

# WOMEN IN MEDICINE WORKSHOP: QUESTIONS FOR OUR PANELISTS

## HOW DID YOU GET TO WHERE YOU ARE IN YOUR CAREER

JULIA BAE MD, AREA  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR, KERN  
COUNTY

After my Allergy and Immunology fellowship training, I started in private practice in Houston before joining TPMG in Northern California in 1999. I transferred to SCPMG in 2000 and found my true home. I soon discovered that SCPMG encouraged physicians to take charge of our work life and take on leadership roles. Through the encouragement of all my mentors and support from many leaders, I was given the opportunity to lead KC as AMD in 2007.

BARBARA CARNES MD, AREA  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR, SOUTH  
BAY

I joined SCPMG, because I did not feel competent in the "administrative" components of a private practice and wanted to dedicate 100% of

my time to clinical medicine and direct patient care in a group practice model where someone else worried about the administrative stuff. Early on, as an associate, I got involved in quality improvement and peer review as my departmental QI chair. I developed a love for process improvement and my work on pediatric asthma paved the path to become the medical center Quality leader. I was elected medical staff president a few weeks after I learned I was pregnant with my first child. Through these roles I was given opportunities for leadership development. I was surprised to learn that working to improve clinical care and improve the way we deliver care, was exciting and energizing for me, and I enjoyed it as much as direct patient care. I have enjoyed and learned from each subsequent role, Chief of Peds, HealthConnect Leader, AAMD, and most recently AMD at SB.

AGNES CHEN DO, SOUTH  
BAY CHAMPION OF CARE  
EXPERIENCE & CPC

I started at SCPMG straight out of Family Practice residency. Always enjoying being involved in a variety of things, I fell in love with Care Experience and CPC (Clinician Patient Communication) and became involved in facilitating classes. Then four years later I was given the opportunity to take greater leadership roles in the medical center because of some key female mentors

(shout out Dr. Barb Carnes!) and took the role of the Physician in Charge at the Gardena Medical Office for six years. Towards the end of the term, one of my other mentors, who had been the Physician Champion of Care Experience and CPC decided it was time for retirement and naturally I jumped at the opportunity to take on those roles.

NANCY GIN MD, AREA  
MEDICAL DIRECTOR,  
ORANGE COUNTY

I started out in academics for the first 8 years following training before coming to Permanente. Because of my interest in always wanting to make systems better for our pts and team, I was asked to be the Asst Chief of Internal Medicine 15 months later. By the time I made partner, I was asked to be Chief of Internal Medicine, which I declined because my children were only 6 and 10. I also felt that a large dept like ours deserved to have a chief who had been a partner for more than two months. I was selected to be the physician coordinator for the development of our KPOC-Irvine Medical Center campus in 2007, and was named AAMD that same year. I served as President of the SCPMG Hospital Staff during that period to gain broader understanding of the necessary work "behind the scenes." After the hospital opened in May 2008,

HOW DID YOU GET TO WHERE YOU ARE IN YOUR CAREER? (CON'T)

NANCY GIN MD, AREA MEDICAL DIRECTOR, ORANGE COUNTY (CON'T)

I resigned the AAMD position and took on the Physician Director of the Medical Service Line position, equivalent to an AAMD but more operational in Orange County, in January 2009.

When Ed Ellison was selected as Executive Director, I was selected from a field of four in Spring 2011, and starting five weeks later as Dr. Ellison began his own training.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD, ASSISTANT AREA MEDICAL DIRECTOR, ORANGE COUNTY

For me, it was honestly about relationships. I fell into this category of street smarts, empathic communication, but not necessarily test score smart. That meant that if someone did not advocate for me I would not necessarily be in medicine. I also dedicated my own time to prove myself. Right thing to do at the time, but would not necessarily recommend for others. Know your worth....

JUANITA WATTS MD, REGIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH LEADER

I have had a long history of being active, involved and in leadership prior to my professional career .

(Selling all of those Girl Scout cookies was very competitive!). Fortunately, interest and an opportunity presented itself. Ready or not .... here I learned and got very involved in at work, in the community and other organizations. Within one month of my arrival at the Inglewood clinic, I was appointed as a Module Coordinator.

