Each year, the Mount Sinai Health System, which consists of seven hospital campuses, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and a large, regional ambulatory footprint across the New York City metropolitan area, performs nearly 70,000 endoscopic procedures.

To ensure that the same high standards for quality in endoscopy are met at every site, we are adopting a common endoscopic reporting system that will measure individual and group performance on standardized quality metrics. Additionally, we are building a robust framework to provide clinical decision support so our physicians can enhance quality and efficiency of care.

As we move toward complete integration, our Health System will be well-positioned to ensure that every patient will continue to receive the best care.

Michelle Kang Kim, MD, MSc, Associate Professor of Medicine (Gastroenterology), in collaboration with Juan Wisnivesky, MD, MPH, DrPH, Professor and Vice Chair of Research in Mount Sinai's Department of Medicine, has found that the current staging system used to diagnose neuroendocrine tumors (NETs) does not accurately track progression of the disease. The findings, published in 2013 in the Journal of Clinical Oncology, also highlighted a more effective way of staging that improves predictors of outcomes in patients with small intestine neuroendocrine tumors.

Building upon this research, Dr. Kim seeks to develop and validate, using population-based and multisite institutional registries, a comprehensive NET staging system that incorporates pathologic, grading, and morphometric features, which will involve data from the National Cancer Institute's SEER database, as well as the SEER-Medicare registry. Additionally, Dr. Kim will lead a collaborative effort among Mount Sinai, the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and the University of Pennsylvania to create a multi-institutional data registry, work that is supported by the American Cancer Society. She is also spearheading the Mount Sinai NET Data Registry and Biobanking.

Over the past decade, Dr. Kim has worked closely with Richard RP Warner, MD, Director of Mount Sinai's Center for Carcinoid and Neuroendocrine Tumors, in caring for patients with these uncommon tumors. Mount Sinai has formed a multidisciplinary team of gastroenterologists, surgeons, oncologists, and radiologists who help provide coordinated and specialized care to NET patients.
Findings Support BRCA1 and BRCA2 Gene Mutation Testing for Pancreatic Cancer

Aimee L. Lucas MD, MS, Assistant Professor of Medicine (Gastroenterology), and a team of investigators published new research on the link between BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene mutations in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDAC) in the April 14, 2014, issue of Cancer. Their research bolsters previous evidence that found that approximately 10 percent of PDAC cases have a genetic predisposition.

Large contributors to hereditary PDAC are the BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations, best known as risk factors for breast and ovarian cancer. These new findings, which will help serve to identify a novel group of patients at increased risk of developing PDAC who could benefit from screening, are poised to alter current PDAC screening recommendations.

Dr. Lucas and her co-authors performed clinical BRCA1 and BRCA2 genetic testing, which included testing for three Ashkenazi Jewish founder mutations in two groups of patients. One group consisted of PDAC-free individuals who were enrolled in a high-risk PDAC-prevention program because of family history of PDAC. The second group was comprised of patients with a personal history of PDAC.

Of the 57 PDAC-free patients, seven were BRCA1 or BRCA2 carriers: one had a BRCA2 mutation found on sequencing the full gene, and six carried Ashkenazi Jewish mutations (three with BRCA1 and three with BRCA2). Of the 52 patients with PDAC, two had BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutations on full gene analysis, and five had the Ashkenazi Jewish founder mutations.

The researchers established that BRCA1 and BRCA2 testing is useful in assigning risk level for PDAC, and argued that new screening recommendations should be considered for patients who harbor these mutations, as well as their immediate relatives. The team also concluded that patients of Ashkenazi Jewish descent with a personal or family history of PDAC should be tested for BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations, even when there is no family history of breast and ovarian cancer.

Top Honors for Mount Sinai Researchers

For the first time in its 47-year history, the Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation of America presented all three of its 2014 annual scientific achievement awards to research and academic luminaries at Mount Sinai.

“It seems quite fitting that they all are from Mount Sinai, where Crohn’s disease was first described by Dr. Burrill B. Crohn, a Mount Sinai physician, together with his Mount Sinai colleagues, Drs. Leon Ginzburg and Gordon Oppenheimer, and where groundbreaking research and treatment for Crohn’s continues today,” said Marjorie Merrick, Vice President of Research Special Projects, Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation of America. The following awards were given to:

The Henry D. Janowitz Lifetime Achievement Award in Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

David B. Sachar, MD, Clinical Professor of Medicine, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Director Emeritus of the Dr. Henry D. Janowitz Division of Gastroenterology

Dr. Sachar contributed to the development of oral rehydration therapy, and was instrumental in laying the foundation for the current international classification of Crohn’s disease.

Scientific Achievement in IBD Clinical Research

Jean-Frédéric Colombel, MD, Professor of Medicine, and Director of The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center at Mount Sinai

Dr. Colombel is the former president of the European Crohn’s and Colitis Organization, and past chair of the International Organization for the Study of Inflammatory Bowel Disease, and is among the world’s most prominent IBD researchers.

The Scientific Achievement in Basic IBD Research

Judy H. Cho, MD, Ward-Coleman Chair in Translational Genetics, Vice Chair for Translational Genetics, and Associate Chief of Research for Gastroenterology

Dr. Cho, the first female to win the award, has identified many of the first genes associated with Crohn’s disease.