

Newsletter General Practice & Family Medicine

2025 July Issue



Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends of the Institute,

these days, we are under close observation – and we welcome it! Our graduate research program has undergone formal evaluation.

For the past four years, we have been conducting joint research with TUM on general practice approaches to manage depression (www.pokal-kolleg.de). This collaboration has led to the development of new tools: the DESY-PC questionnaire for assessing depression in primary care and the SuPr-10 scale for evaluating suicidality. We have also designed a brief psychological intervention and created guidance to identify situations, where deprescribing antidepressants may be indicated.

Beyond that, our research has shown the value of actively involving GPs and family members in chronic care programs. Moreover, we are offering practical insights into the use of emerging technologies – such as sensor rings – in general practice settings. We aim to complete the program in 2027, after six years of work – not only to advance the careers of young researchers, but also to benefit our patients.

For experienced colleagues in practice, we recently introduced the “LMU Insights General Practice”, with an initial crash course on multi-medication and deprescribing. If you would like to dig deeper, we are warmly inviting you to join our Quality Circle on General Practice Pharmacotherapy.

Wishing you a pleasant summer,

Yours, Jochen Gensichen
and the LMU General Medicine Team

IMPRESSUM

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DFG review of the POKAL-Kolleg

On July 8–9, 2025, the POKAL Graduate Program (DFG-GrK 2621) underwent formal review. Thirty-two doctoral candidates from LMU and TUM presented their research projects on the management of depression in primary care. The review was marked by lively discussions with the evaluation panel, university leadership, and the entire team. These two days of critical exchange offered not only an opportunity to present ongoing work, but also to reflect on achievements and define new goals. This review represents a key milestone in the development of the program and is a strong testament to the vibrant culture of primary care research in Munich. Hannah.Schillok@med.uni-muenchen.de

What really helps: Disease management for depression

Disease Management Programs (DMPs) are often considered a success in chronic disease care – but what specifically makes them effective in the management of depression? A research team led by Hannah Schillok analyzed over 20,000 cases from 35 international studies. Two elements proved particularly effective: the involvement of family members and brief psychological interventions by GPs (Schillok et al., JAMA Psychiatry 2025). She received the award for best publication within the POKAL program and was named “LMU Medical Scientist of the Year 2025.” Congratulations!

Hannah.Schillok@med.uni-muenchen.de

Involving family members!

Mental illnesses such as depression or anxiety disorders often place a significant psychological burden on family members. We examined to what extent patients can benefit from actively involving their relatives in their treatment through a systematic review (Bader et al., Family Practice, 2025). Self-management, psychoeducation, and peer support can be effective approaches. However, the evidence in the context of general practice remains limited to date. Felix.Bader@med.uni-muenchen.de

PTSD after intensive care – Help from GPs

About 20% of patients treated in intensive care go on to develop symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The PICTURE study showed that a structured short version of Narrative Exposure Therapy (MedNET), delivered in GP practices, can be reliably effective. This conversational technique is easy to learn and strengthens the role of GPs in long-term care. We celebrated the successful conclusion of our first major clinical study at the institute (Gensichen et al., BMJ 2025) on June 27, 2025, with the “PICTURE PARTY” – a special moment after a lot of collaborative work. Many thanks to all who stayed with us – we look forward to more exciting insights! Linda.Sanftenberg@med.uni-muenchen.de

Insights from the large DOOR study: Medication management

“I had no idea my sleeping pill could worsen my depression,” said a patient from one of the 30+ participating GP practices. The DOOR study’s medication analysis tool checks for individual risks, overmedication, and offers guideline-based therapy recommendations. Combined with psychoeducational conversations, a smart ring, and app, it forms an innovative approach for depression care. Initial feedback shows these tools create notable “Aha moments” – for both doctors and patients. Interested in participating? Call [+4989/4400-54316](tel:+4989440054316), visit our [Website](#) or contact Susanne.Winter@med.uni-muenchen.de.

Innovation increases vaccination rates!

The Standing Committee on Vaccination (STIKO) recommends seasonal COVID-19 and flu shots for everyone aged 60+. About 20% of them show signs of mild cognitive impairment and need tailored vaccine counseling. Together with colleagues from LMU Statistics and Oxford University, we developed the AI-based voice assistant “AVA”, which provides evidence-based and empathetic vaccine advice. Interested in testing “AVA” with your patients? We look forward to hearing from you! Linda.Sanftenberg@med.uni-muenchen.de

CRISP Checklist for primary care research

Research conducted in general practice settings comes with specific requirements. The CRISP Checklist (Consensus Reporting Items for Studies in Primary Care) helps present study results clearly and in a practice-oriented manner. The newly published German version was developed in collaboration with the international CRISP team and is now available online. You can access the checklist [here](#). Robert.Philipp.Kosilek@med.uni-muenchen.de

Dates

LMU Insights General Practice

Wednesday, July 16, 2025, 17:30–19:45

When five medications are the standard – how much is too much? And how can psychotropic medications be reduced when medically appropriate? Find the answers at our continuing education event *LMU Insights General Practice*, where we present the latest knowledge from our field. Friedrich-von-Gärtner-Hall, LMU Hospital, Nußbaumstr. 5. [Program](#) link available. Registration: Robert.Philipp.Kosilek@med.uni-muenchen.de

Hufeland-Lecture by The Primary Health Care Foundation, Thursday, October 2, 2025, 13:00

As part of the DEGAM Congress in Hanover, the traditional Hufeland Lecture will take place. This year, Prof. Peter Strohschneider will give the honorary lecture and receive an award. Infos: degam-kongress.de/2025

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

Wednesday, November 12, 2025, 13:30:

“Living with another person’s illness: The role of family members in depression treatment” – Prof. Dr. phil. Elisabeth Schramm, University Medical Center Freiburg, Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy

Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 13:30:

“Resilience: What makes us resistant to mental illness?” – Prof. Dr. med. Klaus Lieb, Leibniz Institute for Resilience Research, Mainz
Zoom links available on the Pokal-Kolleg [Website](#).

