

New York and New Jersey Education and Research Center Annual Report

ERC summary and relevance, and key personnel

ERC Summary:

The New York and New Jersey Education and Research Center, serves Federal Region II, which is comprised of the states of New York and New Jersey, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U. S. Virgin Islands. The mission of NY/NJ ERC is to educate professionals in occupational medicine, industrial hygiene, ergonomics and occupational safety and health engineering, so that they are able to understand, evaluate, prevent, manage and treat occupational disease and injury in the workers of our region and across the United States. Center Administration is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the ERC, serves as liaison between the programs and NIOSH, and is responsible for interdisciplinary interaction and coordination among the programs and their faculty and students. NY/NJ ERC is a consortium of five educational institutions (www.nynjerc.org) offering nine programs in occupational health and safety training, covering all of the four essential core areas for ERC's, namely Occupational Medicine, Industrial Hygiene and Occupational Safety/Ergonomics, and Occupational Health Nursing. Constituent programs are:

- Occupational Medicine and Pilot Project Research Programs at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai (New York City, NY);
- Occupational Medicine at the Rutgers School of Public Health (Piscataway, NJ);
- Industrial Hygiene at CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy (New York City, NY);
- Occupational Safety and Health Engineering at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (Newark, NJ);
- Occupational Ergonomics and Biomechanics Program at New York University (New York City, NY);
- Occupational and Environmental Health Nursing at New York University (New York City, NY);
- Continuing Education, Outreach, and Interdisciplinary Programs, at Rutgers School of Public Health (Somerset, NJ).

Relevance:

Occupational safety and health is a key component of public health, and the training we provide is primary prevention of accidents and workplace hazards. Our Center focuses on educating our students to make workplaces a safer environment in which to work.

Key Personnel:

Roberto Lucchini, MD

ERC Director

Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

1 Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1057, New York, NY

(212) 824-7052

roberto.lucchini@mssm.edu

Mitchel Rosen, PhD

ERC Deputy Director, CE Program Director, Interdisciplinary Program Director, Outreach

Program Director

Rutgers School of Public Health

NYNJ Education and Research Center
Roberto Lucchini, MD
300 Atrium Drive, Somerset, NJ
(732) 235-9452
mrosen@rutgers.edu

Brian Pavilonis, PhD
IH Program Director
CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy
55 W 125th Street, New York, NY
(646) 364-9509
Brian.pavilonis@sph.cuny.edu

Arijit Segupta, PhD
Occupational Safety and Health Engineering Program Director
New Jersey Institute of Technology
GITC 2513, Newark, NJ
(973) 642-7073
sengupta@njit.edu

George Olsen, PhD
Occupational Safety and Health Engineering Program Deputy Director
New Jersey Institute of Technology
GITC 4414, Newark, NJ
(973) 596-3389
golsen@njit.edu

Ali Sheikhzadeh, PhD
Occupational Ergonomics and Biomechanics Program Director
New York University
63 Downing Street, New York, NY
(212) 255-6690
Ali.Sheikhzadeh@nyumc.org

Shira Weiner, PT, PhD
Occupational Ergonomics and Biomechanics Program Deputy Director
New York University
63 Downing Street, New York, NY
(212) 652-1933
ssw219@nyu.edu

John Meyer, MD, MPH
OM Program Director
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
1 Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1057, New York, NY
(212) 824-7057
john.meyer@mssm.edu

NYNJ Education and Research Center
Roberto Lucchini, MD

Michael Pratt, MD, MPH
OM Program Director
Rutgers School of Public Health
170 Frelinghuysen Road, Piscataway, NJ
(848) 445-6048
pratt@eohsi.rutgers.edu

Yueh-Hsiu Mathilda Chiu, ScD
Pilot Project Program Director
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
1 Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1057, New York, NY
(212) 824-7075
mathilda.chiu@mssm.edu

Koshy Koshy, PhD
CE Program Deputy Director
Rutgers School of Public Health
300 Atrium Drive, Somerset, NJ
(732) 235-9459
koshko@rutgers.edu

Victoria Vaughan Dickson, PhD, CRNP, FAHA, FHFSA, FAAN
OHN Program Director
New York University, Rory Meyers College of Nursing
433 First Ave, #742, New York, NY 10010
(212) 992-9426
vdickson@nyu.edu

Amy Witkoski Stimpfel, PhD, RN
OHN Program Deputy Director
New York University, Rory Meyers College of Nursing
433 First Avenue, Office 658, New York, NY 10010
(212) 992-9387
as8078@nyu.edu

ERC web link: www.nynjerc.org

Program highlights of high impact:

Program highlights of high impact: Interdisciplinary

The NY/NJ ERC conducted their 12th Historical Perspectives on Occupational Safety and Health Tour. The tour included visits to a coal mine in Lackawanna, PA; a dairy farm in Loganton, PA; auto manufacturing in Dearborn and Pontiac, MI; Beryllium in Elmore, OH; steel manufacturing and the NIOSH PPTL in Pittsburgh, PA. In addition to the NYNJ trainees, three trainees from the University of Cincinnati ERC participated.

The tour provided our trainees the opportunity to see how work impacts health, by visiting work locations that have high injury rates. Comments from the students include:

“The most valuable aspect of the Historical Perspectives Tour was the ability to interact with peers who are have different fields of study within occupational safety and health. Prior to the trip, I was not sure what an Industrial Hygienist did and I appreciated the relaxed learning atmosphere.”

