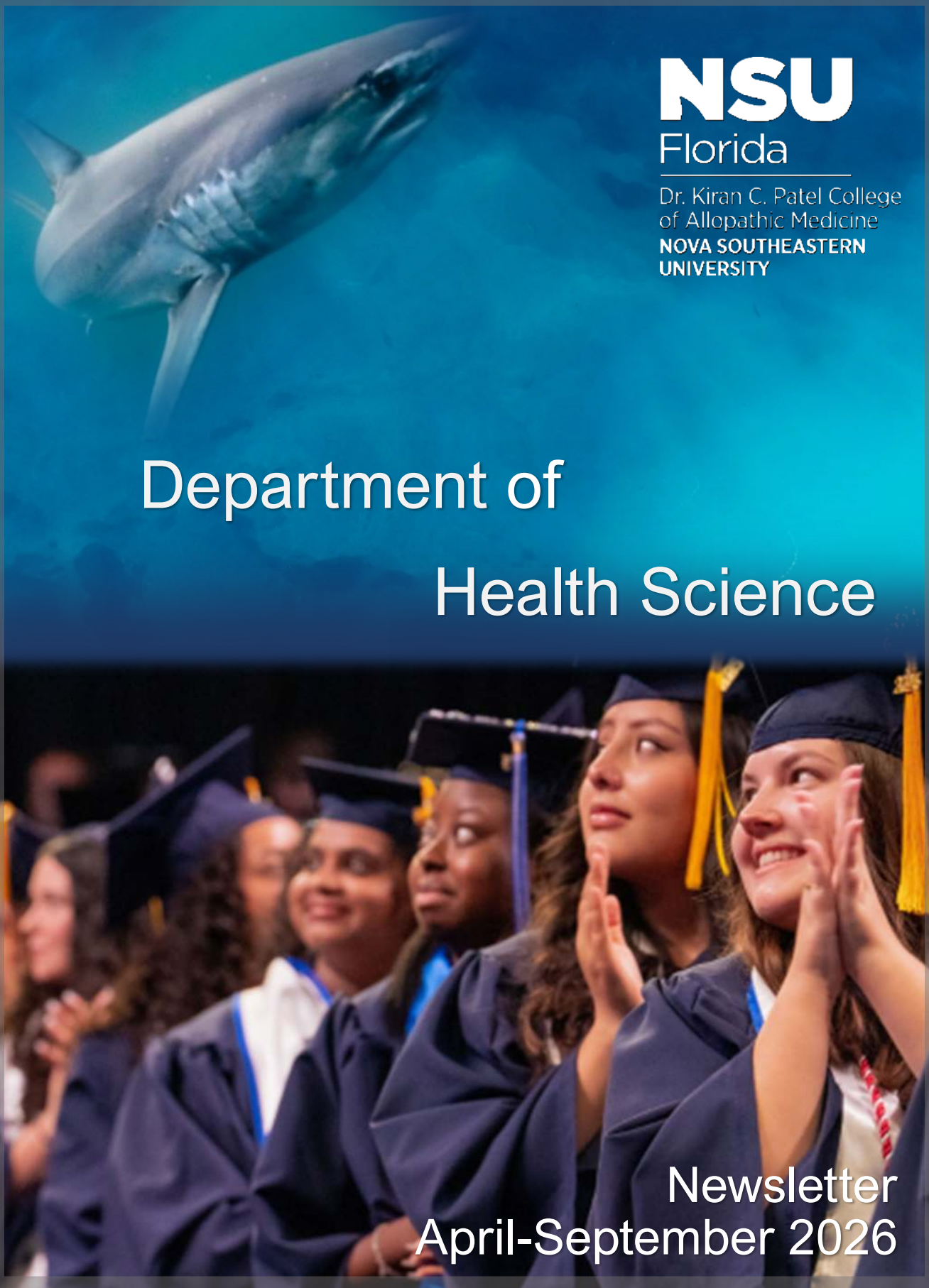

NSU Florida
Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine
NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Department of Health Science

