

7th Annual Internal Medicine Update, a CME conference sponsored by Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi

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Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

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I feel honored to represent ACP as a Global Ambassador to this internal medicine CME conference in Abu Dhabi. My overall conclusion is that there is a strong interest in the internal medicine community in this region for active engagement in ACP and its activities and that the prominent presence of an ACP Global Ambassador was well appreciated.

The conference is endorsed by ACP as well as the Society of Hospital Medicine (SHM), and the ACP logo is prominently displayed on conference displays. This was the 7th annual conference and was held in the conference space of Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi (CCAD), which is a sprawling and modern campus that includes a hospital, clinics, and academic and retail spaces on Al Maryah Island in the heart of the city of Abu Dhabi. The conference space is extremely modern and elegant, with a main auditorium that I believe seats about 200 people and has high-quality technology and an IT support crew that rivals the best I have seen anywhere. Last minute PowerPoint changes, AV needs, food and beverage options—all of these are of the highest quality.

Most speakers were from CCAD, and the majority trained in the United States or Europe. Many were practicing physicians in the United States or Europe before coming to Abu Dhabi. Thus, the presentations were Western-style, entirely in English, and I would rate them as comparable to high-quality and evidence-based presentations in the United States. Although attendees hailed from a few dozen countries, any one of these attendees and/or speakers would be appropriate for U.S.-based activities. Many internal medicine residents were present, and they served as the highly professional moderates of each block of presentations.

As ACP Global Ambassador, I was treated like an honored guest. I attended 80% to 90% of the conference and sat mostly in the front row with the conference organizers and a past President of Society of Hospital Medicine, who was also an invited guest from the U.S.

I gave two presentations on days 2 and 3 of the conference. The first of these was billed as the “Keynote Address” and for it I drew on ACP-formatted slides and talking points. The theme of my presentation was the “Global Family of Medicine,” and I interspersed photos of ACP members with ACP talking points of relevance to global members. I frequently referenced the bonding that we can all share, regardless of our culture or place of origin, through the profession of internal medicine—whether it be educational, professional development, wellness, or networking. For me, my take home personally is that the global family of medicine is a source of comfort and hope. Wonderful internal medicine physicians and wonderful human beings live all over this planet.

I highlighted an internal medicine resident from Abu Dhabi who went to medical school in Europe, trained in Abu Dhabi, and did an ACP Global Physician Scholar experience in Ohio. I highlighted this individual as an exemplary model of the global family of medicine, and I had the chance to meet this resident physician at the conference when she made an effort to meet with me.

My second presentation was more academic, and I presented “Just stop doing that! Things we do for no good reason,” which involved a high-level introduction of high-value care, some concepts of clinical reasoning skills, and then five cases of medical practices that we often do but for which little evidence exists. Two of my cases were of special interest to me, one being the use of derogatory, biased, or judgmental language in our documentation (e.g., “The patient was noncompliant.”). The other was a lighter look at the benefits of coffee. Both of these drew engaged audience interaction, and I received several jovial greetings from attendees in the social hour about my endorsement of coffee!

The past President of SHM and I were the two judges for the resident/student poster session. There appeared to be about 75 posters, and the final 10 were prominently displayed. Each finalist student/resident orally presented his/her poster to the two of us as we were surrounded by 10 to 20 others from the CCAD faculty who were listening in. We narrowed it down to the three winners, some of whom were Cleveland Clinic residents, but others were from a local medical school. The past President of SHM and I presented the awards to the winners.

A lovely reception was held for all attendees after the first day. This included delicious food offerings at stations in the elegant lobby space of CCAD.

All speakers, including me, were presented with an engraved gift for my desk. I presented the most senior person with a book and pen gift from ACP.

My hotel was attached to CCAD and was an elegant hotel, as is typical of the city. I arrived 1 day early and visited the Grand Mosque and Qasr Al Watan (two landmarks of the United Arab Emirates). I spent a couple evenings at various restaurants as well.

This was a marvelous experience for me and, I hope, a meaningful extension of ACP outreach to an eager group of internal medicine specialists in the United Arab Emirates. I am honored to have been an ACP Global Ambassador, and I am grateful for the connections with new friends in Abu Dhabi.