MARY WILSON MD, MPH, EXECUTIVE MEDICAL DIRECTOR, KAISER PERMANENTE OF GEORGIA

I got started leading various programs like the scan committee. I had great senior pediatricians who encouraged me to be a problem solver for the department. I worked in the hospital and clinic and took care of everybody's kids, so knew people. Elected to chief of staff. Became AAMD to Virginia Ambrosini, learned all about access and service. Then became one of Jeff Weisz's assistants at region in charge of starting a new division of the care experience. Then back to PC to be AMD. And now EMD of Georgia.

ARE THERE ANY OBSTACLES YOU HAVE HAD TO OVERCOME DURING YOUR CAREER?

JULIA BAE MD

I moved to the USA at age 10 from Korea. I learned English from reading books, so I

never lost my Korean accent. This led to a fear of speaking in front of large audiences. In fact, when I was appointed as AMD, my mother reminded me that I do not like public speaking. To this day, I get nervous when speaking in front of a large audience. I was honored to ask to speak at "Women in Medicine Workshop" as I want to support all our wonderful women leaders.

BARBARA CARNES MD

Thankfully, gender bias in medicine has continued to diminish over the course of my career. It was ever present earlier in my career. Most women, were assumed to be nurses, and most nurses resented women physicians and treated us poorly. As women physicians, we had to be twice as nice to the nurses to gain their support and trust. Most of my physician peers when I started were men, and most had wives who stayed at home, cooked dinner and had full responsibility for their children's activities. At the time, there were few women physicians in leadership and those I met, had made a choice to prioritize their career, and had opted not to children. I struggled to find role models who were successfully balancing a full time clinical practice and leadership with being a wife and mother.

ARE THERE ANY OBSTACLES YOU HAVE HAD TO OVERCOME DURING YOUR CAREER? (CON'T)

AGNES CHEN DO

Learning to deal with unhappy or difficult people, facing stereotypes that assume women in healthcare are nurses, not doctors, constantly struggling with time management.

NANCY GIN MD

The only obstacles I have had were either self-imposed or nature-made. I was also very aware that because there were not many women in leadership positions earlier in my career, I was often representing XXs.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

Balancing family and career. I have put career first at times, and there may be an expense to that decision but also benefits. More recently, gender and the glass ceiling has played out more than I was aware of going into leadership. I had to spend more time peeling away the onion layers of women in medicine including leadership and what we bring to leadership.

JUANITA WATTS MD

Building confidence to step forward. My SCPMG career began at a time when there were very few women and especially women of color. I was the second female in

the FM department and the only AA. The first and only female had been in the department for 15 years. She was strong, outspoken, brilliant, respected, a great physician and advocate. (but this is not how the males in the department would describe her). She had the largest panel in the department and highly empanelled with women.

MARY WILSON MD

It's hard for me to answer that, because in all honesty obstacles turn into opportunities. My main obstacle was personal in that I had to have good self-awareness, be open to listen and learn, and manage my energy.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU AND HOW DO YOU STAY MOTIVATED?

JULIA BAE

Helping others motivates me. Whether as a physician taking care of patients one on one, or as a physician leader helping a larger number of patients and supporting our medical group through my work as AMD. I ask myself each day as I drive home if I helped anyone and feel grateful that I had that opportunity. I stay connected with our patients and our physicians/staff as I exist in my work to serve them. I also get joy in mentoring new leaders, and seeing them expand their leadership potential.

BARBARA CARNES MD

I feel so privileged to be a physician at SCPMG. As a clinician, my patients and their parents taught me so much and were a constant source of inspiration and motivation. Now as I have transitioned to an administrative role, I am privileged to witness daily acts of kindness, compassion and extraordinary service to our patients, our medical group and to each other. That motivates me to be the best I can be every day and to savor and appreciate all. I am witness to.

AGNES CHEN DO

The patients motivate me, because of the relationships I have built with them and the privilege of them entrusting their care to me, as well as my faith and relationship with God and my husband, who continually reminds me that this was the profession I was called to.

NANCY GIN MD

I truly love our medical group and believe in the mission of Kaiser Permanente. I enjoy helping people develop into the best of who they are and derive a great deal of motivation in their success. I am also committed to our dedicated, hard-working physicians, who rely on leaders to develop and sustain a work environment

that is overseen with integrity, supportive of our

#### HOW DO YOU STAY MOTIVATED? (CON'T)

NANCY GIN MD (CON'T)

team and evolving as the world of health care changes. Knowing our team depends on me for that makes me want to honor them always by working hard on their behalf.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

I am motivated by my core values of family and compassion. I have always said to check in every 6 months as to how family is doing. However, making changes and advocating for needs was harder than I imagined. You have to be willing to say no I can't do that...