Newsletter
April-September 2026

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NSU At a Glance

1 of 3

U.S. Universities with M.D. and D.O. Colleges

Only university in the U.S. offering M.D., D.O., and D.M.D. degrees

Largest

Educator of Physicians and Healthcare Professionals in Florida

Largest

Educator of Healthcare Professionals in the Nation

Includes doctoral degrees in medicine, dentistry, health sciences, nursing, pharmacy, and therapy

1 of 21

U.S. Universities with Both Carnegie's R1 and Opportunity College Rankings

Top-Tier R1

Florida's Largest Private Research University

Top 6

In the U.S. Professional and Doctoral Degrees Awarded

High Earnings

Graduates Who Earn Significantly Above the National Average

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
AMERICA'S BEST COLLEGES 2026
IN COOPERATION WITH COLLEGE PULSE AND statista

Best College

NSU is recognized as a Best College by the Wall Street Journal

CONFERENCES

RDH · UnderOneRoof

July 16-18, 2026
National Harbor, MD

RDH Under One Roof was a three-day, action-packed event that offered high-quality dental hygiene education. Dental hygienists learned from leading speakers in the industry through a variety of educational courses. Attendees also visited the exhibit floor to explore the latest dental hygiene products and dental equipment showcased by exhibitors.

Our college was represented by ***Brian Tachick***, Associate Director of Graduate Admissions.



USPHS SCIENTIFIC & TRAINING SYMPOSIUM

The 2026 USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium was a major national public health conference organized by the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps and its partners. The 58th Annual Symposium took place from May 18 to 21, 2026, at the Huntington Convention Center in Cleveland, Ohio.



Dr. Lynn Chevalier DHS, MPH (CPH), MS, CPC, CSSGB



Dr. Chevalier with a Health Science alumna

The 2026 theme, “USPHS Rocks! Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Service, and Improving the Health of the Nation,” highlighted the Corps' legacy and mission. The symposium also offered continuing education credits, supporting professional development across a variety of health professions.



Dr. Lynn Chevalier with a former student



Dr. Chevalier sharing memories with another alumna



USPHS
SCIENTIFIC & TRAINING SYMPOSIUM



Smiles and Memories!
Health Science Alumni reconect with ***Dr. Lynn Chevalier*** at the USPHS Symposium

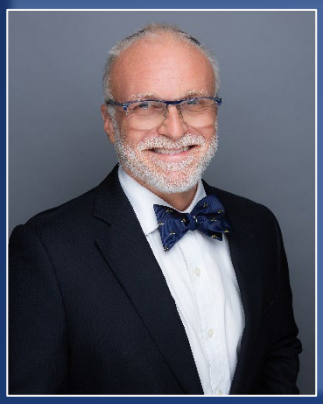




Faculty Highlights!

GSA GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA®

2026 Annual Scientific Meeting
This year's theme is "Reinforcing Resilience in Aging Science, Research, and Education."



Dr. Akiva Turner, PhD, JD, MPH



Dr. Lynn Chevalier, DHS, MPH (CPH), MS, CPC, CSSGB

The abstract, "Artificial Intelligence in Health Care: A Community-Based Study of Older Adults and Digital Engagement," has been accepted for poster presentation at the 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA).

The study, co-authored by Dr. Akiva Turner, Prof. Alina Perez, Dr. Lynn Chevalier, Dr. Kamilah Thomas-Purcell, and Dr. Elliot Sklar, presents community-based findings on older adults' perceptions of telehealth, communication effectiveness, and artificial intelligence in health care among a diverse aging population in South Florida.

The findings highlight both opportunities and challenges related to digital readiness, trust, and the equitable implementation of AI-enhanced health care for older adults.