“The convergence between theory, actual places of work, workers and professionals engaged in teaching and working in occupational was a dynamic and multi-faceted approach in actual places to bring occupational health and safety to life.”

“This visit is extremely valuable to me because I am new in the field of EHS and had I not seen the inside hardships of various sites, I wouldn't have been able to picture or even understand the issues from the outside.”

“How crucial interprofessional education is to become a good competent occupational medicine physician. Seeing workers at their own sites, helps you learn and appreciate their work conditions, their challenges and hazards on a whole new level that can never be learned as well from a classroom or clinic. Seeing workers from a variety of settings and occupations was very beneficial and this trip was one of my most memorable experiences in my medical career.”

“The experience of being glued to this huge cacophony of people for 5 days while we do very school-like things in this non-school context was phenomenal - it's less intense in study, but it never stops. From the bus ride briefings, to the work site tours, to the afterward dinner conversations, the theme is always there; but it's ok because you don't see it as tedious work. Finally, the social connections you make, whether reinforcing relationships you already have with classmates, or making new connections with new people just outside your own professional circle, those experiences are invaluable.”

The tour provides the opportunity for students to understand the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration to address occupational safety and health issues.

Program highlights of high impact: Continuing Education

The Continuing Education Program has been teaching the NIOSH-Approved (#043) Spirometry training for over 30 years. Being able to provide this course to occupational health nurses (OHN) at their worksites is essential. Our offsite Spirometry courses are held at small to mid-size manufacturing sites, with multiple work shifts. Most of them do not have the scheduling flexibility for staff to attend multiple days of training at Rutgers and the initial spirometry training cannot be completed online. Having the ability to bring this course to worksites allows for scheduling flexibility and travel savings for the employers while meeting their training needs. Laurie Heagy, Medical Services Manager at East Penn Manufacturing Co. said, “We have been sending our staff to your training programs for over 25 years. I can’t say enough about the opportunity to have these courses offered on our own site. These courses allow us to take a look at our own programs in more detail when we are the only ones in the class so we can improve our own programs. Thank you for providing great quality programs for occupational health professionals and especially for providing to us at our location.”

Coordinating the delivery and return of multiple spirometers (manual and electronic) to the training site is essential to these efforts as students must demonstrate proficiency in operating multiple devices to successfully complete the training. Being able to meet the needs of occupational health and safety professionals is the essence of our training center. Providing training for employees at their worksite enables them to receive the training that is needed to improve their skills.

Program highlights of high impact: Ergonomics/Biomechanics and OEHN

Drawing on the expertise of ERBI allows our trainees to focus on the musculoskeletal challenges faced by all workers, including the aging workforce. ERBI's track record in research, injury prevention, and industry partnerships provides the foundation for advancing our efforts to address the OSH needs of a changing US workforce. This is a natural extension of ERBI's agenda to date. Together with NIOSH, ERBI is a leader in advancing the health and wellness of workers as these changes evolve. As a first step the ERC is collaborating with OEHN, a partner in the ERC, to explore occupational demands associated with aging nurses. This branching out allows for future growth and possibilities, and this first effort is focusing on the aging nursing workforce. An ERC funded pilot project is underway exploring the literature for key variables associated related to aging nurses and work ability. The variables are then to be used to inform a qualitative study, involving semi-structured interviews and focus groups with older nurses.

This collaboration with nursing furthers the mission of the ERC in expanding the pool of well-trained and competent OSH workers in the region. While each distinct arm of the ERC, including ERBI, contribute a unique OSH perspective, such interdisciplinary collaboration allows each respective discipline to broaden their viewpoint of the problems and needs of working

groups. As the outlook for OSH workers suggests insufficient numbers in the coming years, engaging inter-professionally is an important step in increasing the skills and expertise of both ERBI and nursing personnel. Furthermore, this relationship can serve as a model for future collaborations with other professional groups currently not engaged in OSH, yet with the skills and knowledge-base for OSH engagement.

Program highlights of high impact: Occupational Medicine

While still a resident, Yvonne Farnacio, MD MPH, was chosen to represent all preventive medicine residents nationally on the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Preventive Medicine Residency Review Committee. The committee work was a significant investment in time, but has helped prepare Dr. Farnacio for a leadership role in occupational and environmental medicine while offering service to her specialty.

While at Rutgers, Dr. Farnacio excelled in all her academic and clinical work. She was afforded the honor of presenting her capstone project, funded in part by the ERC NIOSH grant, from the podium at the American Occupational Health Conference. The research was also presented as a poster at NIOSH's 2017 State of the Science conference. As lead author she has seen this research through to recent publication (currently in press) in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine: Are Workplace Psychosocial Factors Associated with Work-Related Injury in the US Workforce? National Health Interview Survey, 2010. In this cross-sectional study, Dr. Farnacio, et. al. found that a hostile work environment was significantly associated with injury and that the increased injury risk may exist even outside the workplace.

Dr. Farnacio is a board-certified occupational medicine working full-time at the JFK Occupational Medicine Clinic where she continues to give back selflessly to our current residents as a supervising external practicum physician.