JUANITA WATTS MD

I really LOVE what I do. I am motivated by the new and ongoing work that keeps me busy. I have embraced change and the opportunity to influence new challenges.

MARY WILSON MD

I'm a true believer in Permanente medicine and always have been, so I want to work toward our success. I enjoy the feeling of having areas of competence or excellence that I can offer others, and I like to teach. I love developing leaders and thinking about how people

can contribute. I'm a doer and a worker who was lucky enough to find a good fit in my career.

#### HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE STRESS OF YOUR LEADERSHIP POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

JULIA BAE

I have many good friends who care. Most of my friends are at work, as I do not have much time for outside relationships. It can be lonely at times being in a leadership role and I believe it is important to connect with others who are in similar leadership roles. They are not only your support, but also give you honest feedback. This way you can be confident that they will always have your back and help you do the right thing. I also have a wonderful spouse who has a very balanced look in life and helps me see the bigger picture when I get stuck feeling sorry for myself. :)

BARBARA CARNES MD

I used to be a perfectionist. That was extremely self-limiting and very stressful. I had to learn to let go of perfection, understand what I am good at (and what I am not), to trust, engage and develop others, and to have better boundaries. Those things have both reduced my day to day stress, while increasing my capacity to juggle many competing priorities. Being AMD is truly a 24/7/365 job, and so it has tested all of those skills and I am continuing to learn how to

balance, have boundaries and practice self-compassion.

AGNES CHEN DO

I spend a lot of time with my family and friends and I do the things I most enjoy that re-energize me, like singing (love karaoke!) and dancing

NANCY GIN MD

I try to stay connected with family, friends and our dog to provide balance in my life. I walk/trot on my treadmill at home for 3.5-4 miles nearly every day as soon as I am done at work.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

I am learning more about self-compassion and self-care. I did not know that earlier, so hope to mentor others. I am also proud to say I am a former perfectionist. It took 1 1/2 years to work on it, but understand more about living in the moment and being ok with good enough as a leader, physician, mother and my other essential roles. I started with self-care as easier and walk for 1 hour each day - listen to books, have meetings, etc but get my 10,000 steps. The self-compassion has required more research, reading, and honestly a GREAT therapist.

## HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THE STRESS OF YOUR LEADERSHIP POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES? (CON'T)

JUANITA WATTS MD

I try not stress in my leadership position/responsibilities.

However, leadership can be a 24/7/365. Getting a handle on the body of work, staying organized, working with really smart people, feeling comfortable with my style, and being honest with myself and those that I have the privilege to work with. Good leaders deserve great vacations...make sure you take a few!

MARY WILSON MD

I deal with stress mainly through exercise and reading, socializing, and vegging out watching HGTV.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A NEW ASSOCIATE?

JULIA BAE

You are in a very good place. I would pick SCPMG as my career choice over any other opportunities, whether as 100% clinician or as a physician leader. I go home at night grateful that I am working in a medical group where quality of care comes first. Also know that senior leaders at both the regional and local levels have the interest of the associate physicians at heart. You are the future of our beloved medical group. Trust your

leaders; not any rumors you may hear. Validate any concerns you have and ask for help rather than struggle by yourself. We are here to support you.

BARBARA CARNES MD

First year, get grounded in your relationships, with your patients and your team, your department and peers. Everyone hits that feeling of being grounded in those areas at different points, but when you do, expand your circle and get involved. Go to the social events that appeal to you, and develop relationships with physicians from other departments. Get involved in a project or committee that might broaden your knowledge or perspective. I was invited to join the budget management team early on; I had no interest in finance, and the meetings were at 7 am, but I got to meet many influential leaders, and to learn from them. The best part was I met another female leader from another department who became one of my all-time BFFs and deeply enriched my life both at work and outside of work.

AGNES CHEN DO

Hang in there, YOU ARE NOT ALONE, and take this time to build relationships with your colleagues, that is what is going to get you through.

