

FRRP

FELLOWSHIP AND RESIDENCY RESEARCH PROGRAM

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO.1 - SPRING 2015

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the first newsletter for the Fellowship and Residency Research Program (FRRP), an educational program providing residents with research skills that would motivate them to have a positive perspective and augment their efforts to develop a career in biomedical research.

The idea of the FRRP started while discussing the benefits of research on medical students. Based on the ongoing discussion, we raised the issue to the dean of the Faculty of Medicine who together with faculty members supported and welcomed the innovative idea. Laying the groundwork for our project was an exciting phase since it marked the accomplishment of our first milestone.

After the different departments in the Faculty of Medicine vastly acknowledged and applauded the designated idea, we kicked off the implementation phase by establishing the FRRP office. Residents constantly came in and out to present their inquiries and project ideas. Slowly, our office gained momentum, and the administration believed in our mission. Soon enough, we were a separate entity with its own interdependent collaborations with all the departments at the Faculty of Medicine. Our outcomes were fruitfully embodied through seven FRRP research projects published in peer reviewed journals thus elevating research at AUBMC to higher standards, keeping in mind that more projects are yet to come.

Our hope is to engage other faculties at AUB and to enhance enthusiasm and departmental collaboration. The FRRP has been a remarkable experience for all participating members. Establishing the program and reaching success year after year has proven to us that nothing is impossible. Looking back, it was a wonderful experience, and we wouldn't have done it any differently.

Dr. Ali Taher
Dr. Hani Tamim
FRRP Directors

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OVERVIEW OF THE FRRP

The FRRP has been set as a required component for all attending residents and medical fellows of the Fellowship and Residency Program at the Faculty of Medicine at AUBMC.

The FRRP is directed by Dr. Ali Taher, Associate Chair for Clinical Research, Department of Internal Medicine, and Dr. Hani Tamim, Director of the Biostatistics Unit, Clinical Research Institute.

Its main objectives are to accommodate residents who have no prior experience in research or those with previous research backgrounds and to ameliorate their research skills by carrying out a research project throughout their residency/ fellowship period.

History and Progress

2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implemented at the Department of Internal Medicine14 PGY1 categorical residents joined the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Program expanded to all AUBMC departments.62 categorical residents joined the program.A committee was formed at a departmental level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">152 residents (PGY1, 2 or 3) worked on FRRP research projects.14 PGY3 Internal Medicine residents graduated in the Open House ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none">221 residents (PGY1, 2 or 3) worked on their FRRP projects.45 residents are to graduate from the program in the 2015 Open House ceremony.

OUR SERVICES

- Follow up with the residents, advisors, and representatives on weekly basis.
- Maintain liaison with residents to address and solve challenges facing them at each stage and keep track of their progress.
- Provide our residents with the necessary skills in clinical research.
- Guide the residents with the IRB process.
- Provide the residents with adequate support in statistical analysis.
- Assist the residents in finalizing their publications and posting them in peer reviewed journals.

OUR PROCESS

Throughout the residency period, residents are expected to conduct their own research projects and pass through the different stages of the FRRP process.

The process begins upon submitting the letter of intent followed by the proposal, gaining IRB approval, and presenting progress presentations. It ends up with a final manuscript to be published in an international peer reviewed journal.

STEP 1 LETTER OF INTENT	STEP 2 PROPOSAL	STEP 3 IRB APPROVAL	STEP 4 PROGRESS PRESENTATIONS	STEP 5 FINAL MANUSCRIPT	STEP 6 PUBLICATION
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OUR TEAM



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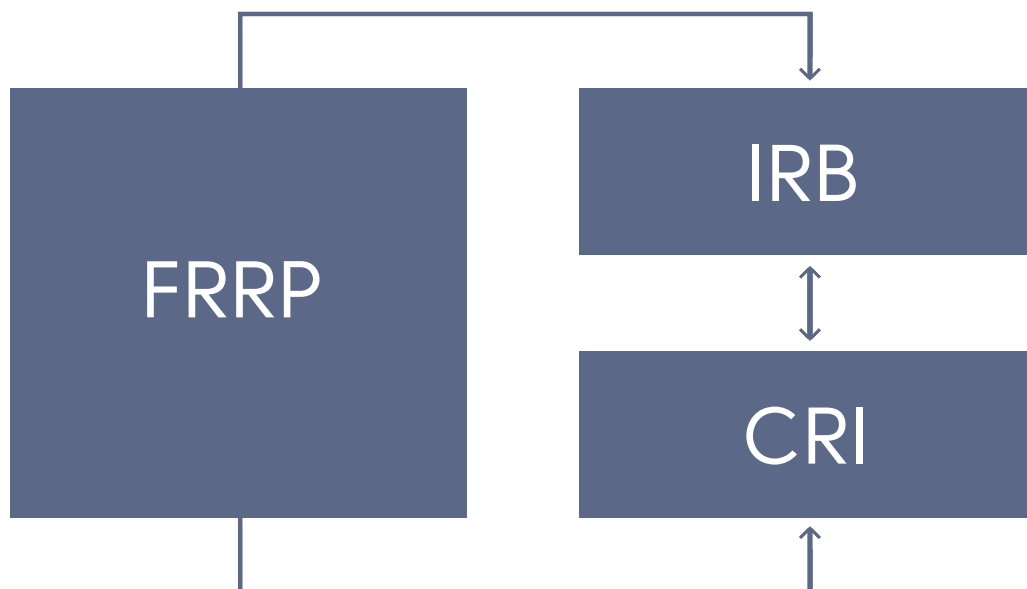
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OUR CONNECTIONS