Dr. Elliot Sklar, Ph.D., M.S



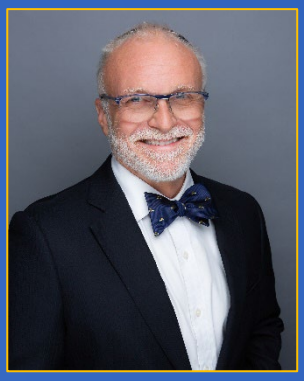
Prof. Alina Perez, JD, MPH, LCSW



Dr. Kamilah Thomas-Purcell, PhD, MPH, MCHES, RN

JOURNAL OF APPLIED CLINICAL MEDICAL PHYSICS

Celebrating Achievement!



Dr. Akiva Turner PhD, JD, MPH



Dr. Lynn Chevalier DHS, MPH (CPH), MS, CPC, CSSGB



Dr. Deborah Schofield PhD

We are pleased to share that the manuscript, "The Burden of Burnout: Understanding Its Prevalence and Organizational Drivers in Medical Physics," recently published in the Journal of Applied Clinical Medical Physics, has been awarded the Michael D. Mills Editor-in-Chief Award of Excellence for an Outstanding General Medical Physics Article by the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM).

The paper, authored by Dr. Deborah Schofield, an NSU PhD in Health Science graduate, along with Dr. Akiva Turner, Dr. Lynn Chevalier, and colleagues from MD Anderson Cancer Center and Mayo Clinic, examined the prevalence and drivers of burnout among medical physicists in the United States. Using a cross-sectional survey of 1,962 medical physicists, the study found that nearly 60% of respondents reported high levels of burnout in at least one domain. Significant associations were identified between burnout and both personal and organizational factors, including workload and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This recognition highlights the importance of the work in addressing workforce well-being and sustainability within the medical physics community. The award will be formally presented at the AAPM Annual Meeting & Exhibition 2026 in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Biomedical & Life Sciences Collection

Lectures by leading world expert

HSTalks



Dr. Sarah Ransdell, PhD
Professor, Department of Health Science

HS Talks offers a comprehensive online platform featuring high-quality lectures from leading experts around the world. Accessible anytime and anywhere, it serves a diverse global audience, including universities, medical and business schools, hospitals, government agencies, and pharmaceutical companies. Its content is delivered by renowned academics and practitioners, including Nobel laureates, from fields such as research, industry, and public service, ensuring authoritative, engaging, and impactful learning experiences.

"Integrating AI Into Teaching Research Methods"

On May 28, 2026, Dr. Sarah Ransdell delivered a lecture on integrating artificial intelligence into the teaching of research methods. Topics covered included:

Scientific writing
Critical thinking
The cognitive impact of artificial intelligence
Evolving teaching strategies
Transparency in research and education

The publication is available online at the following link:
https://hstalks.com/bs/19132/



Dr. Terry Morrow-Nelson, PhD

Faculty Highlights

"Strengthening Access to Preventive Healthcare: An Innovative IDEA"

Dr. Terry Morrow Nelson was recently awarded the Quality of Life Grant for her project, "Strengthening Access to Preventive Healthcare: An Innovative IDEA."

The Interprofessional Diabetes Education and Awareness (IDEA) Initiative is entering its 15th year at NSU and includes faculty and students from 14 health professions who collaborate on interprofessional teams to provide diabetes prevention and management workshops throughout the tri-county area.

Faculty Highlights



Dr. Sarah Ransdell, PhD
Professor, Department of Health Science

South Florida Hospital News and Healthcare Report
THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS

Since joining the Holy Cross Health Volunteer Program in the fall of 2021, Dr. Sarah Ransdell has brought exceptional energy, passion, and efficiency to her role in the Wanda and Jim Moran, Jr. Emergency Department. Every day, she arrives with a warm smile and a positive attitude, immediately taking on responsibilities such as checking patient rooms, supporting patients and their families, and assisting colleagues with comfort measures.

With more than 1,600 hours of dedicated service, she has become an essential member of the ED team. Dr. Ransdell not only volunteers several days each week but also helps orient new volunteers, ensuring they feel welcomed, prepared, and supported.

