

## Division Introduction

Under the direction of Interim Division Director Tracey B. Wright, M.D., the Division of Pediatric Rheumatology at UT Southwestern Medical Center remains the major center for pediatric rheumatology in North Texas. The mission of the Division is to provide outstanding care for children with rheumatic disease, to foster the inquiry and discovery of new knowledge to advance our field, and to develop the future leaders of Pediatric Rheumatology through our training program.

The Division has a busy clinical practice spanning three locations: Scottish Rite Hospital for Children Dallas, Scottish Rite Hospital for Children Frisco, and Children’s Medical Center Dallas. The Division operates the largest and longest established multispecialty clinic for children with rheumatic diseases in the region at Scottish Rite Hospital for Children Dallas. We serve a diverse patient population and have a broad referral base from throughout Texas and surrounding states. Faculty have a broad array of clinical and research interests, including juvenile idiopathic arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, juvenile dermatomyositis, and scleroderma.

The Division is actively involved in both translational and clinical research endeavors directed toward improving pathophysiologic understanding, treatment options, and outcomes in a variety of pediatric rheumatic diseases. Collaborative research with leading pediatric rheumatology translational scientists has significantly improved the understanding of the underlying pathophysiology of Systemic-Onset Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis and Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.

Pediatric Rheumatology has a significant commitment to medical education, offering a rheumatology elective for pediatric residents and fourth-year medical students. The fellowship training program is one of only 36 ACGME-accredited programs for pediatric rheumatology; it has continuously trained fellows from all over the world for more than 30 years.

## Faculty

Currently the Division is comprised of 4 faculty members with diverse clinical and research interests, who provide care to patients with rheumatic disease, including inpatient, outpatient, and infusion services.



**Tracey B. Wright, M.D.**  
Associate Professor  
Interim Division Chief



**Tracy Wright, MD**  
Associate Professor  
Interim Division Chief



**Julie Fuller, MD**  
Assistant Professor



**Lorien Nassi, MD**  
Assistant Professor



**Katie Stewart, MD**  
Assistant Professor

## Honors / Awards

### Best Doctors/Pediatric Specialists in Dallas, *D Magazine*

- Julie Fuller
- Lorien Nassi
- Katie Stewart
- Tracey Wright

### Texas Super Doctors, Texas Monthly

- Julie Fuller

## Invited Lectures

### Tracey Wright

- Pediatric Rheumatology Symposium; University of California, Irvine; Irvine, CA, February 2020
  - *"Autoinflammatory Syndromes"*

### Katie Stewart

- Pediatric Orthopedic Education Series; Scottish Rite Hospital for Children; Dallas, TX, February 2020
  - *"Does This Child with Joint Pain Need a Pediatric Rheumatologist?"*

### Julie Fuller

- Children's Health LIVE: Practice to Practice; Webinar, October 2020
  - *"Rheumatology Labs: When to Order and What Do They Mean?"*

## Conference Presentations

### American College of Rheumatology Convergence

November 2020

**Bitencourt N**, Makris U, Solow E, **Wright T**, Bermas B.

Oral Presentation, *"Predictors of Adverse Outcomes in Patients with Childhood-Onset Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Transitioning to Adult Care"*

## **Education and Training**

The Division of Pediatric Rheumatology has a significant commitment to medical education and is actively involved in teaching medical students and pediatric residents, in addition to its fully accredited Pediatric Rheumatology Fellowship Program. Fellows from other departments also spend time in the Rheumatology clinics. Faculty educational activities include educational seminars for other community physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, and other allied health professionals.

### **Medical Students**

Third-year medical students rotate through the Rheumatology clinic during their Ambulatory Care rotation, and an elective is available for second- and fourth-year students. Students learn to:

- Develop a working differential diagnosis of arthritis in childhood
- Learn a complete joint examination and the physical evaluation of rheumatologic patients
- Evaluate patients from all major rheumatic disease categories

### **Residents**

The Division provides the major instruction to pediatric residents in the evaluation of the musculoskeletal system and assessment of the rheumatic diseases through direct teaching in regular departmental clinical conferences, and as part of the inpatient consultation service. A rheumatology elective is available for pediatric residents, and the primary objectives of the rotation are to:

- Learn to diagnose and understand the pathophysiology, natural history, prognosis and current management concepts of common rheumatic diseases in children;
- Interpret standard laboratory testing to recognize and assess the severity and chronicity of systemic inflammation and understand significance of autoantibody testing; and
- Gain experience in the management and coordination of care of the medically complex patient with rheumatic disease.

