



The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia
To embrace our legacy, foster collegiality, and share expertise to improve the health of women in Philadelphia and beyond

OCTOBER 2020

Newsletter

VOL. 47, NO. 5

President's Message



DONALD DEBRAKELEER, DO
 PRESIDENT: OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...”


While these words were written 161 years ago, they sound ominously descriptive of 2020. In many ways, it has been the worst of times. The COVID virus has sickened millions and killed almost a million people worldwide. It has stressed the healthcare system to its limits. It has put healthcare providers in harm's way and left them overwhelmed and over-stressed. And it is still not over! Sadly, there still may be a “second wave” coming.

The beauty of dark times, however, is that it is precisely the time that the flicker of humanity's light shines the brightest. The millions of health care workers around the world who, like firemen rushing into a burning building, have put on their scrubs and PPE and faced the fear of the unknown to care for patients in need. While patients were sick and dying without family, health care providers were at their side to comfort them while they died and support them as they got well on many long roads to recovery. Our colleagues became the support person for patients through difficult labors when limited or no support people could be present.

Our profession mobilized! We implemented telemedicine with unprecedented speed to try to cover the gap in our ability to see patients in person. This has led us to rethink how we provide patient care and, more pertinent to us, prenatal care. We implemented office guidelines that have kept our staff and our patients safe while

getting back to our normal volume of patient care. Providers developed innovative ways to provide family planning services. We were challenged in developing protocol to resume utilization of the operating room in a safe and efficient manner. Challenging times are challenges for us to innovate and innovation is happening everywhere. Our first webinar will examine how this has affected us and changed our practices.

A large part of our mission involves collegiality, but we will not be able to meet in person until possibly February. Therefore, we are going to innovate and start our lecture series as interactive webinars. This year's lecture series will focus on many of the problems and issues facing our profession in these turbulent times.

While things may still look a little dark and uncertain, I think there is a lot to be excited about for the next year! We will continue to come together as a profession to be the “heroes” we are all purported to be. Collegiality is so important now, more than ever, as we can all share our stories and support for each other as we navigate these stressful times. To make it even easier to share in the support of your colleagues, we are allowing free membership for this year. So please join us for our meetings! Invite Advanced Practice Nurses, Nurses and Family Practice Colleagues to join our webinars and consider membership in our new Auxiliary Member category. 

Upcoming Lecture



Thursday, October 15, 2020

7:00 PM

“OB/GYN Practice during COVID19”

We hope that you will be able to join us for our October Zoom meeting, when Aasta Mehta, MD, MPP, Medical Officer of Women's Health, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, will moderate a panel discussion on OB/GYN practice during COVID19.

See page 2 for details.

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The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia

OUR MISSION: "TO EMBRACE OUR LEGACY, FOSTER COLLEGIALLY, AND SHARE EXPERTISE TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF WOMEN IN PHILADELPHIA AND BEYOND."

YOU ARE INVITED TO A TIMELY MEETING...

OB/GYN Practice during COVID19

What did you do?

What will you keep doing?

Where are you now?

MODERATOR



AASTA MEHTA, MD, MPP
Medical Officer of Women's Health
Philadelphia Department of Public Health

PANELISTS

MATERNAL FETAL MEDICINE

VINCENZO BERGHELLA, M.D

GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY

MARK SHAHIN, M.D.

FAMILY PLANNING

BETHANY PERRY, M.D.

REPRODUCTIVE ENDOCRINOLOGY

ANNETTE LEE, M.D.

Date: Thursday, October 15, 2020

Time: 7:00 PM

**This will be a Zoom Meeting –
an email invitation will be sent to each member and Emeritus**

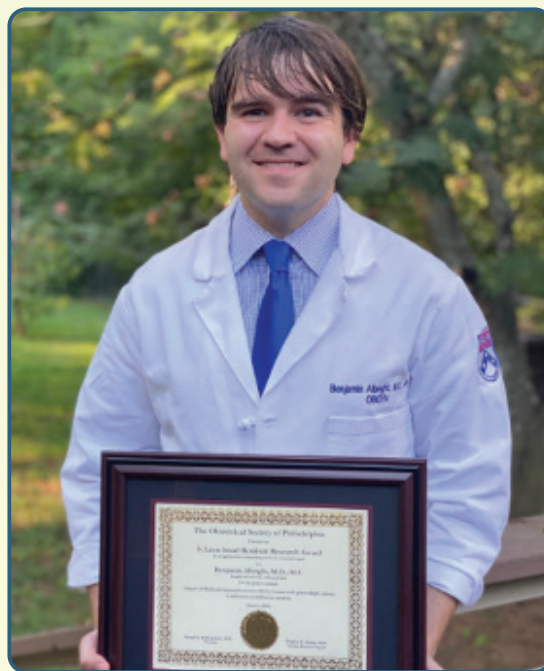
THE S. LEON ISRAEL AWARD WAS ESTABLISHED TO RECOGNIZE EXCELLENCE
IN RESEARCH IN THE DISCIPLINE OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY.

The Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia

PRESENTS THE

S. Leon Israel Resident Research Award
In recognition for outstanding work on a research topic

TO



BENJAMIN ALBRIGHT, M.D., M.S.
HOSPITAL OF UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

FOR THE PROJECT ENTITLED:

**Impact of Medicaid expansion on non-elderly women with gynecologic cancer:
A difference-in-difference analysis**

Awarded June 6, 2020

How Philadelphia Saved the Life of a Pregnant Woman and Her Newborn

ADEEB KHALIFEH MD
MATERNAL FETAL MEDICINE DIVISION
EINSTEIN MEDICAL CENTER

My Memorial Day morning started in the same way every morning has started for me since March: by quickly and obsessively reaching for my phone to check the number of new COVID-19 cases and deaths in Philadelphia, followed by a look at whether “The Curve” was flattening. That morning, however, was sadly memorable for encountering a front page of one of the many newspapers I read with the actual names of the approximately 100,000 individuals who had lost their lives to Coronavirus in the United States.

In that moment, I was overcome with grief, certainly, but also gratitude. I was grateful that, as a high-risk pregnancy specialist in Philadelphia, the COVID-19 patients I had encountered, though at times critically ill, had escaped such a fate. It was only a few minutes later that I received news from one of my colleagues: “The COVID-19 patient you were consulted on 2 days ago just got intubated.” My patient, a 35-year-old mother, 36 weeks pregnant with her third baby, had been admitted to one of Einstein Healthcare Network’s satellite hospitals’ Intensive Care Unit. I was saddened by the news, for just the night before, she was only requiring minimal oxygen, and the team had been hopeful for a quick recovery.

Since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, it has become common knowledge that those who became critically ill with the need for a ventilator had a much greater chance of death. And although a death in medicine is always tragic – to families and to the medical professionals who treated a patient – maternal death is particularly harrowing for families, healthcare workers and society in general. In the United States, where maternal mortality rates are higher compared to those in other wealthy countries, and where black and Hispanic women are disproportionately at risk of death in pregnancy, we need and must continue to work harder to help improve this stark reality.

With all of these thoughts running through my head, and much more, I knew I had to make quick decisions to give the patient and her fetus the best chance at survival, now that both were relying on a ventilator.


Obstetricians in Philadelphia and around the world have been navigating the uncharted waters of COVID-19 infection in pregnancy, grappling to understand the clinical course of the disease



and its impact on mothers, fetuses and newborns. In the absence of Level 1 evidence-based medicine, clinicians have to rely on “case-series” evidence. Fortunately, since the stay-at-home order was issued in Philadelphia, leaders of maternities of Philadelphia area hospitals have been participating in weekly phone calls, coordinated by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, with the goal of sharing experiences relating to COVID-19 infection and management in pregnancy. It is because of our participation in these calls that my team and I knew that the best course of action was to proceed with the delivery the baby.

I quickly met with my Maternal Fetal Medicine colleagues – remotely – to brainstorm and analyze all ideas and possible answers. A few hours later, the patient was airlifted to Einstein’s main campus, in Northeast Philadelphia, where we agreed she would have access to more resources. Initially we contemplated an assisted vaginal delivery, as the patient was multiparous, and in view of her comorbidities, her risks were increased with a cesarean section. However, her respiratory status quickly deteriorated, and a delayed vaginal delivery would only increase the risk of maternal and perinatal death.

Early in the night on Memorial Day, a well-oiled team of physicians, nurses, medical staff and residents and fellows, worked together and delivered a baby to a critically ill COVID-19 patient by cesarean section. No more than a few hours into his life, the newborn was extubated and feeding. And on June 3, 2020, the mother was extubated and is now home after a month of rehabilitation.