Her enthusiasm extends far beyond her daily shifts. She plays an active role in colleague engagement and hospital-wide celebrations, where her upbeat spirit brings joy and positivity to every event.

In addition to her volunteer service, Dr. Ransdell brings an extraordinary 40-year career in higher education, including 20 years at Nova Southeastern University. She currently serves at NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, where she continues to inspire and shape future health care professionals.



Our Faculty at The Learning and Educational Center!

When a Walk Becomes a Movement: Dr. Terry Morrow Nelson on Interprofessional Education and Community in Action

What began in 2012 as a small team participating in an American Diabetes Association fundraising walk at NSU has grown into the Interprofessional Diabetes Education and Awareness (IDEA) Initiative, a robust, year-round example of community-engaged learning. In this episode, Dr. Terry Morrow Nelson describes how the program expanded from just five colleagues into a structured effort involving 15 health professions, 10 interprofessional teams, and 70 to 80 students each academic year. Its success is rooted in aligning community needs with existing university expertise while building long-term partnerships with organizations such as Memorial Healthcare System, the Boys & Girls Clubs, and the Broward Sheriff's Office.

Dr. Morrow Nelson highlights the initiative's strengths-based leadership approach and its focus on continuous, reflective learning for both students and faculty. She notes that students often enter the program expecting to deliver polished presentations but leave with a deeper understanding that true impact lies in what participants change or apply afterward. Her key advice for faculty interested in similar work is to start with their own strengths, identify meaningful community needs, and create sustainable structures that support long-term engagement.

Our Faculty in the Learning and Educational Center!



We are excited to share that Dr. Moya L. Alfonso is featured in the latest episode of Behind the Scenes: How Faculty Bring Learning to Life at NSU!

In Season 3 of Behind the Scenes: How Faculty Bring Learning to Life at NSU, the focus is Community in Action: How NSU Faculty Serve, Partner, and Make an Impact. Host Dr. Marti Snyder speaks with Dr. Moya Alfonso, Program Director and Associate Professor in the Department of Health Sciences at the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, about the winding path that led her from public health research and nonprofit leadership to NSU.

Dr. Alfonso discusses her service-learning course model, including a program evaluation project with Hands of Esperanza that the nonprofit now incorporates into its annual reporting. She also shares insights from her current Academy Health Fellowship work on maternal mental health and substance use in rural Georgia. Throughout the conversation, she reflects on what sustains community partnerships over time and why she believes humility is essential to doing this work well.

This candid conversation is a must-listen for anyone interested in building coursework around meaningful community partnerships.

Here's where listeners can tune in:

Spotify (link goes live Monday morning at 6:00 a.m. EST) [Spotify episode link]
SharkMediahttps://sharkmedia.nova.edu/playlist/dedicated/42646441/1_1oy9arz1/1_25zq0h0e]
Behind the Scenes: How Faculty Bring Learning to Life at NSU Spotify | Apple Podcasts | Amazon Music Shark Media | Link tree

