The Miriam Hospital Infectious Diseases and Immunology Center

The Miriam Hospital Infectious Diseases and Immunology Center serves as the outpatient infectious diseases clinic for the Lifespan System. The Center has a number of different components, including:

- HIV Specialist and Primary care
- Hepatitis C and Hepatitis C/HIV co-infection specialty care
- General Infectious Diseases consultation
- Outpatient parenteral antimicrobial therapy (OPAT)
- Rhode Island’s only Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) clinic
- Rhode Island’s tuberculosis treatment clinic (the RISE Clinic)

The Infectious Diseases and Immunology Center is the largest provider of HIV care services between New York and Boston, and serves over 1,600 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) annually (about 70% of the HIV-positive population of Rhode Island). It is a Ryan White funded clinic and has a large Ryan White staff, including three nurse case managers, a social worker, a psychologist and five psychology residents/fellows, a part-time psychiatrist, three outreach workers, a peer navigator, a pharmacist, and a physician assistant who specializes in medication assisted therapy (buprenorphine) for substance use disorder. The Center also has a large outpatient ID (non-HIV) component. About half of the nearly 1,000 visits per month are non-HIV related and consist of OPAT, hepatitis C, and general infectious diseases. The STI clinic sees an additional 250 patients per month that present for routine screening and subsequent treatment if applicable. The RISE/TB Clinic sees an additional 450 patients per month that are managed for both latent and active TB infections. The Brown Infectious Diseases division has 34 active faculty within the Lifespan system, of whom 21 actively see outpatients in the ID & Immunology Center.

HIV-related outcomes at the Center are overall very impressive: 86% of the Center's patients were virologically suppressed in 2015, and 77% were retained in care. The key to success of the Center has been the integration of clinical care services with intensive medical case management services, non-medical case management services, mental health, peer education, outreach, and pharmacy, which have supported the engagement and retention of patients with challenging social circumstances and complex comorbid illnesses. These integrated services have historically been possible because of the vital support of Ryan White funding.

Additionally, The Miriam Hospital has the only inpatient HIV service in Rhode Island (called the Immunology Service). The service generally has between two and eight patients admitted and is a teaching service for the house staff from the Brown Internal Medicine residency program. An attending physician from the clinic serves as the admitting attending for this service.

Role of ID Clinical Pharmacist Specialists at Lifespan

There are currently three Clinical Pharmacist Specialists in Infectious Diseases employed through Lifespan Corporation: an ASP/ID PharmD at TMH, an ASP/ID PharmD at Rhode Island Hospital (RIH), and an HIV/ID PharmD at TMH ID & Immunology Clinic. The ID pharmacists work as a team and collaborate with one another frequently on projects, guidelines, and protocols. The ID pharmacists are members of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Subcommittee and attend Infection Control meetings regularly.
Role of ID Clinical Pharmacist Specialist at TMH ID & Immunology Center

Specific roles for the pharmacist at TMH ID & Immunology Center include:

- Assistance with managing patients with polypharmacy and complex drug/drug interactions and medication adjustments (HIV and hepatitis C medications)
- Medication adherence assistance with HIV positive individuals
- Providing medication counseling to all patients with a new diagnosis of HIV and assisting with medication selection and prescription coordination with the outpatient Miriam Hospital Pharmacy
- Assistance with managing patients with multi-drug resistant HIV and opportunistic infections
- Attend Monday morning Immunology (HIV) Signout Rounds on the inpatients, act as a resource to the inpatient attending regarding drug/drug interactions or management questions, and round with inpatient HIV service on a rotational basis
- Co-management of hepatitis C patients with the physicians and nurse specialists
- Assistance with outpatient antimicrobial stewardship initiatives and developing new outpatient pharmacy initiatives to advance patient care
- Assistance with therapeutic drug monitoring and dose adjustments for patients in the OPAT program, working with the physician assistant nurses
- Assistance with accessing medications for HIV and Hepatitis C positive patients – prior authorizations, peer-to-peers, help accessing patient assistance programs, etc.
- Serving as a liaison to the outpatient Miriam Hospital pharmacy
- Preceptorship of PGY1 and PGY2 pharmacy residents and students in infectious diseases clinical rotations
- Didactic lecturing for therapeutics course for two Physician Assistant schools, Johnson and Wales University and Bryant University

Qualifications

- Doctor of Pharmacy degree
- Eligible for pharmacist licensure in Rhode Island
- Completed an ASHP-Accredited PGY1 pharmacy residency and an ASHP-Accredited PGY2 in infectious diseases or applicable residency or equivalent experience


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