

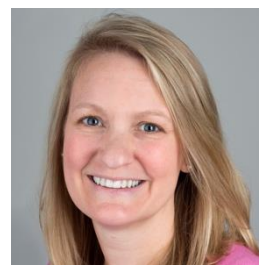
Department of Neonatology

New staff arrivals, awards, honors & leadership positions

July – September 2026

Welcome to Neonatology

We are delighted to welcome **Wendy Timpson**, MEd, MD, as the new Medical Director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in the Department of Neonatology. Dr. Timpson is a board-certified neonatologist and a nationally recognized leader in quality improvement, with more than a decade of experience caring for critically ill newborns and their families.



Dr. Timpson comes to us from UMass Chan Medical School and UMass Memorial Medical Center as an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and has served as Clinical Chief of the Neonatology Division since 2022 and as Chair of Pediatrics at MetroWest Medical Center.

Prior to 2022, Dr. Timpson spent eight years at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School. As Associate Director of Quality Improvement and later Director of Clinical Operations, she led a range of projects. These included work with MIT engineers to safely reduce cardiorespiratory alarm burden and an initiative that more than doubled early skin-to-skin holding for NICU families. Nationally, she co-led a Vermont Oxford Network collaborative that helped 126 NICU teams improve critical care transitions.

Dr. Timpson earned her medical degree at UMass Chan Medical School, where she also completed her pediatrics residency and neonatal-perinatal medicine fellowship. Before medicine, she earned a master's in Early Childhood Education from Boston College. That background still shapes her commitment to teaching and mentorship, which earned her the New England Perinatal Society's Mentor of the Year award. She also serves as Chair of the NeoPREP Planning Committee and District Representative to the SoNPM Executive Council of the AAP.

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We are pleased to welcome **Julia Bender Stern**, MD, who joined our Neonatology team in July. Dr. Bender Stern is a board-certified pediatrician with a long-standing interest in maternal and child health and in caring for families during the transition from hospital to home.



Dr. Bender Stern earned her medical degree at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth and received Geisel's Blatman Award for Excellence in Maternal and Child Health. She then completed her pediatric residency at the University of California, San Diego. During residency, she received the program's Sawyer Award for Community Service, Advocacy, and Leadership. Most recently, she worked as a primary care pediatrician at Neighborhood Healthcare in Escondido, California.

Before medicine, Dr. Bender Stern spent three years as a clinical research assistant in gastroenterology at Boston Children's Hospital, where she co-authored several publications on pediatric inflammatory bowel disease. She also taught young children at a bilingual school in Spain and is fluent in Spanish.

Please welcome **Alison Payson**, MD, who will join the Cochran Newborn Service as a per diem physician beginning November 2.



A California native, Dr. Payson earned her undergraduate degree at University of California, Los Angeles, where she majored in art history and minored in public health. She received her medical degree from the University of Miami and completed both her Pediatric residency and a fellowship in Pediatric Hospital Medicine at Nicklaus Children's Hospital. During fellowship, she focused on newborn medicine and resident education and developed a particular interest in infant nutrition and breastfeeding.

After fellowship, Dr. Payson moved to New York and practiced as a pediatric hospitalist with Northwell Health, caring for patients on the inpatient wards at Cohen Children's Medical Center and in the newborn nurseries at Long Island Jewish Medical Center and North Shore University Hospital. Following the birth of her identical twin boys, she stepped away from clinical practice to care for her family, and during that time she earned her International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) credential.

Dr. Payson and her family relocated to Massachusetts last year for her husband's gastroenterology fellowship, and she is excited to return to clinical work in the newborn nursery.

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Matthew Gracianette, MD, will join the department in early 2027 as the CHA Medical Director. He is a board-certified pediatrician and clinical informaticist with more than 25 years of experience in pediatric and neonatal medicine, clinical leadership, medical education, and healthcare technology. He currently serves as Pediatric Chief and Medical Director of Pediatric and Neonatal Hospitalist Services at Portsmouth Regional Hospital in New Hampshire.



Dr. Gracianette earned his medical degree with honors from the University of Washington and completed his pediatric residency at the University of California, San Francisco. His extensive clinical experience includes caring for newborns and critically ill infants in Level II and III neonatal units, as well as pediatric inpatient medicine. He previously served as a Physician Clinical Informaticist at Epic, contributing to electronic health record development, clinical implementation, and research. He will provide clinical informatics support at both CHA and BIDMC.

Awards and Honors

Santiago Reyes De la Torre, MD, was selected to give an oral presentation at the Dr. M. Judah Folkman Research Day at Boston Children's Hospital. Out of nearly 200 submissions, only 20 were chosen for oral presentations. Dr. Reyes De la Torre presented, "Retrospective Trial-Based Cost-Effectiveness Evaluation of a Low-Cost, Non-Electric Infant Warmer for Hypothermia in Rwanda." The annual event brings fellows together with the wider research community through oral presentations and a poster session showcasing ongoing work.