Master of Health Science PA Students' **Poster Presentation**

June 19th, 2026



Debra A. Dixon RDH, MS, DHSc
Director, Master of Health Science Program



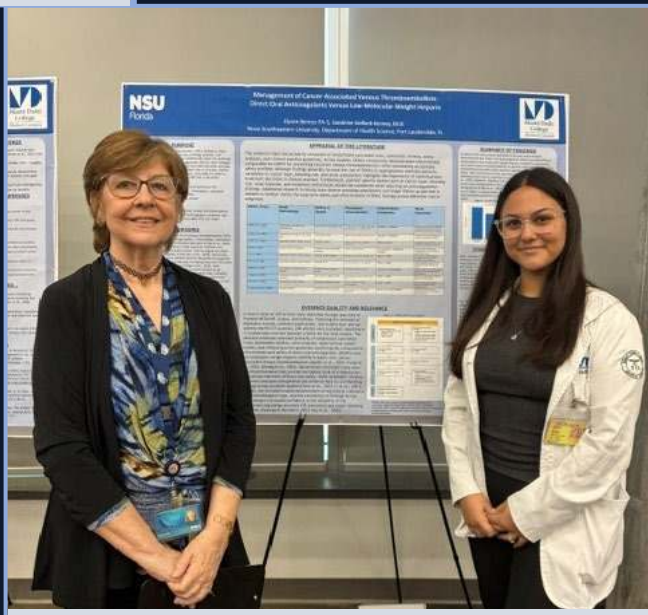
Dr. Debra Dixon, Prof. Alina Perez, Dr. Sandrine Gaillard-Kenney, and Dr. Maureen O'Hara with MDC faculty and staff.

Our Master of Health Science Physician Assistant students from Miami Dade College presented their practicum research posters. This presentation marked one of the final steps in completing their Master of Health Science degree. We are incredibly proud of the students' hard work and dedication. The event took place at the Miami Dade College Medical Campus.

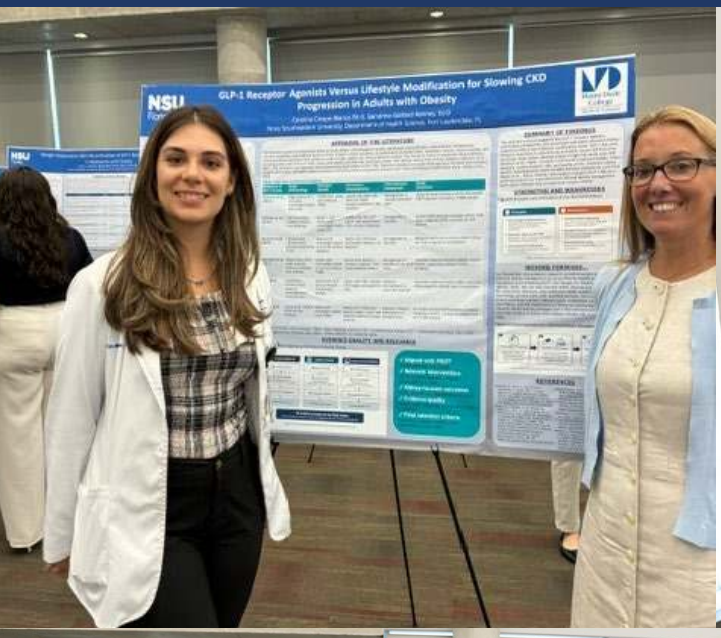


Dr. Sandrine Gaillard-Kenney with a MDC Student

Special thanks to Dr. Sandrine Gaillard-Kenney, Dr. Maureen O'Hara and Prof. Alina Perez for their invaluable guidance and support to our Miami Dade PA students!



Prof. Alina Perez with a MDC Student









MDC Poster Presentation







The MDC/NSU Dual-Enrolled Physician Assistant Class of 2026 students celebrated their Pinning Ceremony on July 31, 2026.

Miami Dade College Pinning Ceremony





This meaningful milestone recognized their hard work, dedication, and commitment as they prepared to enter the next phase of their professional journey.

PhD Student Achievement

Dissertation Final Defense



Solangel Padron LMHC, BCBA

Congratulations to Solangel Padron who sucessfully defended her dissertation on April 21, 2026!

"UNEMPLOYMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES AMONG WOMEN AGED 25-54 IN THE UNITED STATES"

The study investigated the relationship between employment status and mental health outcomes among U.S. women aged 25 to 54 using data from the 2024 National Health Interview Survey.

The findings indicated that unemployment was associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and serious psychological distress.

These results highlight employment as a key social determinant of mental health and underscore the importance of employment-focused strategies in public health efforts.

Chair

Dr. Peter Holub

Committee

Dr. Moya Alfonso and Dr. Kamilah Thomas-Purcell

PhD Alumni Achievement



Dr. Natalia Coletti, PhD.

