

PHARMACY FOCUS

JOURNAL OF THE VALLEY HOSPITAL PHARMACY

FORMULARY UPDATES



ADDITIONS

Brexpiprazole (Rexulti).

FDA-approved indications include agitation associated with dementia due to Alzheimer's disease, major depressive disorder, and schizophrenia. This drug is the only FDA-approved medication for dementia-associated agitation.

Nadofaragene Firadenovec (Adstiladrin).

A gene therapy used to treat certain types of bladder cancer. Restricted to Luckow Infusion.

Mitomycin (Jelmyto).

This new formulation of mitomycin is a special gel-like solution used for low-grade Upper Tract Urothelial Cancer. Restricted to Luckow Infusion.

Donanemab-azbt (Kisunla).

This is a monoclonal antibody approved by the FDA for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease in patients with mild cognitive impairment or mild dementia due to Alzheimer's. It works by targeting and removing amyloid plaques in the brain, potentially slowing cognitive decline in these patients. Restricted to Luckow Infusion.

40% Glucose Gel (Sweet Cheeks).

Sweet Cheeks is a 40% glucose gel used to treat babies with hypoglycemia. This usually occurs in babies with high and lower birth weights and pre-term babies. This medication helps to increase exclusive breastfeeding in babies that would otherwise have to be put on formula.

EXPANDED USE

Olanzapine IM

The use of intramuscular olanzapine has been expanded for use in all inpatient units. The onset is 15 to 45 minutes with a duration of 2 hours. Doses range from 1.25 mg to 10 mg with a maximum dose of 30mg/day.

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DRUG INFORMATION CORNER

Kermena Shenouda and Mariya Rastrigina, FDU PharmD Candidates 2025, Krissia Melgar, PharmD, BCPS

Question: Can we assess the risk of bleeding in atrial fibrillation patients taking direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs) using the “HAS-BLED” score that we use with warfarin?

Response: Patients with atrial fibrillation, a condition characterized by an irregular heart rate or rhythm, are at greater risk for stroke. Therefore, it is recommended for many of these patients to be on anticoagulant medications to prevent blood clot formation leading to stroke. Oral anticoagulants like warfarin carry a significant risk of bleeding, so the “HAS-BLED” score, standing for “Hypertension, Abnormal renal/liver function, Stroke, Bleeding (history or predisposition), Labile international normalized ratio, Elderly (>65 years), certain Drug and alcohol use” was created. It helps to identify patients who take anticoagulants and have a higher risk of bleeding to provide them with safer therapy options.

Direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs), such as apixaban and rivaroxaban, are the preferred anticoagulants for most patients with atrial fibrillation, except those with mechanical heart valves or severe mitral stenosis. The HAS-BLED score assesses bleeding risks but was developed for warfarin-treated patients, making it less precise for those on DOACs. To address this, Aggarwal et al. developed the DOAC Score in 2023, which has been validated for use. Their research shows that the DOAC Score is more accurate than the HAS-BLED score for predicting bleeding risks in patients taking DOACs. It considers factors like age, kidney function, and medications, offering a more personalized and reliable approach to assessing bleeding risks and guiding treatment decisions.

References

1. Liu X, Wang S, He W, Guo L. HAS-BLED vs. ORBIT scores in anticoagulated patients with atrial fibrillation: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Front Cardiovasc Med.* 2023;9:1042763. Published 2023 Jan 5. doi:10.3389/fcvm.2022.1042763
2. Aggarwal R, Ruff CT, Virdone S, et al. Development and Validation of the DOAC Score: A Novel Bleeding Risk Prediction Tool for Patients With Atrial Fibrillation on Direct-Acting Oral Anticoagulants. *Circulation.* 2023;148(12):936-946. doi:10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.123.064556

DOAC SCORE

Variable		Points
Age	<65	0
	65-69	2
	70-74	3
	75-79	4
	≥80	5
Creatinine clearance (mL/min)	>60	0
	30-60	1
	<30	2
Underweight (BMI <18.5 kg/m ²)	No	0
	Yes	1
Stroke/TIA/Embolism history	No	0
	Yes	1
Diabetes	No	0
	Yes	1
Hypertension	No	0
	Yes	1
Antiplatelet use	No	0
	Aspirin	2
	Dual-antiplatelet	3
NSAID use	No	0
	Yes	1
Bleeding history	No	0
	Yes	3
Liver disease	No	0
	Yes	2

Interpretation: 1-Year Major Bleeding Risk Scores: 0-3=Very low; 4-5=Low; 6-7=Moderate; 8-9=High; 10 or greater=Very high

MEET OUR NEW RESIDENCY COORDINATOR



USHA TEJWANNEY, PHARM D

PGY-1 Community Pharmacy Residency Program Coordinator

Usha Tejawaney earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Long Island University. She joined Valley Hospital in 2018, rapidly gaining extensive experience across various units, including critical care, emergency room, operating room, and acute care. She later transitioned to oncology in an ambulatory care setting at Lucknow Pavilion. Currently, Usha Tejawaney works at our outpatient oncology infusion center, where she also serves as a Community Pharmacy Residency Coordinator and preceptor for APPE students and residents. In addition, she is a faculty member at Fairleigh Dickinson University, teaching an elective course.

