

LMU General Practice & Family Medicine

Newsletter July 2026



Dear colleagues,
dear friends of the Institute,

I am delighted to take on my new role as Professor of Mental Health in Primary Care and look forward to working with you to help shape the future development of our discipline. General practice plays a pivotal role in identifying psychological distress at an early stage, assessing it appropriately, and providing patients with reliable, ongoing support.

As a psychological psychotherapist, I am particularly committed to the prevention and early detection of mental health conditions. Many disorders develop gradually, making early intervention all the more important – before symptoms become entrenched or develop into chronic conditions. Primary care offers a unique opportunity in this regard, as it is often the first and most consistent point of contact for people seeking help.

My research also focuses on the use of modern technologies that open up new possibilities for diagnosis, monitoring, and intervention. At the same time, I believe it is essential to critically examine their limitations and to ensure that technological innovations are implemented in ways that are meaningful, evidence-based, and centred on patients' needs.

I look forward to exchanging ideas with you, collaborating on future projects, and continuing to strengthen mental health in primary care together.

Yours sincerely,
Johanna Löchner
and the LMU General Practice team

LMU insights General Practice – Vaccination Update

On 8 July 2026, we hosted another *LMU insights General Practice* continuing medical education event, bringing together healthcare professionals for an evening focusing on current topics in vaccination medicine. Held at the Gärtner-Saal of St. Vinzenz House, the programme featured presentations by PD Dr Linda Sanftenberg, PD Dr Martin Alberer, and PD Dr Camilla Rothe on current recommendations for routine vaccinations, the use of artificial intelligence to support vaccine prevention, and recent developments in travel and tropical medicine. Further information is available on our [Homepage](#).

Early-SoDA Study: Early Detection of Depression and Anxiety

"Psychological distress often develops long before it becomes visible within the healthcare system." This idea lies at the heart of the Early-SoDA (Early Signs of Depression and Anxiety in the Young using Digital Biomarkers) study at the German Center for Mental Health (DZPG). The project investigates how early signs of depression and anxiety disorders can be identified in young people aged 16–22 years. Over a six-month period, participants use their smartphones to collect data on their well-being, contributing to the development of AI-based models for early detection. Building on this work, the multicentre UNity study will launch at the DZPG in July 2026, developing and evaluating an AI-based intervention designed to improve the mental health of university students experiencing psychological distress.

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EMMA Software Tool Continues to Grow

The EMMA software tool, developed at our Institute, supports general practitioners in systematically identifying and prioritising medication-related risks in patients with polypharmacy. In a study involving four general practices in the Munich region, EMMA generated approximately 4,000 medication risk alerts for 663 patients receiving multiple medications. Based on a sample of cases, treating GPs confirmed a concrete need to adjust medication in more than 60% of patients included in the analysis. EMMA is currently being expanded through several doctoral research projects to include AI-based components. tobias.dreischulte@med.uni-muenchen.de

Quality of Life After Intensive Care: Depression Plays a Key Role

A recent analysis of the PICTURE study examined which factors have the greatest impact on health-related quality of life among patients showing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) following intensive care treatment. Depressive symptoms emerged as the strongest influencing factor. These findings highlight the importance of systematically identifying and treating depression to achieve lasting improvements in patients' quality of life (Kosilek, *Scientific Reports* 2026).

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'STARCE Angehörige': Involving Family Members as Partners in Care

Structured involvement of family members and other close supporters is becoming increasingly important in the care of patients experiencing psychological distress. Funded by the German Center for Mental Health (DZPG), we are collaborating with the [Leibniz Institute für Resilience Research](#) to develop a task-sharing approach that supports GPs in working together with relatives and close supporters to improve patient care. We are currently seeking our first patients and family members to participate from January 2027 onwards. For further information: daniela.lindemann@med.uni-muenchen.de

Innovation Fund Supports the RiSE Study on Sleep Medication in Older Adults

The Innovation Fund of the Federal Joint Committee (G-BA) has selected the RiSE – Reducing Inappropriate Sleep Medication Use through Patient Empowerment project for funding. Led by our Institute, the study investigates whether statutory health insurers can use routine healthcare data to identify people with long-term sleep medication prescriptions and provide evidence-based information on deprescribing. The aim is to encourage discussions with general practitioners about the risks, alternatives, and possible discontinuation of sleep medication. Project partners include the aQua Institute and BARMER. tobias.dreischulte@med.uni-muenchen.de