9th National

Cribs for Kids Conference

Safe Sleep: Rooted in Evidence, Branching Into Action

Congratulations to Dr. Natalia Coletti on her presentation, “The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Burden of Death for Minority Infants in the United States: Interactions Among Modifiable and Unmodifiable Risk Factors in 2019 and 2020.” The study has been accepted for poster presentation at the 9th National Cribs for Kids Conference, Safe Sleep: Rooted in Evidence, Branching Into Action.

Alumni Achievement

HMP Global Learning Network

WOUNDS



Congratulations to Marina Shabalow, whose article, “Lymphedema Therapy and Wound Healing: A Retrospective Analysis of Pre- and Post-Treatment Wound Volume,” has been accepted for publication in WOUNDS: A Compendium of Clinical Research and Practice."Lymphedema Therapy and Wound Healing: A Retrospective Analysis of Pre- and Posttreatment Wound Volume."

Abstract

Background: Venous leg ulcers (VLU) frequently exhibit prolonged healing times, particularly in the presence of lower extremity lymphedema (LEL). One approach to managing VLU is to combine traditional wound care with lymphedema therapy (LT). Despite recognition of compression as an effective agent for management of chronic wounds, utilization of lymphedema services is still insufficient among healthcare providers.

Objectives: The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of LT for tissue repair and to examine the impact of various factors on wound healing.

Materials and Methods: Electronic medical records of patients with VLU who completed LT between 2016 and 2020 were reviewed. Wound volume (length x width x depth) was compared before and after LT, and medians of non-normally distributed data were compared via the Wilcoxon signed rank test. Demographic characteristics and medical history were evaluated to determine their relationship to VLU healing. A three-step hierarchical approach was utilized to investigate the effect of various factors on predicting tissue repair.

Results: A total of 178 wounds in 115 patients were included in the analysis. The average wound volume before LT was 14.4 cm^3. After lymphedema intervention, the mean wound volume decreased to 3.8 cm^3, indicating a significant reduction in wound size. A hierarchical regression model revealed no statistically significant relationships between wound closure and age, sex, comorbidities, or treatment-related factors. However, BMI emerged as a moderately significant predictor of wound healing.

Conclusion: The findings support the effectiveness of LT for healing chronic VLU in patients with lymphedema treated in an outpatient clinic.

AJIC American Journal of Infection Control

"Ninety-Day All-Cause Readmission and Mortality Following Central Line–Associated Bloodstream Infection: The Impact of MDRO Status and Age"

Dr. Caitlin Crews-Stowe, an alumna of the PhD Program, published an article in the American Journal of Infection Control based on her dissertation research. Dr. Elliot Sklar chaired her dissertation committee and co-authored the article.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajic.2026.04.005



Background

Multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs) are a common cause of central line–associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs). The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between the risk of a patient who had a CLABSI and 90-day mortality and readmission after discharge and the role of age and MDRO status.



Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar, Ph.D., M.S

Methods

A retrospective analysis including 143 patients from a nine-hospital system examined patients who had a CLABSI between January 2018 to December 2019. Descriptive statistics were performed, with logistic regression analyses performed to identify risk factors.

Results

The results showed there was not a significant difference in mortality (OR = 0.67, p =.550) or readmission (OR = 1.79, p =.215) within 90 days in patients who had an MDRO CLABSI. Age as a covariate showed a 2.7% decreased readmission risk for every 1-year increase in patient age (p =.019). Patients with a non-MDRO CLABSI did not have a significant increased risk in 90-day mortality or readmission (p =.536, p =.211).

Conclusion

Decreased readmission risk from an MDRO associated with increasing age may result from increased patient–provider interactions as patients age. Additional research with a larger study sample is recommended.