Usha Tejawaney's professional interests include oncology, leadership management, and teaching. She is an active member of multiple pharmacy organizations and has authored several published articles. Beyond her professional commitments, she is deeply involved in her children's activities and sports. Usha Tejawaney enjoys traveling and spending quality time with her family and friends.

MEET OUR NEW PGY1 PHARMACY RESIDENTS

Our two Valley Hospital Pharmacy Residency Programs are accredited by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP). Following graduation from pharmacy school, pharmacists can enhance their education through a one-year post-doctoral residency. This program provides new practitioners with comprehensive exposure to various aspects of pharmacy practice, enables them to manage specialized patient populations, and allows them to apply their knowledge and skills in collaborative, interprofessional settings. We are excited to introduce the three residents who will join our July 2024 – June 2025 residency class.

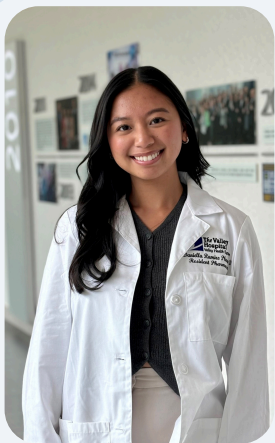


ANNA WSZEBOROWSKA, PHARM.D

PGY1 Pharmacy Resident

Anna Wszeborowska was raised in Kinnelon, New Jersey, and earned a Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University in May 2024.

Anna is very excited to embark on her journey as a resident pharmacist at The Valley Hospital. She is eager to expand her clinical knowledge and professional skills through many of the patient-care-centered opportunities offered at Valley. Her current areas of interest include oncology, cardiology, and clinical trials. Outside of pharmacy, Anna enjoys going to concerts and visiting new restaurants.



DANIELLA RAMIRO, PHARM.D

PGY1 Community-Based Pharmacy Resident

Daniella Ramiro is from Robbinsville, NJ and earned her Doctorate of Pharmacy from the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy at Rutgers University in May 2024.

Daniella is very excited to be a part of the Valley Health Pharmacy team as one of the PGY-1 Community-Based residents. She is eager to apply her pharmacy background to the challenges and opportunities presented through Valley's residency program. She shows a strong interest in ambulatory care and is excited to learn more about oncology and specialty medications. Outside of pharmacy, Daniella enjoys exercising, trying new cafes, and spending quality time with her family and friends.



JASMINE TAKACH, PHARM.D

PGY1 Community-Based Pharmacy Resident

Jasmine Takach is from Fair Lawn, NJ and earned her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from The University of Rhode Island in May of 2024.

Jasmine is eager to start her career as a PGY-1 Community-Based Pharmacy Resident with Valley. Jasmine looks forward to establishing professional relationships with other disciplines within the healthcare community to help provide the highest quality of care our patients. She is interested in ambulatory care and hopes she can continue to impact the community through various outreach activities during the year. By the end of residency, Jasmine wishes to establish her skills and knowledge throughout the various training sites. Besides pharmacy, Jasmine is interested in cooking, exercising, and is an avid New York Jets fan.

FATIMA IHARADA AND MARC PEYKO HONORED AS PRECEPTORS OF THE YEAR

Fatima Iharada, the esteemed preceptor for the inpatient staffing learning experience, has been recognized by Karen Flores and Likitha Mamillapalli, graduated PGY1 Pharmacy Residents, for her exceptional commitment to mentoring pharmacy residents and fostering their development in a real-world clinical setting. Known for her patient-centered approach, Fatima provides invaluable guidance to residents as they navigate the complexities of inpatient care, ensuring they gain critical skills in medication management. Her dedication to creating a supportive learning environment has earned her admiration from both residents and colleagues alike, making her a standout figure in shaping the next generation of pharmacy professionals.



LEFT TO RIGHT: KAREN FLORES, FATIMA IHARADA, AND LIKITHA MAMILLAPALLI



Marc Peyko (left), the preceptor for the clinical trials learning experience, has been celebrated for his expertise in guiding residents through the intricacies of clinical research. Marc equips residents with the knowledge and hands-on experience necessary to succeed in the evolving field of clinical pharmacy. His mentorship goes beyond the classroom, providing residents with real-world insights into the importance of research in advancing healthcare. Marc's thoughtful and thorough approach to preceptorship has made him a respected mentor, helping residents develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for understanding in clinical trials. He is recognized by Phillip Park, the graduated PGY1 Community Resident, for setting achievable yet challenging goals. A phrase he commonly tells residents is, "Your success is my success, your failure is my failure so I'll do my best to make you succeed."



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