NANCY GIN MD

Get out and meet the people in the group -- physicians, nurses, MAs, leaders -- everyone connected with the work you do. You will appreciate the impressive breadth of people we have working for KP, and connect a name with a face and function. That has always helped me appreciate what it means to work in a group in which everyone is striving for the same goal -- outstanding patient care and outcomes in a collegial and collaborative environment. Knowing the folks we work enhances my enjoyment of the work we do together, and reminds me that I am never rowing this boat by myself. This approach also allows you to learn more about where you might want to get involved even more in helping to shape the direction of our group.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

Plan out your path and ask for help. Seek the wisdom from those of us who have been there. Know your worth and your core values.

JUANITA WATTS MD

Get involved! Especially now. There is so much opportunity. Find your passion, be creative and present in the moment. Ask more questions...About everything.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A NEW ASSOCIATE? (CON'T)

MARY WILSON MD

Advice for new associates - just be an excellent physician, ask for help, and take good care of yourself and your colleagues. Ask yourself what is best for the patient and try to provide it. Don't fight the fact that the time you have is never going to be perfectly in sync with the time you need. Let go and enjoy the ride. And get engaged with the work, it's more fun.

HOW DO YOU RECONCILE WORK-LIFE BALANCE WITH CAREER OPPORTUNITIES?

JULIA BAE MD

First step is making sure you know what you want. There is no perfect world. But if you know what you want at work and at home then find a solution together with your leaders and colleagues, then you are in charge of your life. You are not a victim. You may have to compromise, as we may not get everything, but we will get what is important to us by being part of the solution. Share your thoughts with your family and partner. Work-life balance requires compromise at home as well. Communicate with your family and find out what is most important to them; you may be surprised when you hear their thoughts. My husband told me that he preferred us spending quality time and seeing me less pressured than having

elaborate home cooked meals. Now he cooks many meals and we are both happier. We also decided together what we wanted to do ourselves and what we wanted to use outside services for to protect our family time.

BARBARA CARNES MD

My family has always been my true north, and it is only because of them that I am not a workaholic. I feel so fortunate that within SCPMG, I was able to take advantage of having a reduced schedule and comping out to create days off in the middle of the week, when I returned from maternity leave and when my children were young. Keep in mind, I was probably the first person to do any of this in my department, so for me, this felt like an incredible gift . Because I was so grateful, when I was at work, I always tried to give 150% to the group and go the extra mile for my patients. Likewise when I was spending time with my family, I worked hard to be " let go of work" and being 150% focused on my children and my husband. To be truthful the person that often did not attention was me. It was not until mid career that I started to learn the importance of self care, and I am still a work in progress in that area! Now I make sure to set personal goals for myself and plan for them, as those things just will never be prioritized by anyone else.

Staying physically active has always helped me stay balanced, and prioritizing time for yoga, Pilates, spin, hiking and skiing improves my energy level and helps me stay positive. I like to use the creative side of my brain and enjoy photography, scrapbooking, and creative cooking. I have a broad network of friends outside of work and love traveling and spending time with them. I am traveling more with my husband now and have done 3-4 " girls' trips" with different groups of friends this year. (This comes with time.... when my kids were younger, I tried to do one short girls trip a year)

AGNES CHEN DO

I am still learning how to do this but I have discovered it is about being brave about priorities and saying no and knowing your boundaries but understanding where your passions lie.

NANCY GIN MD

I understood from early on that I needed to make choices depending on where I was in life. I passed on some positions early on because my children were quite young, but felt that as long as I was contributing to our group in a meaningful way, opportunities would continue to present themselves. My family is involved in all major decisions that arise, and I

## HOW DO YOU RECONCILE WORK-LIFE BALANCE WITH CAREER OPPORTUNITIES? (CON'T)

NANCY GIN MD (CON'T)

consider myself a work in progress in terms of the balance I achieve in life.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

I honestly have come to terms with no regrets, but I took on leadership at a time when I should have said no. The reward was working with Dr. Ellison as his assistant and then advancing in leadership under Dr. Gin. It would not have happened if I didn't put work first at the time. Every external message was to work less and be home more.

JUANITA WATTS MD

Control your own time. Figure out your priorities and what you can give up to have "peace of mind". For me, family was first. Once I had twins the first thing that I gave up was "housework"....whew. (POM)

MARY WILSON MD

As I've gotten older it is much clearer to me that life goes in cycles. So for young women who may or may not be married, may or may not have a good relationship, there will be issues around meeting people, loneliness, finances. Once we begin to have children many other pressures build regarding how one feels about being a

working mother, and how to get help from family or hiring someone. None of this lasts forever. It passes and becomes less difficult because you won't have kids at home forever. And you will have productive years available to you after that if you want. So you need to look at yourself honestly and take the long view. I confess it does break my heart a little bit to see women physicians drop out of practice because I think they forget to take that long view for themselves.