### **Fellows**

The Division of Pediatric Rheumatology at UT Southwestern has one of only 36 ACGME-accredited fellowship training programs in pediatric rheumatology in the United States. The Fellowship Program, directed by Dr. Tracey Wright and Dr. Katie Stewart, provides comprehensive training and seeks to train the future leaders in pediatric rheumatology with the following aims:

- To provide rigorous and diverse clinical training for fellows to develop sophistication in the diagnosis and management of children with rheumatic disease;
- To mentor and support fellows as they pursue hypothesis-driven clinical, translational, and basic research that advances knowledge in pediatric rheumatology;
- To prepare fellows to possess habits of life-long learning to build upon their knowledge, skills and professionalism, and to become leaders in pediatric rheumatology; and
- To develop compassionate advocates for children with rheumatic disease.

In the first year of fellowship, emphasis is on the acquisition of knowledge and clinical skills in rheumatology. During the second and third years of training, fellows focus on the progress and completion of a clinical, translational, or basic science project which meets the ABP requirements for scholarly activity. Program graduates secure positions in major academic institutions throughout the country with several holding key leadership positions including Division Chief, Fellowship Program Director, and University Diversity Officer.

Focused areas of research by the Division's current fellows includes:

- Evaluation of biomarkers and fibrinolysis to identify pediatric patients at risk for development of adverse outcomes after initial venous thromboembolism
- Improving the transition of children and adolescents with rheumatic disease to adult care



Elizabeth Sloan, MD  
3<sup>rd</sup> Year Fellow



Maryem Al Manaa, MD  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year Fellow



Hannah Bradfield, MD  
1<sup>st</sup> Year Fellow

## Research Activities

The Division is actively engaged in translational and clinical research to further elucidate disease mechanisms and to improve the care for children with rheumatic disease. A large, diverse patient population has provided the ability to conduct studies in several areas, and faculty have been involved in multi-center studies in the pathogenesis and epidemiology of childhood rheumatic diseases. All division faculty are members of the Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance (CARRA), an investigator-led collaborative pediatric rheumatology research network with a mission to conduct collaborative research to prevent, treat, and cure pediatric rheumatic diseases.

- **Dr. Julie Fuller** actively participates in a multi-center collaborative study with the NIH to study the natural history of calcinosis in Juvenile Dermatomyositis. She is also part of the CARRA Juvenile Dermatomyositis Telemedicine workgroup studying the evaluation and management of these patients using a virtual platform.
- **Dr. Lorien Nassi** directs the Division's quality improvement efforts, leading projects focused on adolescents with rheumatic disease. Current projects evaluate the identification of adolescents with rheumatic disease at risk for pregnancy, mental illness, or social barriers to health care and seek to improve the transition of children and adolescents with rheumatic disease to adult care.

- **Dr. Katie Stewart** is the Site Principal Investigator for the CARRA Registry, a multi-site observational registry whose goal is to understand the long-term outcomes and long- and short-term safety and effectiveness of the medications used to treat pediatric rheumatic disease. She has a specific interest in Juvenile Scleroderma and is participating in a multi-site study through CARRA to identify immunophenotype subsets in Juvenile Scleroderma.
- **Dr. Tracey Wright** is the Principal Investigator for the Clinical and Sample Core of the NIAMS funded Center for Lupus Excellence, an integrated, cooperative center based at UT Southwestern Medical Center, Drukier Institute for Children’s Health at Weill Cornell Medicine, and the Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine. The goal of the CLR is to advance the knowledge of pathways and mechanisms that contribute to the development and amplification of human SLE, and to develop assays and tools to: 1) monitor these dysfunctional pathways; and 2) stratify patients towards personalized therapies.