The road to full recovery may be long and hard for this mother, but as I sit and reflect on the series of events, I realize the power of information-sharing for decision-making in medicine, and I feel particularly blessed to be part of the Philadelphia medical community. 

DURING THESE CHAOTIC, ISOLATING TIMES, IT'S HEARTWARMING TO HEAR FROM COLLEAGUES, OLD FRIENDS, AND MENTORS. WE REACHED OUT TO OUR EMERITUS MEMBERS AND ASKED THEM TO SHARE GREETINGS AND UPDATES.

“ Doing well retired over 3 years ago. Wishing everyone health, wellness and safety.”

ROBERT I. MICHAELSON, MD

“ Please let folks know that I have enjoyed 2 years of retirement. I have concentrated very heavily on my hobby of photography & would love to share images if anyone is interested. My wife & I are surviving COVID-19, playing it very carefully at home. A number of trips to the family & to photography destinations have been canceled. I hope to get back out on the road in 2021.”

BE WELL,

ROBERT I. MICHAELSON, MD

“ It was so nice to hear from you. I miss all my Philly friends. I have retired and moved to Florida. I am no longer practicing medicine.”

CARL DELLABADIA, DO

“ I closed my Gyn practice on July 22nd but continue to read DXA's for St Luke's West, a 25 year 'hobby'. My newer Company is called Firstline Care. My address is Trexler Park Bldg, 3131 College Heights Suite 200B Allentown Pa 18104. It will be great when this insanity ceases!”

BRUCE VIECHNICKI, MD

“ Hello, I am retired. Covid-wise, my wife and I are fine-so far! Our son, a nursing home nurse did have the virus, but is all better now.”

RONALD LOEWE, MD, FACOG



“ I have been retired since 2016, and I am doing well. My greatest joy since retiring is waking up without an alarm clock. I miss seeing all of you, and I hope all of you are well.”

MONA SHANGOLD, MD

“ Hello, Enjoying retirement.. Miss friends and colleagues.”

COURTNEY MALCARNEY, MD

“ I am fortunate to be able to continue to audit courses at Bucknell mainly in the Humanities by Zoom which is ok but we all miss the interaction of being in class together.”

BEST ALWAYS,
MARION BROWN, DO

“ I am happily retired and send my best regards to those of my very senior colleagues who are still around.”

JULIAN D. FELDMAN, M.D.



“ I miss the Obstetrical Society in person meetings. My family and I are well.

I have taken Emeritus status and now caring for patients and teaching a few days weekly for which I am grateful to be of service.”

STEVE SONDEHEIMER, M.D.

PLEASE THINK ABOUT SHARING YOUR OWN GREETING,
ANNOUNCEMENT, AND PHOTOS IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.
SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO TERI WISELEY AT OBPHILA@YAHOO.COM

2020-21 Meeting Schedule



October 15, 2020

Zoom Meeting

Panel Discussion –Practice during COVID19

What did you do? What will you keep doing? Where are you now?

Aasta Mehta, MD, MPP

Medical Officer of Women's Health, Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Vincenzo Berghella, M.D. - Maternal Fetal Medicine

Mark Shahin, M.D. - Gynecologic Oncology

Bethany Perry, M.D. - Family Planning

Annette Lee, M.D. – Reproductive Endocrinology

November 19, 2020

Zoom Meeting

Racial Disparity in Obstetrical Outcomes from Roots to Reduction

Sarah Wheeler, M.D., Maternal Fetal Medicine, Duke University

January 14, 2021

Venue TBA

HIV in Pregnancy – What is new?

The Health Federation of Philadelphia

February 11, 2021

Venue TBA

Prenatal Diagnosis: The Next Step

Ronald Wapner, M.D.

Director, Reproductive Genetics

Columbia University, New York, NY

March 11, 2021

Venue TBA

Transgender Surgery and the Impact on the Gynecology Office

Christine McGinn, D.O. Papillon Center for Gender Wellness

April 16, 2020

Venue TBA

President's Night – Innovation in OBGYN and our Role in Stewardship

Donald J. DeBrakeleer, D.O., Axia Women's Health, Chief, Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery, Einstein Health System

Resident Education Day

To be announced

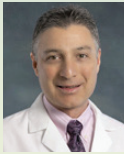


Obstetrical Society of Philadelphia

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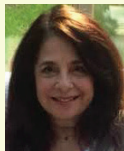


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