of Princeton University and received her medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine. She did her postgraduate training at George Washington University, is board certified in Ophthalmology, and is a fellow of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

Icilma V. Fergus, MD

Icilma V. Fergus, MD is the Director of Cardiovascular Disparities at Mount Sinai Medical Center. Prior to that she served as Chief of the Division of Cardiology at Columbia University Harlem Hospital Center beginning in April 2007 and Director of Non-Invasive Cardiology of New York Hospital Queens from 1999-2006. Her current academic appointment is Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York, New York. She is a

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Barnard and SUNY Downstate graduate. She completed her residency and Chief residency at Albert Einstein Medical Center. Dr. Fergus completed her cardiology fellowship at Weill Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Fergus is board certified in Internal Medicine and Cardiology. Dr. Fergus has authored numerous articles related to heart disease and congestive heart failure in peer-reviewed journals and is a co-author in the new book entitled “Cardiovascular Disease in Ethnic Minorities”. Her current research interests involve cardiovascular disparities, hypertension and diastolic dysfunction as well as heart disease in women. She has been an investigator in several clinical trials including a NHLBI sponsored trial evaluating acute ischemia in young women entitled “VIRGO” and a DOH sponsored grant for Harlem Healthy Eating and Living.

Maria Gilliam

Maria Gilliam (Schraff) is a director of US Clinical Operations, Novartis. At Novartis, Ms. Gilliam has contributed to numerous key trials in support of NDAs across all of the company’s therapeutic areas, including the following approved therapies: Diovan, Foradil, Gleevec, Ilaris, Myfortic, Neoral, Reclast, Tekturna, Zortress, and Zometa. She has been an important contributor to many process improvement efforts focusing on delivering high quality data for Novartis clinical trials. These include roll out of the original Electronic Data Capture system in 2000 and subsequent system upgrades; as well as the development of Risk Based Monitoring processes. Maria spent nine years as an ICU and Post Anesthesia Care Unit nurse; served as a nursing supervisor for a 562 hospital; and many years in clinical development for Syntex, Roche, and Sandoz/Novartis.

Allicia Girvan, PhD

Dr. Girvan received her PhD in biochemistry/molecular biology from the University of Louisville in Louisville, KY in 2006. During her training there, she worked in the James Graham Brown Cancer Center studying the mechanism of a novel anti-cancer molecule and moved it through a Phase I clinical trial. She then joined Eli Lilly as a Senior Clinical Research Scientist working on lung cancer clinical trials in the US affiliate. Her work in observational studies led to several publications and awards including the prestigious Lilly President's Scientific Recognition Award. She then accepted the role of Director of Global Advocacy and Professional Relations in Oncology, where she utilized her clinical/scientific background in policy and legislative issues affecting research. Returning to research in her current position, Senior Research Scientist Oncology Global Health Outcomes, Dr. Girvan investigates the clinical, humanistic, and economic impact of anti-cancer agents in development.

Charles D. Howell, MD, AGAF

Charles D. Howell, MD, AGAF is chair of the Howard University Department of Internal Medicine. As chair, Dr. Howell is responsible for overseeing all academic, clinical, and research activities of the department, as well as directing a new interdisciplinary viral hepatitis program that will work to reduce the burden of hepatitis in the Washington metropolitan area. Prior to becoming chair of the department, Dr. Howell served as a professor of medicine and director of hepatology research at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Dr. Howell’s clinical interests include management of chronic liver diseases, particularly hepatitis B and C, primary biliary cirrhosis and autoimmune hepatitis. Dr. Howell has had a long-standing interest in racial disparities in chronic hepatitis C treatment, and was an investigator in the NIDDK VIRAHEP-C study. He was Principal Investigator in patient oriented research to study Racial Disparities in Liver Diseases (sponsored by the NIDDK) and another study of Ribavirin Pharmacokinetics and HCV treatment outcomes.

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Edith P. Mitchell, MD

Dr. Edith Mitchell is Clinical Professor, Department of Medical Oncology, at Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University and Associate Director of Diversity Programs for the Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson. She was recently honored with a “Tree of Life” award from The Wellness of You, a local nonprofit health education and resource organization. The “Tree of Life” award recognizes health professionals who are committed to making a difference in community health. Dr. Mitchell received a bachelor of science in Biochemistry "with distinction" from Tennessee State University and her medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond. In 1973, while attending medical school, Dr. Mitchell entered the Air Force and received a commission through the Health Professions Scholarship Program. She entered active duty after completion of her internship and residency in Internal Medicine at Meharry Medical College and a fellowship in Medical Oncology at Georgetown University. Dr. Mitchell's research in pancreatic cancer and other GI malignancies involves new drug evaluation and chemotherapy, development of new therapeutic regimens, chemoradiation strategies for combined modality therapy, patient selection criteria and supportive care for patients with gastrointestinal cancer. In addition to her medical achievements, Dr. Mitchell is a retired Brigadier General having served as the Air National Guard Assistant to the Command Surgeon for US Transportation command and headquarters Air Mobility Command (AMC) based at the Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. Dr. Mitchell has been awarded over 15 military service medals and ribbons including the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Achievement and Commendation Medals, National Defense Service Medal, and Humanitarian Service Medal. Dr. Mitchell was selected for inclusion in America's Top Oncologists.