## Clinical Activities

The Division offers expert evaluation, counseling, and treatment in the broad array of rheumatic diseases found in children, including juvenile idiopathic arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, juvenile dermatomyositis, morphea/scleroderma, vasculitis, inflammatory uveitis, and autoinflammatory syndromes. Clinical services are offered at Scottish Rite Hospital for Children Dallas, Scottish Rite Hospital for Children Frisco, and Children's Medical Center Dallas. The Rheumatology Clinic at the Scottish Rite Hospital for Children Dallas campus is a multi-disciplinary clinic staffed by an attending rheumatologist, pediatric rheumatology fellows, and additional SRH staff including two pediatric rheumatology nurse practitioners, a psychologist, occupational and physical therapy, and Child Life. In 2020, between the three hospitals, Division faculty saw more than 4,900 outpatient visits in eighteen clinics per week. There were 1,142 new patient visits.

Services provided by UT Southwestern pediatric rheumatology physicians include:

- Evaluation and treatment of children with suspected rheumatic diseases
- Physical and occupational therapy evaluations and recommendations
- Coordination of team care, including ophthalmology, dental, and dietary counseling
- Education about specific rheumatic conditions
- Psychosocial support

## Patient Statistics

Respiratory Medicine Patient Stats by Locations By Type.

<b>Scottish Rite Hospital Dallas</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Outpatient Visits	2,787	2,946	2701
New Outpatient Visits	366	532	426
Infusions	469	735	502

<b>Scottish Rite Hospital Frisco</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Outpatient Visits	1463	1318
New Outpatient Visits	459	410
Infusions	152	263

<b>Children’s Medical Center Dallas</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Outpatient Visits	1,651	1,022	892
New Outpatient Visits	427	378	306
Infusions	306	258	251

## Grant Support

### Katie Stewart

**Grantor:** Childhood Arthritis and Rheumatology Research Alliance  
**Title of Project:** Observational Study of Pediatric Rheumatic Diseases: The CARRA Registry  
**Role:** Principal Investigator  
**Dates:** 08/2015 – 07/2020

### Tracey Wright

**Grantor:** Rheumatology Research Foundation  
**Title of Project:** Mentored Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Award for Workforce Expansion  
**Role:** Principal Investigator  
**Dates:** 05/2019 – 04/2020

**Grantor:** National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases  
**Title of Project:** Center for Lupus Research  
**Role:** Principal Investigator  
**Dates:** 09/2017 – 02/2022

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

1. Bitencourt N, Solow EB, **Wright T**, Bermas BL. [Inflammatory myositis in systemic lupus erythematosus](#). *Lupus*. 2020 Jun;29(7):776-781. PMID:32281474
2. Li SC, Torok KS, Rabinovich CE, Dedeoglu F, Becker ML, Ferguson PJ, Hong SD, Ibarra MF, **Stewart K**, Pope E, Higgins GC, Laxer RM, Mason T 2nd, Fuhlbrigge RC, Andrews T, CARRA Registry Investigators.. [Initial Results from a Pilot Comparative Effectiveness Study of 3 Methotrexate-based Consensus Treatment Plans for Juvenile Localized Scleroderma](#). *J Rheumatol*. 2020 Aug 1;47(8):1242-1252. PMID:31615917
3. Nehar-Belaid D, Hong S, Marches R, Chen G, Bolisetty M, Baisch J, Walters L, Punaro M, Rossi RJ, Chung CH, Huynh RP, Singh P, Flynn WF, Tabanor-Gayle JA, Kuchipudi N, Mejias A, Collet MA, Lucido AL, Palucka K, Robson P, Lakshminarayanan S, Ramilo O, **Wright T**, Pascual V, Banchereau JF. [Mapping systemic lupus erythematosus heterogeneity at the single-cell level](#). *Nat Immunol*. 2020 Sep;21(9):1094-1106. PMID:32747814
4. Nguyen M, Do V, Yell PC, Jo C, Liu J, Burns DK, **Wright T**, Cai C. [Distinct tissue injury patterns in juvenile dermatomyositis auto-antibody subgroups](#). *Acta Neuropathol Commun*. 2020 Aug 5;8(1):125. PMID:32758284
5. Patel C, Khanshour AM, Wilkes D, Rios JJ, Sheff KW, **Nassi L**, Wise CA. [Novel homozygous variant in WISP3 in a family with unrecognized progressive pseudorheumatoid dysplasia](#). *Clin Case Rep*. 2020 Aug;8(8):1452-1457. PMID:32884773