



Factors Associated with Mortality from Severe Sepsis in the Medical Intensive Care Unit
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During my PURM project, I worked with Dr. Nuala Meyer in the Department of Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. The goal of the project was to research risk factors associated with outcomes of severe sepsis and septic shock in the ICU, both conditions with very high mortality rates. Additionally, I worked with Dr. Brian Anderson to learn how to assess delirium in ICU patients.

My role consisted of reading through patients' medical records in search of answers to questions about chronic health history, daily laboratory test results, the specifics of treatment received in the ICU, and much more. This data can then be statistically analyzed to find relationships between the variables, and between the variables and the patients' outcomes. I also joined the team of ICU doctors on rounds, learned how to read chest X-Rays, and went to biweekly intern meetings, where interns are taught how to approach different types of patient cases.

While I had participated in various laboratory based research projects prior to beginning PURM, this was my first experience with clinical research. Because I am considering a career in medicine and possibly clinical research, this was extremely helpful and gave me not only insight into a different type of research, but also provided me with skills that I will be able to use in the future. These skills include using MedView, Sunrise, and Oracle, understanding patient medical records, interacting with patients, understanding a significantly larger amount of the medical terminology I encountered, reading chest X-Rays, and using the CAM-ICU to assess delirium. Another highlight of my PURM experience was the opportunity to get a closer look at what it would be like to be a physician by interacting with various doctors on the study team, shadowing them on rounds, and reading through their notes in patients' files. This served to solidify the idea that I want to pursue a career in medicine. Finally, getting an introduction to clinical research confirmed my interest in it, and I hope to pursue it in the future as well.

PURM was an amazing and exciting experience that I would recommend to those interested in research, or those with a desire to try a new kind of research.