Gary A. Puckrein, PhD

Dr. Gary A. Puckrein is President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Minority Quality Forum. The Forum is dedicated to improving the quality of health care through the use of evidence-based, data-driven initiatives. The Forum maintains a centralized data warehouse of vital statistics, demographics, environmental information, provider claims, prescription drug use, clinical laboratory values, health-care access points, and other data. The Forum employs these data resources to build web-based indexes and atlases that enable users to measure and forecast health status and disease prevalence in small geographic areas, evaluate the impact of specific interventions, and monitor changes in health outcomes. The Forum has also recently launched the Clinical Trial Engagement Network, the healthcare industry resource addressing a critical need in drug research – improving the representation of diverse populations, including African Americans, Asian Americans and Hispanics, in clinical trials. Dr. Puckrein is considered a preeminent authority on health information products and was the publisher of *American Visions* and *Minority Health Today*. Dr. Puckrein has served on numerous health-care advisory boards, including the National Advisory Board on Health Disparities for the Health Research and Educational Trust (American Hospital Association), the CLAS/Health Disparities Expert Panel (National Committee for Quality Assurance), and the Pharmacy Education Advisory Council (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy). Between 1974 and 1992, Dr. Puckrein taught and lectured at Brown University, Rutgers University, Connecticut College, and Roger Williams College. Dr. Puckrein has received many awards and honors, including being named a visiting scholar and fellow at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History and a visiting fellow at Princeton University. He was awarded doctoral and master’s degrees in history from Brown University, and a bachelor’s degree from California State University at Los Angeles.

Nawar Shara, PhD

Nawar Shara, PhD is the Director of the Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics of The MedStar Health Research Institute and Director of the Design, Biostatistics and Population

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Studies at Georgetown-Howard Universities Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSA). She received her PhD in Applied Statistics from American University in 2002 and currently holds a faculty appointment at Georgetown University as an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine and as an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Nursing and Health Studies. Dr Shara has also served as a Visiting Full-time Professor, American University, Washington, D.C. Her honors, awards and fellowships include a Masters Fellowship, Karim Rida Said Foundation, PhD Fellowship, Mathematics and Statistics Department, American University and PhD qualifying exam with distinction. Her current professional affiliations are the American Statistical Association, Royal Statistical Society, American Society of Nephrology, Women in Statistics Caucus as a representative at large and as Chair of the Science and Research Committee of the National Arab American Medical Association, and she also served as a peer reviewer for review of contract proposals in response to BAA NIAID-DMID-NIHAI2008025: Targeted Clinical Trials to Reduce the Risk of Antimicrobial Resistance, 2008. Her research projects as a principal investigator include the Cystatin C and Cardiovascular Disease in Populations with High Prevalence of Diabetes and Kidney Disease; Kidney and Cardiovascular Disease in American Indians: Statistical analyses of existing data; and Renal Dysfunction and Cardiovascular Disease in American Indian: Obtaining new markers of oxidative stress using stored specimen and conducting statistical analyses to show associations between levels of kidney function and cardiovascular disease.

Lisa R. Treviño, PhD

Dr. Lisa R. Treviño, PhD, joined Doctors Hospital at Renaissance (DHR) in January 2014 as Vice President of Research and Development. Dr. Trevino earned a doctorate in Molecular, Cellular and Development Biology from the University of California at Santa Cruz and did her postdoctoral training at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN. Most recently, Dr. Trevino was managing and serving as the lead scientific analyst for various adult and pediatric cancer projects at the Human Genome Sequencing Center at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, TX. With her extensive basic and translational research experience, Dr. Trevino's has published in top-tiered, peer-reviewed scientific journals including Nature and Science and other prominent cancer journals. Dr. Trevino will lead the research program at DHR by establishing sound policies and procedures for everyone interested in conducting human subject research. She will expand the current clinical research studies in the areas of Diabetes and other disease states as well as facilitate the writing of medical manuscripts pertaining to existing data the physicians at DHR have collected. Throughout her scientific career, Dr. Trevino has established and maintained professional collaborations with the experts in the Texas Medical Center including Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital as well as with other institutions nation-wide and will work tirelessly to bring the most cutting-edge technology and advanced diagnostics to DHR and the people of the Rio Grande Valley. Dr. Trevino was born and raised in Pharr, TX and is a graduate of Pharr-San Juan-Alamo High School.