Awards for Vaccination and Trauma Research

As part of the PICTURE study, our research on improving patients' health-related quality of life received the Quality of Life Award from the Lilly Deutschland Foundation. The study findings were published in *The BMJ* on 7 May 2025, and the award was presented in Berlin in May 2026. Our project AVA: AI-supported Vaccination Assistant aims to improve influenza vaccine uptake among adults aged 60 years and older with mild cognitive impairment. In recognition of its innovative approach and its potential for implementation in routine clinical practice, the project received the Poster Award at the 2026 National Vaccination Conference in Cologne, presented by the 'Kinder.Gesundheit.Mainz' Foundation. The conference focused on the theme "Vaccine Communication."

IMPRESSUM

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Dates & Events

General Practice Compact, 2–4 July 2026, hybrid

Preparation course for the specialist board examination: [Münchner Akademie für Ärztliche Fortbildung](#)

Dragon Boat Race, 3 July 2026, 16:00, Olympic Lake, Munich

Once again, we will be taking part in the traditional University Dragon Boat Race on Munich's Olympic Lake. Spectators are warmly welcome!

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BayFoNet CME for Research Practices 2026

15 July 2026 (Würzburg): Long-COVID; 7 Oct 2026 (Regensburg): Evidence-based Counseling; 25 Nov 2026 (Erlangen): Osteoporosis.

www.bayfonet.de

LMU insights General Practice

8 July 2026, 17:30 - 19:30

St. Vinzenz Haus, LMU Campus INN

Free Participation & 2 CME credits. Information [here](#). Registration: allgemeinmedizin@med.uni-muenchen.de

Meeting for Teaching Staff Summer Semester 2026, 8 July 2026, 17:30 - 19:30 St. Vinzenz Haus, LMU Campus INN

The Summer Semester 2026 meeting for teaching faculty will take place in person as part of the LMU insights General Practice event. Registration: anja.sommer@med.uni-muenchen.de

Public Lecture Series „Depression in Dialogue“ (via ZOOM)

8 July 2026, 13:30 - 14:30: „AI in Psychotherapy“, Prof. Harald Baumeister; 11 Nov 2026, 13:30 - 14:30: „GPs, Psychiatrists und Psychologists“, Prof. Peter Brieger. No Registration required, Zoom-Link available [via the Primary Health Care Foundation](#)

PTQZ – Pharmakotherapie Quality Circle 2026

Wednesdays, 17:00 - 18:30:

St. Vinzenz Haus, LMU Campus INN

23 Sep 2026: Lipid-lowering therapy; 16 Dec 2026: Reimbursement Claims. Participation is free of charge, new participants are welcome to join at any time.

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Hufeland-Lecture 2026, 1 October 2026, Göttingen

This year's Foundation for General Practice Award will be presented to Prof. Wilhelm Niebling, who will deliver the Hufeland Lecture during the DEGAM Annual Congress on the topic: Developments, Opportunities and Challenges in Drug Therapy in General Practice. Further information is available on the Foundation's website.

Public Annual Meeting of the Primary Health Care Foundation, 16 October 2026, St. Vinzenz Haus, Nußbaumstr. 5.

The Foundation warmly invites you to this year's annual meeting on the theme "Obesity: Between Social Stigma and Identity". Speakers: Prof. Annette Becker (Marburg), Katharina Timper (Technical University of Munich), and Nastasja Penzar (Vienna). Registration: andrea.bischhoff@med.uni-muenchen.de

Editor of this issue: Barbara Parzefall
GP Trainee, Hausarzt 360° Residency Programme