Pharmacotherapy Quality Circles

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 17:00–18:30: Fall Risk Increasing Drugs (FRIDs) in older patients.

Wednesday, December 17, 2025, 17:00–18:30: Prescribing levothyroxine according to guidelines. St. Vinzenz House, 3rd floor, Nußbaumstr. 5. Registration: Robert.Philipp.Kosilek@med.uni-muenchen.de

Teaching Coordinators’ Meeting

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

The summer semester 2025 teaching coordinators’ meeting will take place in person for the first time within the framework of “LMU Insights General Practice.” Anja.Sommer@med.uni-muenchen.de

Education series for physicians and medical assistants (BayFoNet Online Education Series 2025)

Wednesdays, 16:00 -18:30

The Bavarian Research Network in General Practice invites you to its 2025 online education series on GP-relevant topics:

Part 4: „Prevention“, September 24, 2025

Part 5: „Climate adaption“, November 12, 2025. Participation is free of charge. Program and registration form available online: [Registration for BayFoNet online training courses](#)

This newsletter was created by Ronja Walleitner, physician in advanced training in the leadership program “Hausarzt 360°”.

“What would you do...?” – Mental Health Hotline for (young) colleagues

“I have a young patient with panic attacks – but what will really help her?” Many early career general practitioners ask themselves questions like this, especially when transitioning into private practice. Our Mental Health Hotline offers support in precisely these situations: by colleagues, for colleagues. Through interdisciplinary case conferences, we discuss your specific questions and clinical cases together with GPs, psychologists, and psychiatrists – confidentially and with a focus on practical, real-world advice. The input helps you make informed decisions with greater confidence – and reminds you that you are not alone. Contact us at [+4989 4400 53779](tel:+4989440053779) or at allgemeinmedizin@med.uni-muenchen.de. We look forward to hearing about your cases! Ronja.Walleitner@med.uni-muenchen.de

News from the Primary Health Care Foundation

Strengthening the visibility of general practice, promoting leadership in the field, and supporting research projects – these are the three main pillars of the Primary Health Care Foundation (Stiftung Allgemeinmedizin). The following events are currently taking place:

NUWA: Network for young general practitioners: The Foundation provides a space for exchange and career planning through the Network for University-Based Training in General Practice (NUWA). Following the successful NUWA launch in April, a hybrid journal club will take place on July 23, 2025, followed by a meeting at the DEGAM Congress on October 1, 2025. All current and former participants of university-based general practice training programs are invited. Registration: Andrea.Bischoff@med.uni-muenchen.de

Hufeland-Lecture 2025: This year’s honorary lecture and award will go to Prof. Peter Strohschneider, a medievalist who served as Chair of the German Science and Humanities Council and President of the German Research Foundation (DFG). For his Hufeland Lecture, he raises the question: “Crisis of Evidence?” Vaccine skepticism, conspiracy theories, fake news, climate change denial – in today’s public discourse, topics that should be objectively resolvable are increasingly contested. Scientific evidence and everyday beliefs do not always align. But what happens when, for example, medical professionals and patients or scientific advisors and policymakers fundamentally disagree?

Public lecture series “Depression in Dialogue”: This online lecture series brings current research to a broad audience – including healthcare professionals, affected patients, and family members. The goal is clear, accessible dialogue on equal footing. Topics, speakers, and access links can be found under “Events”. More info: stiftung-allgemeinmedizin.de

Teaching

Pharmacoepidemiology – Successful Spring School in May 2025

From May 12–16, 2025, the Spring School on Pharmacoepidemiology took place at the LMU campus in cooperation with Harvard Medical School. Under the direction of Prof. Tobias Dreischulte and guest professor Prof. Sebastian Schneeweiss, 44 participants deepened their understanding of studies on drug safety and effectiveness. The program included hands-on pilot analyses and in-depth discussions on the practical challenges of working with secondary data. In addition to academic training, the Spring School provided a valuable forum for exchange between early-career and senior researchers alike.

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Pharmacotherapy Quality Circle launched

Uncertainty about drug combinations, successful deprescribing strategies, or adverse effects – these are everyday challenges in primary care. In response, we launched a new forum for professional exchange on pharmacotherapy in primary care: the LMU Pharmacotherapy Quality Circle (PTQZ). Since its start in March, the interdisciplinary group has discussed case studies, approaches to systematically reviewing multi-medication, and current challenges in deprescribing. The upcoming dates are September 17 and December 17, 2025. For registration, please contact Robert.Philipp.Kosilek@med.uni-muenchen.de. We look forward to exchanging ideas with you!

Publications

Our publications can be found on our [Homepage](#).

Job Openings

Would you like to join our team? Visit our website for job listings: [Homepage > Jobs](#).

Our newsletter is published 3 times a year. If you no longer wish to receive it, please send an email to: allgemeinmedizin@med.uni-muenchen.de