Alumni Highlights



"Mobile Health Literacy Interventions and Health Disparities Reduction"



Dr. Donrie Purcell, PhD, MPH

ABSTRACT

This chapter, co-authored by Dr. Donrie Purcell, discusses the critical role of health literacy in addressing health disparities and highlights how electronic and mobile health applications can help mitigate these challenges. Health literacy, defined as the ability to obtain, process, and understand basic health information, is essential for managing health, navigating the healthcare system, and engaging in preventive behaviors. Low health literacy often exacerbates health disparities among underserved populations.

The chapter explores how mobile health (mHealth) and electronic health (eHealth) technologies can help reduce these disparities. These technologies, including telemedicine and educational apps, offer innovative solutions to improve access to care, enhance health literacy, support chronic disease management, and provide personalized care. For example, telemedicine can help bridge gaps in healthcare access for rural and low-income populations, while educational apps can make health information more accessible and understandable for individuals with limited health literacy.

The chapter also addresses challenges such as the digital divide and privacy concerns, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions, healthcare provider training, and supportive policy changes. In addition, it introduces the ASK (Abilities, Skills, and Knowledge) model, a framework for developing effective mHealth interventions that promote health literacy. This model underscores the importance of creating personalized, user-friendly solutions tailored to individuals' varying levels of health literacy. Overall, the chapter presents mHealth and eHealth technologies as powerful tools for improving health literacy, reducing health disparities, and advancing health equity.

Stories Beyond Graduation

PhD Alumna's Camino de Santiago Journey: A Story of Perseverance and Celebration.



Natalia Coletti, PhD

Consultant/ Trainer specializing in professional development in maternal mental health and early childhood programs

We are proud to celebrate one of our alumni, who recently shared her inspiring journey with Dr. Moya Alfonso, PhD Program Director. Natalia completed the Camino de Santiago, this time walking north across Portugal. Her experience was filled with adventure, reflection, and personal growth, and she commemorated the achievement by celebrating her recent graduation along the way. Pictured here in front of the breathtaking Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, she exemplifies the resilience, determination, and spirit of lifelong learning and exploration that characterize so many of our alumni.

Student Achievement

IJAHSP
THE INTERNET JOURNAL OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES AND PRACTICE

Operational and Implementation Evaluation of a Short-Term Medical Service Program in Rural Guatemala

This article was co-authored by a group of students from the DHS Program Evaluation course. The authors thanked Dr. Moya Alfonso, Program Director of the PhD and DHSc Programs, for her exceptional mentorship and methodological guidance.

Mitchell M. Michalak
Shamecka Douglas
Oscar Gonzalez
Giovanna Sanguinetti
Ashley Sweat

The study evaluated a student-led short-term medical service trip (SMST) serving Indigenous communities in rural Alta Verapaz, Guatemala, using routine program data. Over four clinic days, the team provided care to 478 patients, distributed 12 water filters and improved cookstoves, and delivered six health education sessions.

The evaluation identified several operational challenges, including incomplete clinical documentation, limited medication and referral tracking, translation-related workflow issues, and gaps in volunteer preparation. Despite these limitations, volunteers reported high levels of satisfaction.

The findings demonstrate that routinely collected field data can provide valuable insights for improving clinic operations, data collection processes, and volunteer training. The lessons learned may also be applicable to similar global health programs operating in resource-limited settings.

https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2845&context=ijahsp



Dr. Imelda Moise, PhD, MPH, Msc

Affiliated Faculty Appointment

Dr. Imelda Moise has been appointed as affiliated faculty with the Department of Health Science. Dr. Moise is a Professor of Medical Education at Nova Southeastern University's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine, where she serves as Director of the Global Health Program and Director of the NSU Ocean Health Initiative (NOHI). An applied medical geographer with expertise spanning global health, population health, and environmental change, she is also a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Zambia. At NSU, Dr. Moise leads the development of innovative global health programs and fosters interdisciplinary collaborations that address the connections among human health, environmental change, and community resilience.