Sharing Research, Advancing Knowledge: Open Science in General Practice

Open Science promotes transparency and maximises the scientific value of research data. In general practice, where studies often require substantial effort and collaboration across practice-based research networks, making high-quality datasets openly available represents an important contribution to the efficient use of scientific resources. The Institute of General Practice therefore provides selected research datasets for public use. These include: POKAL core dataset (DOI: 10.5282/ubm/data.662; n = 2,741 patients), focusing on improving depression care; BaCoM dataset (DOI: 10.5282/ubm/data.819; n = 1,071 patients), examining the situation of people requiring long-term care during the COVID-19 pandemic; PICTURE dataset (DOI: 10.5282/ubm/data.557; n = 319 patients), investigating long-term outcomes following intensive care treatment. If you have any questions, including regarding opportunities for data access and reuse, please contact us at allgemeinmedizin@med.uni-muenchen.de.

News from the Primary Health Care Foundation

Election to the Leopoldina: On June 17th, Jochen Gensichen became the first general practitioner to receive a membership certificate from the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina in Halle (Saale). He was elected to Class III – Medicine, Section: Global Health. Further information is available at Leopoldina.org.

Dr. ChatGPT? The Foundation supports a range of AI-based research projects, including the development of [AVA](#), a chatbot that provides information on vaccination, as well as another chatbot designed to support patients after intensive care treatment. Many patients find it easier to share concerns with an AI that they may hesitate to discuss in person. In the latest episode of the [#DIGDEEP podcast](#), Jochen Gensichen explains why shame remains an underestimated factor in general practice.

Early Career Network Meeting: The annual gathering of the Network for University-Based General Practice Training (NUWA) will take place on 30 September in Göttingen as part of the DEGAM Annual Congress. To register, please contact office@stiftung-allgemeinmedizin.de

Join Us for Discussion and Celebration: The Foundation warmly invites you to its Annual Meeting on 16 October 2026 at St. Vinzenz House. The programme will include keynote presentations followed by a garden reception. This year's theme is "Obesity Stigma: Between Social Stigma and Identity." Speakers: Prof Annette Becker (Marburg), Katharina Timper (Technical University of Munich), and Nastasja Penzar (Vienna). Registration details are available under "Events" in the left column.

Teaching & Professional Education

Hosting the DZPG Early Career Scientists Network

On 27 April, we hosted this year's meeting of the Early Career Scientists (ECS) Network, jointly organised by the Departments of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Institute of General Practice. The event brought together researchers at the beginning of their careers and provided a valuable platform for scientific exchange, networking, and the development of collaborative approaches to healthcare. We were pleased to present several research projects led by our Early Career Scientists in General Practice and to further strengthen our collaboration with the German Center for Mental Health (DZPG). daniela.lindemann@med.uni-muenchen.de

Mentoring as a Cornerstone of Residency Training

Mentoring is a key component of postgraduate specialty training in general practice and is supported by the Bavarian Competence Centre for Postgraduate Training in General Practice (KWAB). At its core is the structured exchange of knowledge, experience, and professional guidance provided by experienced mentors. Alongside the well-established one-to-one mentoring programme, KWAB is currently piloting a new group mentoring format. This enables participants to discuss shared challenges while also addressing individual questions, creating a structured environment for peer learning and exchange. Both mentoring formats are part of the Competence Centre's programme and are open to all doctors undertaking postgraduate training in general practice. Clinicians interested in participating as mentees—or in contributing as mentors, particularly those from our network of teaching and research practices—are warmly invited to get in touch. robert.philipp.kosilek@med.uni-muenchen.de

Three Questions for Clinician Scientist Dr. Jan Ziegler

Jan, you are currently a GP trainee in the Hausarzt 360° residency programme. What motivates you? "Above all, it's the contact with my patients. The Leadership Programme also gives me the opportunity to experience university-based clinical training while further developing my skills in research and health policy." *Why did you choose general practice?* "Medicine should make a meaningful difference and reach patients where it matters. What I find particularly rewarding about general practice is its broad coordinating role across healthcare, together with the unique, long-term relationships with patients." *What is the focus of your research?* "I've always been passionate about physical activity, so my research explores how we can effectively encourage patients to become more active and the health benefits this can achieve. I also investigate the use of over-the-counter medications and ultra-processed foods, using large datasets and statistical methods to identify causal relationships."

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Our newsletter is published three times a year.

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