The FRRP, involving all the residents from the different AUBMC departments, collaborates with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Clinical Research Institute (CRI).



OPEN HOUSE 2014

The FRRP and the Faculty of Medicine at AUBMC organized their first research open house on Thursday, May 22, 2014 showcasing 14 graduating residents who presented their research.

The event was successful in recognizing the residents' efforts by providing them with the opportunity to elaborate on the results of their collaborative research conducted under the supervision of faculty advisors. The diversified faculty research activities and their continuous growth at AUBMC were also accentuated during the event.

The Research Open House welcomed visitors from the clinical and academic fields including clinical researchers, medical students and trainees, governmental representatives, and members of research centers, universities and general public.

The diligent efforts of Drs. Ali Taher and Hani Tamim, the Internal Medicine faculty members who supervised the residents' projects and the FRRP staff led the 1st FRRP graduation to thrive with success.



FRRP AWARDS

Prizes were awarded to the first group of graduating residents who participated in the Fellowship and Residency Research Program (FRRP). First prize went to Razmik Warakian, second prize to Eliane Younes, and the third to Nisrine Ghazal.



Dr. Razmik Warakian (Advisor: Dr. Farid Talih), our first prize winner.



Dr. Eliane Younes (Advisor: Dr. Hassan Chami), our second prize winner.



Dr. Nisrine Ghazal (Advisor: Dr. Ghada Fuleihan), our third prize winner.

HAPPY HOUR, DECEMBER 2014

The Fellowship and Residency Research Program (FRRP) at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) organized its third Happy Hour Event on December 17, 2014 at Casper & Gambini Med Café promoting three residents' publications.

Raja N. Khuri Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Vice President of Medical Affairs, Dr. Mohamed Sayegh and Associate Dean for Translational and Clinical Research, Dr. Samia Khoury were two special guests who attended the event in the presence of faculty members from all clinical and academic fields, FRRP representatives, medical staff, residents, fellows and medical students.

The director of the FRRP, Dr. Ali Taher, welcomed the attending guests before Dr. Samia Khoury gave an overview of the program and its benefits for the residents.

The achievements of three residents: Iman Abou Dalle, Jessica Aoun and Tharwat el Zahran were celebrated during the ceremony. They presented their publications and shared their FRRP experience while emphasizing the significance of gaining research skills throughout the residency/fellowship period.

Dr. Mohamed Sayegh wrapped up the occasion by shedding light on the accomplishments attained by the FRRP, a new initiative to elevate research to a higher standard. A cocktail reception followed the event.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FRRP REPRESENTATIVE: DR. RAMI MAHFOUZ
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF PATHOLOGY
AND LAB MEDICINE

Q: How do you evaluate the Fellowship and Residency Research Program?

A: FRRP is an exciting and extremely educational program. It has delineated the necessary steps needed to reshape the concept of research among residents in an academic institution.

Q: In what way will the program enhance the residents' research abilities?

A: The FRRP leads residents to become more proficient investigators and authors in the future, and in turn mentor another group of junior medical students, interns, or residents.

Q: Do you have any comment/ advice for future residents?

A: My advice to all residents is to roll up their sleeves and benefit the most from a wonderful experience and unique opportunity in their academic journey by getting enrolled in the FRRP program as early as possible.



FRRP ADVISOR: DR. ZEINA KANAFANI
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

Q: Do you believe that a research experience is important for a physician who is only considering the clinical practice?

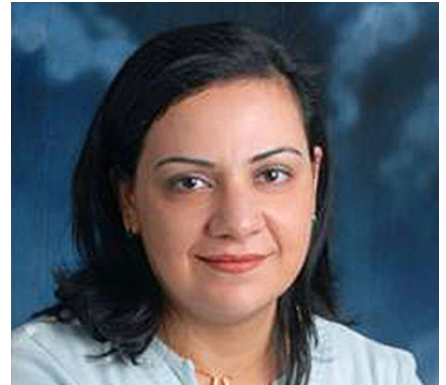
A: Absolutely. Even if they are interested in a purely clinical practice, all physicians should acquire some research experience. Getting exposed to research might change their views, and they might start considering an academic career. On the other hand, clinicians are expected to rely on scientific evidence in the care of their patients. Therefore, they need to know how to appraise this evidence so that they can make correct decisions at the bedside.

