Elizabeth Kantor is the PI of a newly-funded R01 from NCI, titled “Obesity, Chemotherapy Dosing, and Breast Cancer Outcomes” which will include nearly 34,000 breast cancer patients treated at Kaiser Permanente: Northern California and Washington conducted in collaboration with a multi-site team of investigators. Kelli O’Connell and Nanne Heon will be working with Elizabeth on her new study.

Sigríð Carlsson, her co-investigators Andrew Vickers, Behfar Eshahri, and their collaborators at Harvard received a two-year research grant from the Prevent Cancer Foundation for the study “Optimizing prostate cancer screening through the electronic health record.” The overall objective of this proposal is to develop and implement a clinical decision-support tool for PSA-screening in primary care which leverages the electronic health record (EHR). This will improve health outcomes by screening patients who 1) want to be screened and 2) should be screened. The rationale for this proposal is that no EHR-embedded algorithm for risk-stratified PSA-screening exists and development of such a decision-support tool for the EHR is critically needed and innovative.

The Chanel Endowment to Fund Survivorship Research awarded a two-year grant, entitled “Chronic Opioid Therapy and Opioid-Related Harms Among Older Cancer Survivors,” to Talya Salz. Given that cancer survivors are often exposed to opioids during treatment, commonly experience chronic pain, and are vulnerable to more adverse effects from pain medication than individuals without a cancer history, understanding opioid use among cancer survivors is critical. Along with Allison Lipton-Snyderman and other colleagues, a pilot study will be conducted to understand the scope of opioid use and harms among survivors of multiple cancers, using linked SEER-Medicare data.

Elena Elkin and Jaya Satagopan were awarded an R25 grant from NCI to support the department’s new Quantitative Sciences Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (QSURE). This 8-week internship program will offer up to 10 QSURE fellows an opportunity for hands-on experience using quantitative methods in biostatistics, epidemiology, and health outcomes. In addition to their research projects, supervised by Epi-Bio faculty mentors, QSURE fellows will participate in a Quantitative Sciences lecture series, a seminar in Research Ethics, and special presentations from visiting scientists and scholars. Through the QSURE program, the department hopes to inspire talented undergraduates to pursue graduate studies in quantitative sciences and careers in cancer research. The QSURE leadership team also includes Kay See Tan, Cynthia Berry, and Shireen Lewis. Stay tuned for more QSURE news as the summer approaches!

Together with their colleagues, Debra Goldman, Anne Reiner, and Kathy Panages, co-authored a manuscript in the Journal of Neurosurgery titled, “The relationship between repeat resection and overall survival in patients with glioblastoma: A time-dependent analysis.” The vast body of literature demonstrated a survival benefit from repeat resection for patients with glioblastoma; however, these studies ignored timing of repeat resection, which may have led to biased conclusions. Using data from MSK’s neurosurgery database, Debra and colleagues first demonstrated this bias in their sample where repeat resection was associated with a lower hazard of death (HR: 0.62). Once timing of repeat resection was taken into account in a multivariable time-dependent Cox model, the protective effect reversed, showing a higher hazard of death from repeat resection (HR: 2.19). Their findings establish a foundation in the neurosurgical literature for assessing the relationship between repeat resection and OS.

Kay Park, Prusha Patel, Jrina Linkov, Anjali lotwani, Noah Kauff, and Malcolm Pike co-authored a paper titled “Observations on the Origin of Ovarian Cortical Inclusion Cyts in Women Undergoing Risk-Reducing Salpingo-Oophorectomy” in Histopathology. Evidence suggests that ~70% of high-grade serous ovarian carcinomas (HGSOCs) arise from the fallopian tube, and that most of the remaining cases arise in Mullerian-type cortical inclusion cysts (CICs) within the ovary. It has been proposed that Mullerian-CICs arise either from metaplasia of mesothelial ovarian surface epithelium (OSE) entrapped within the ovary after ovulation, or from normal tubal cells entrapped within the ovary post-ovulation. Distinguishing between these two sources is important and makes quite different predictions regarding the preventive effect of removing the fallopian tubes (salpingectomy) in women undergoing a tubal ligation for contraception. Dr. Pike and colleagues conducted a study of 499 CICs from 59 women undergoing risk-reducing salpingo-oophorectomy at MSK from 2000-2014 using digital microscopy and computer image analysis. Their results strongly support the proposal that many Mullerian-CICs arise from OSE via metaplasia and that salpingectomy will not reduce the incidence of HGSOC arising from within the ovary.
NEW STAFF

Michael Curry, Assistant Research Biostatistician
Mike joined the Health Outcomes Research Group as an Assistant Research Biostatistician. He previously was a biostatistician at the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), where he helped monitor organ allocation policies. He holds an MS from Northwestern University and a MA from Radford University. He will be working with Peter Bach and other investigators on health outcomes studies using SEER-Medicare data.

Diana Mejia, Assistant to Chairman
Diana comes to us from the Department of Surgery where she spent 7 years working as the Administrative Secretary to the Chief of Orthopedic Surgery, Dr. John Healey. In her role, Diana was responsible for Dr. Healey’s clinic, OR time and academic activities. Diana also assisted Dr. Boland, Director of Education, with the Musculoskeletal Fellowship Program.

Kimberly Hubbard, Administrative Assistant
Kim has joined the department as an Administrative Assistant working with the Epidemiology group. She previously worked as a Physician’s Office Assistant. Nicole will be supporting the research needs of Sara Olson and Robert Kurtz (Medicine), focusing on recruitment for the MSK Pancreatic Tumor Registry Study (IRB #02-102). She received her BA in Public Health from the University of Rochester.

HOLIDAY PARTY
Hope to see you all again next December!