Dr. Moise is internationally recognized for her work in spatial epidemiology, implementation science, health systems strengthening, and program evaluation. Her research examines how geographic, environmental, and social factors influence health outcomes and has been supported by organizations including the NIH, CDC, EPA, and the National Geographic Society. She has authored more than 70 scholarly publications and serves on numerous national and international advisory panels and editorial boards. Through her leadership, research, and service, Dr. Moise continues to advance sustainable, evidence-based solutions to complex global health challenges.

Welcome to the Health Science Team Dr. Moise!

Graduation 2026



Dr. Lynn Chevalier, Dr. Elliot Sklar, Dr. Jody Clark, Dr. Sarah Ransdell, Dr. Akiva Turner, Dr. Kamilah Thomas-Purcell, Dr. Peter Holub, Chennel Williams, Dr. Debra Dixon, and Dr. Terry Morrow Nelson

Congrats Health Science Class !

Congrats on your Retirement!

A Tribute to Dr. *Peter G. Holub*

After 21 years of dedicated service to Nova Southeastern University, the Department of Health Science bids farewell to an educator, mentor, clinician, friend, and lifelong learner whose impact will continue to resonate far beyond the classroom. Dr. Peter G. Holub has always viewed education not as a destination but as a journey, one that he chose to take alongside every student, fortunate enough to learn from him. His commitment to continually redesigning and enhancing his courses reflected his belief that learning should be engaging, meaningful, and centered on student success. He never stopped striving to create the best possible educational experience, reminding us that excellence is achieved through curiosity, innovation, and an unwavering dedication to others.

Before joining academia, Dr. Holub built an extraordinary career in healthcare. As a podiatric physician, he owned and operated a sports medicine practice for eight years before dedicating another eight years to serving the Leech Lake Indian Reservation. There, through compassionate care and preventive medicine, he significantly reduced the rate of amputations, an achievement that earned national recognition and led him to Penn State, where he taught, conducted biomechanics research, and earned a master's degree in Kinesiology.

His passion for learning did not stop there. Determined to broaden his impact on healthcare, Dr. Holub pursued a Ph.D. in Computer Technology at Nova Southeastern University. His vision was clear: by educating future healthcare professionals, he could improve the lives of countless patients through the knowledge and compassion of those he taught. Throughout his career, he shared his expertise in biomechanics, medical ethics, cultural competence, narrative medicine, healthcare education, and many other disciplines, inspiring students to become not only skilled professionals but also thoughtful and compassionate caregivers.



Dr. Peter G. Holub D.P.M., Ph.D.

Those who have worked with Dr. Holub know that his greatest legacy extends far beyond his impressive credentials and accomplishments. He has been a dependable colleague, a generous mentor, and a faculty member who consistently demonstrated professionalism, integrity, and kindness. His willingness to support students, respond with patience, and foster an environment of respect and intellectual curiosity exemplified the very best of academic excellence.

As Dr. Holub begins this well-earned retirement, we celebrate not only his 21 years of service at Nova Southeastern University but also a lifetime devoted to improving the health and well-being of others through both clinical practice and education. The countless students he has guided, the colleagues he has inspired, and the patients whose lives have been changed through his work stand as enduring testaments to his remarkable career.

Dr. Holub, thank you for your unwavering dedication, your passion for teaching, your commitment to lifelong learning, and the countless lives you have touched along the way. While you will be greatly missed, your legacy will continue through every student who carries forward the lessons you so generously shared.

On behalf of the Department of Health Science, we wish you a retirement filled with good health, new adventures, and treasured moments with those who matter most. May this new chapter bring you opportunities to enjoy the rewards of your remarkable career while creating lasting memories as a devoted husband, proud father, and cherished friend.

Congratulations on your retirement, Dr. Holub, and thank you for an extraordinary 21 years of service!



CELEBRATING A CAREER

Dr. Peter Holub

Retirement Luncheon

A special gathering to honor and celebrate Dr. Peter Holub as he begins his retirement.