

Research & Teaching AWARDS



2013 Morris F. Collen Research Awards
Teaching Awards for Excellence



The TPMG Research and Teaching Awards were established in 2003 to acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishments of practicing clinicians who also excel in research and teaching.

Morris F. Collen, MD



In 1948, Morris F. Collen, MD, became one of the seven founding physicians of The Permanente Medical Group. As a clinician, researcher and teacher, Dr. Collen made significant contributions to Medical Group colleagues and Kaiser Permanente members. Today he is recognized internationally for his pioneering work in applying computertechnology to medicine.

From 1953 to 1961, Dr. Collen served as Physician-in-Chief in San Francisco. He became Director of Medical Methods Research (now the Division of Research) in 1961, ending his tenure in 1979 when he became Director, Division of Technology Assessment.

Dr. Collen's work in medical computing attracted national attention. He was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Science in 1981, and served as Chair of the Library of Medicine's Board of Scientific Counselors from 1985 to 1987. As a Scholar-in-Residence from 1987 to 1993, he wrote a history of medical applications of the computer.

Since 1983, Dr. Collen has served as a Consultant with the Division of Research, and he remains an enthusiastic supporter of research and teaching in TPMG.

"To be a good physician, you have to keep up with what is new, which means you have to be involved in research and training. So patient care is our first obligation, and to maintain a good quality of care, we must also research and teach. And we do."

~ Morris F. Collen, MD



MORRIS F. COLLEN
RESEARCH
AWARD

Alexander Flint, MD, PhD

Neurosurgery, Redwood City

Alexander Flint, MD, PhD is recognized for his work as lead author of a study to examine the relationship between inpatient statin use and poststroke outcomes. Study results are reported in the article “Statin Use During Ischemic Stroke Hospitalization Is Strongly Associated With Improved Poststroke Survival,” first published in the journal *Stroke* (October 2011).

Prior to Dr. Flint’s study there were no clear guidelines about how soon to start statin therapy after an initial stroke. His study provided an answer, showing that patients who are given statins immediately upon hospitalization are more likely to survive the stroke and be able to go home, rather than dying or being referred to a rehabilitation center or nursing home. The study also showed that withdrawing statins in the hospital, even for a brief time, is associated with worsened survival.

“Dr. Flint’s work adds significantly to the growing body of literature underlying the importance” of stroke patients taking a statin.”

Stroke patients throughout Kaiser Permanente Northern California — and beyond — are already benefitting from the findings in Dr. Flint’s study. “We have broadly implemented these changes in our own stroke protocols, and national expert guidelines have followed suit,” says James O’Donnell, MD, Physician-in-Chief, Redwood City. “Dr. Flint’s work adds significantly to the growing body of literature underlying the importance of stroke patients taking a statin.”

Dr. Flint is currently proposing a follow-up study to determine the long-term clinical impact of increased statin utilization.



MORRIS F. COLLEN
RESEARCH
AWARD

Stephen Follansbee, MD

Infectious Diseases, San Francisco

In the late 1970s when Stephen Follansbee, MD began seeing patients hospitalized with unexplained fever and swollen lymph nodes, he, like other physicians, was puzzled. "In retrospect, these patients had acute HIV infection," he says. "That early experience prompted me to look for answers."

Dr. Follansbee has been looking for answers to the HIV/AIDS puzzle ever since; and helping to find many of them.

For more than three decades, he has been involved in virtually every aspect of research to improve the quality and duration of life for HIV/AIDS patients. He has participated in Phase II and Phase III drug development studies, vaccine research, diagnostic test development and is currently working to improve screening tests for anal cancer. His research has resulted in new treatment protocols for various infectious complications associated with AIDS.

"It's very gratifying to be able to sit with a patient and discuss options — to give them hope, where before there was none."

From the beginning, he has been inspired by the courage of his patients and their eagerness to participate in these research endeavors, even now, when there are so many more options.

"When I started, the average life expectancy of an AIDS patient was about nine months. Today, the outlook for a normal life expectancy is very good," he says. "It's very gratifying to be able to sit with a patient and discuss options — to give them hope, where before there was none."



TEACHING AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE
IN GME

Hillary Campbell, MD

Internal Medicine, North Valley

Hillary Campbell had many excellent teachers during her training, and as a result, she strives to be a stellar mentor to all of her students.

“My goal is to create an environment where medical students and residents feel supported and where they can learn,” she says. In her role as Director, she develops innovative UME and GME programs in conjunction with UC Davis.

Dr. Campbell developed and leads a summer program for second year medical students who are interested in primary care careers. She oversees the traditional primary care block rotation for third year medical students and a fourth year primary care elective. She also administers two primary care clinic experiences for UCD residents.

“My goal is to create an environment where medical students and residents feel supported and where they can learn.”

Recently, Dr. Campbell was designated as the Kaiser Permanente lead on a program funded by the American Medical Association to accelerate training for primary care physicians, in part, to meet the growing need for generalists with the advent of health care reform. Under the program, students who are committed to a career in primary care attend medical school for three years instead of four, then transition to their residency program at KP or UCD.

Dr. Campbell’s outstanding work as a clinician, mentor and educator have inspired more than one medical student to choose a career in primary care, often with TPMG.



TEACHING AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE
IN CME

Gillian Kuehner, MD

Surgery, Napa/Solano

Breast cancer patients hold a special place in the heart of Dr. Gillian Kuehner, and throughout her career she has worked to continually improve the quality and efficiency of their care.

“My goal is to ensure that we take a consistent approach to managing our breast patients,” says Dr. Kuehner.

As chair of the Napa/Solano committee for Breast Care, she instituted and facilitates a multidisciplinary tumor board as part of her efforts to get everyone “on the same page” to maintain a high quality of care for breast cancer patients. She helped standardize the format for the presentation of patients to ensure the inclusion of all data needed to develop a comprehensive treatment plan. She guides her colleagues in adopting treatment protocols based on best evidence, then works to develop consensus to ensure consistency of care.

“Everything we do ensures our patients are at the focus of our care at a very difficult time in their lives.”

She led the way in developing better workflows among the departments of pathology, radiology and surgery, to more efficiently — and compassionately — move patients through the diagnostic and treatment process; and educates primary care physicians and gynecologists about the new workflows.

Says Dr. Kuehner of her efforts: “Everything we do ensures our patients are at the focus of our care at a very difficult time in their lives.”