2016-2017 MPH Practicum Award Recipients

The 2016-2017 awardees are:

**Megan Elizabeth Collins**

**Project Title:** Vision for Baltimore Practicum  
**Partner Organizations:** Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore City Health Department

Vision for Baltimore (V4B) is a new city-wide initiative to provide school-based eye care to children in Baltimore. This three-year program is a partnership between Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore City Public Schools, Vision To Learn, Warby Parker and Johns Hopkins University. While failing a vision screening is the first sign of vision problems in 75% of children, many children in high-poverty neighborhoods do not access the recommended follow up eye care. Even when children do get glasses, they are often lost or broken and never replaced. V4B eliminates many barriers to receiving eye care by bringing all services directly to schools - vision screenings for all students in grades pre-K through 8th grade, eye exams in the mobile vision clinic for students who fail a screening, and free eyeglasses for students who need them. The innovation V4B offers is not only delivering eye care directly to schools, but also coming back again and again - first with glasses, then to offer educational activities about vision and eye health and then to replace glasses as needed. Megan's practicum involvement with V4B is focused on designing educational programs and incentives campaigns to promote program participation, creating a manual of operations to cover all aspects of program logistics and conducting the first quality improvement assessment of the program to identify and troubleshoot issues that impact program success. Ultimately, we hope the V4B program can serve as a model for school-based eye care that can be adopted nationally.

**Shanna B. Dell**

**Project Title:** HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Linkage to Care in the Johns Hopkins Hospital Adult Emergency Department  
**Partner Organization:** Johns Hopkins Hospital

This practicum sought to inform the creation of a linkage to care program for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) by examining factors associated with patients' willingness to access HIV PrEP services in the Johns Hopkins Hospital Emergency Department (JHH ED). This is particularly important because individuals most at risk for HIV often do not access primary care regularly, seeking medical care primarily in emergency departments, and have low uptake of PrEP. The practicum consisted of the creation and dissemination of a tablet-based anonymous survey examining self-reported HIV risk factors and willingness to access PrEP services in the ED of patients seeking care in the JHH ED. Practicum activities included process mapping of JHH ED HIV testing procedures, consensus building with JHH ED and JHH PrEP program stakeholders, and study creation and implementation. Study creation and implementation involved obtaining IRB approval, a successful grant application from The Center for AIDS Adolescent and Young Adult Scientific Working
Maharashtra, with 114 million people, is India’s second most populous state and is known to have a high prevalence of Vitamin B12 deficiency amongst pregnant women. This deficiency is implicated in several adverse outcomes for the developing fetus and Srishti sought to develop socio-culturally appropriate dietary guidelines to address this. The first part of this practicum was completing the course by Dr. Paige and Dr. Gross, *Nutrition and Growth in Maternal and Child Health* which gave her an opportunity to learn about the role of various micronutrients in embryogenesis. Working with Dr. Paige, Srishti conducted a comprehensive literature review aimed at ascertaining the prevalence and causes of Vitamin B12 deficiency in this setting, paying attention to the effects of food habits, comorbidities and socioeconomic strata. With this background, she worked with a physician at a state hospital, B.Y.L. Nair in Mumbai, Maharashtra to study the available interventions. After taking into account the sizeable variation in costs, quality, availability and access, they designed bifurcated guidelines of locally-sourced Vitamin B12-rich foods for vegetarian and non-vegetarian groups. Srishti worked with two translators to convert these to the local language, Marathi as well as Hindi, for immigrants from neighboring states. With assistance from the Multimedia department at Johns Hopkins, she put these together as educational infographics which have begun to be disseminated at tertiary care centers in Maharashtra. This recommendation of encouraging consumption of freely available, low-cost foods will have a long-term impact in reducing B12 deficiency in pregnancy and associated neonatal mortality.

**Srishti Madhu Jayakumar**

**Project Title:** Developing Specific Dietary Guidelines to Address Vitamin B12 Deficiency in Pregnant Women in Maharashtra, India

**Partner Organization:** B.Y.L. Nair Hospital, Mumbai

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Prescription drug prices in the United States are skyrocketing making lifesaving medications unaffordable for millions of Americans. For example, the price of EpiPen, a medication that treats life-threatening allergic reactions, increased 508% from $50 to $304 per dose. In working with Maryland Citizens Health Initiative, Hussain engaged in grassroots advocacy to support the Prescription Drug Affordability Initiative, a set of two legislative bills that 1) Stop price-gouging of off-patent or generic drugs, 2) Require drug price transparency for expensive drugs, and 3) Require notification before price increases. During the practicum, Hussain grew the Maryland Health Care for All coalition by gaining support of statewide organizations. He organized members of the Young Professionals Chronic Disease Network Baltimore Chapter to call key constituents through phone banking sessions and targeted key legislators with a social media calling campaign. He met with legislators in Annapolis to discuss the importance of the initiative and published an opinion-editorial in the Daily Record. In addition, Hussain skillfully testified at hearings and work group meetings in Annapolis and created infographics to communicate key messages to legislators. Hussain’s

**Hussain Lalani**

**Project Title:** Advocating for the Prescription Drug Affordability Initiative Through Grassroots Community Organizing

**Partner Organizations:** Maryland Citizens Health Initiative, Maryland Health Care for All

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Group, and primary data collection. The results of this project will contribute to the knowledge base of HIV PrEP in ED settings and assist in creating the PrEP linkage to care protocol in the JHH ED.
Joseph Daniel Pauly

**Project Title:** Establishing a Surveillance Platform by Conducting Baseline Assessment for Streptococcus Pneumoniae of Indian Serotypes in the Pediatric Population

**Partner Organizations:** The INCLEN Trust International, Johns Hopkins International Vaccine Access Center

Pneumonia is the leading cause of death in children 1-59 months of age both globally and in India. *S. pneumoniae* is the most common cause of bacterial pneumonia and more information about the organism is needed to improve vaccine coverage throughout India. Collection and analysis of serotype prevalence and colonization data will help guide Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) development and vaccine distribution throughout India. Successful PCV rollout in India will reduce childhood mortality from bacterial pneumonia and significantly improve pediatric public health. The BASIS project in Palwal aims to establish epidemiologic surveillance infrastructure in rural Indian sites to identify the burden of *S. pneumoniae* by collection and analysis of nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs. During the practicum, Joe was involved in the rural site expansion of the BASIS protocol to include the village of Banchari in Palwal, Haryana, India. Joe assisted with all components of the study protocol including: field data collection, NP swab testing, case recruitment, and bacterial processing in the laboratory in Vellore, India. During protocol implementation, Joe performed an observational audit to standardize the study design process and ensure accuracy in case recruitment, data management and bacterial analysis. Joe provided insightful recommendations to enhance workflow and improve the community trial design. He also created a visual educational brochure to supplement informed consent and address barriers in health literacy for patients and their families. Ultimately, information from the BASIS rural site expansion will provide additional evidenced-based data to guide India’s national pneumococcal vaccine development and impact childhood survival in India.

Enrollment of children to participate in the BASIS pneumonia study in Banchari Village, Palwal, India.