## DID YOU ENCOUNTER BIASES WHEN YOU BECAME A MOTHER?

JULIA BAE

When I first joined TPMG, the male physicians told me that they were unhappy, as they expected me to have more sick leaves and dump work on them since I was a single mother. I made sure I had routine child care, sick child care and emergency help for when I needed my child picked up from various location when I was at work. I did this as single mother, without any family nearby, as I befriended older neighbors who were lonely and wanted young children around them and young families with kids where I helped with their child-care needs in evenings and weekends. Everyone has needs and everyone can help. I did not have a single day of sick leave. :)

BARBARA CARNES MD

Early on, my chief had identified me as a future

leader, and was giving me projects and allowing me to pursue the leadership track, until I told him I was pregnant, to which he responded "well that changes everything". I found that confusing and discouraging. My BFF mentioned above, was the Chief of Psychiatry at the time and together we pushed through a lot of boundaries as the only "Mommy doc Leaders" at SB at the time.

AGNES CHEN DO

Not what I would call biases but certainly challenges. Balancing my family life became much more difficult, I threw breastfeeding out the window because it was too stressful for me to continue it at work, and I felt a little guilty having to take maternity leave while I was the PIC during the birth of my second child, who I dragged to my MOB Christmas party only a few weeks after birth.

NANCY GIN MD

I did not experience biases as a mother.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

I didn't let me becoming a mother impact my work to the detriment of embracing motherhood and medicine. I know advocate for acknowledging our essential roles including being a mother.

DID YOU ENCOUNTER BIASES WHEN YOU BECAME A MOTHER? (CON'T)

JUANITA WATTS MD

Hmm interesting. I do recall more biases with the interview process when asked questions like "Are you planning to get pregnant?"

MARY WILSON MD

I honestly don't remember anyone introducing limits.

WHAT ARE SOME RESOURCES OR BOOKS YOU WOULD RECOMMEND THAT HAVE HELPED YOU DURING YOUR CAREER?

JULIA BAE MD

SCPMG provided many training opportunities that helped me both at work and at home. Key was practicing them after the wonderful training; as we go back to our old habits if we don't practice. I really enjoyed the Crucial Conversation and Crucial Accountability training and books for those difficult conversations both at home and work. I also liked the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and Who Moved My Cheese? by Dr. Spencer Johnson (a fun book that helps us adopt to changes).

BARBARA CARNES MD

Every leadership development program KP

has offered, but especially Covey's 7 habits.

California Health Care Foundation Leadership Fellowship

Books:

The Power of Full Engagement ( Jim Loehr)

Hardball for Women and Smashing the Glass Ceiling (Pat Heim)

Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself. (Kristen Neff)

Better Than Before and The Happiness Project (Gretchen Rubin)

The Speed of Trust (Stephen M.R. Covey)

Lean In (Sheryl Sandberg)

AGNES CHEN DO

Take advantage of all the resources SCPMG has to offer, from PEOPLE to classes, to programs on all sorts of topics. Books: 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, The Five Love Languages.

NANCY GIN MD

I am a life-long learner and enjoy all the self-analysis resources (Meyers-Briggs, Emotional Intelligence books). The more I understand myself and what makes me tick and how I respond, the better I can recognize my own response triggers and optimize the outcome (it is a constant work in progress). Clay Christensen's "The Innovator's Prescription" is a great book on disruptive

change in health care, and Quint Studer's "A Culture of High Performance" provides a nice guide to the essential elements in a successful, intentional culture.

PAMELA HONSBERGER MD

The Beauty of Imperfection  
Dr. Brene Brown

Daring Greatly Dr. Brene Brown

Rising Strong Dr. Brene Brown

Presence Amy Cuddy

What Works for Women at Work Joan C Williams and Rachel Dempsey

Book of Forgiving By Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu

JUANITA WATTS MD

Lean In - Sheryl Sandberg

Strengths Finder 2.0 - Tom Rath. Develop your strengths once you know what they are.

MARY WILSON MD

Recently I did like "Lean In" But I recommend reading fiction to feed your heart because we are in a human business.