Q: As an FRRP advisor, what are the challenges that you faced along the way?

A: Residents can't dedicate enough time to their projects and their IRB approvals are sometimes delayed again due to their limited time. Furthermore, There is limited access and availability of medical records. Sometimes, residents lack the enthusiasm needed to complete the work after submitting the FRRP report or after graduation.

Q: Do you think that the FRRP has enhanced the relationship between the resident and the attending physician involved in the projects?

A: In general yes, but it really depends on the residents and their dedication to their work. When the resident is fully engaged, his relation with the attending physician strengthens, and such a relation benefits both. However, a lot of work has to be done from the faculty's side to energize and motivate the resident.



FRRP RESIDENT: DR. MARIA RAMIA
FAMILY MEDICINE PGY4 RESIDENT

Q: How do you describe your FRRP experience?

A: It's a good educational experience which paved my way to learn more about research skills and statistical analysis.

Q: Do you recommend the program for the new coming residents?

A: Of course, I do. The FRRP engages the residents with all the major aspects of research, thus exposing them to the most accurate methods involved in conducting the study and leading them to pass through each phase with minimal error.

Q: Do you think that the research experience will enhance your medical career?

A: Definitely! A research experience gives the resident a rich perspective about the different studies conducted around the world. This helps in building personal knowledge on solid ground.



PUBLICATIONS

- **Nabulsi M, Yazbeck N, Charafeddine F.** Lactose-free milk for infants with acute gastroenteritis in a developing country: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial. *BioMed Central Trials*. (Impact factor 2.12)2015
Dr. **Fatmeh Charafeddine**, a first year Pediatrics Fellow, will be part of the 2015 Open House.
- **Massad C, Loya A, Taraif S, Saroufim M, Kibbi AG, Habib R, Novy M, Rauscher B, Oberkanins C, Khalifeh I.** BRAF mutation status in primary and metastatic melanomas in two regions with differing potential ultraviolet radiation exposure. *Clin Exp Dermatol*. (Impact Factor: 1.23)2014 (Dec)
Dr. **Cleo Massad**, a PGY3 Pathology and Lab Medicine Resident, will be part of the 2016 Open House.
- **Saab M, El Hage H, Charafeddine K, Habib RH, Khalifeh I.** Diagnosis of Cutaneous Leishmaniasis: Why Punch When You Can Scrape? *Am J Trop Med Hyg*. (Impact Factor: 2.736) 2015 (Jan 5)
Dr. **Mario Saab**, a PGY2 Pathology and Lab Medicine Resident, will be part of the 2017 Open House.
- **Abou Rahal J, Kurban M, Kibbi AG, Abbas O.** Plasmacytoid dendritic cells in alopecia areata. *J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol*. (Impact Factor: 3.105) 2014 (Dec 29)
Dr. **Jihane Abou Rahal**, a PGY4 Dermatology Resident, will be part of the 2015 Open House.
- **El Sayed MJ, El Zahran T, Tamim H.** Acute stroke care and thrombolytic therapy use in a tertiary care center in Lebanon. *Emerg. Med Int*. 2014 (Jul 16)
Dr. **Tharwat El Zahran**, a PGY3 Emergency Medicine Resident, will be part of the 2016 Open House.
- **Jessica Aoun, Robert Habib, Khalil Charaffeddine, Suad Taraif, Asif Loya, Ibrahim Khalifeh.** Caseating Granulomas in Cutaneous Leishmaniasis. *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases journal* (impact factor 4.57) 2014 [In Press].
Dr. **Jessica Aoun**, a PGY4 Pathology and Lab Medicine Resident, will be part of the 2015 Open House.
- **Dalle I, Reljic T, Nishihori T, Antar A, Bazarbachi A, Djulbegovic B, Kumar A, Kharfan-Dabaja MA.** Extracorporeal photopheresis in steroid-refractory acute or chronic graft-versus-host disease: results of a systematic review of prospective studies. *Biology of Blood Marrow Transplantation* 2014 (May 24) [E-pub. ahead of print].
Dr. **Iman Abou Dalle**: graduated in the 2014 Open House ceremony. She is currently a fellow in the Department of Internal Medicine.

DO YOU KNOW?

- For the academic year 2014/ 2015, the total number of categorical residents is 221.
- The total number of advisors mentoring residents at any given time is 83.
- Every year, we have a number of publications from the FRRP among different departments.
- **In 2014**
 - **Internal Medicine**: 1 publication/ 8 attempted/ 6 pending
 - **Dermatology**: 1 publication
 - **Emergency Medicine**: 1 publication
 - **Pathology and Lab Medicine**: 3 publications
 - **Pediatrics**: 1 publication

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You are all invited to share, invite friends, like, comment, discuss, post and whatever you see worth sharing with a hopefully big community of followers.

For latest updates on FRRP news and events, follow us on:

