

ATS Highlights 2022: Critical Care Assembly Early Career Professionals



Joanna Hart, MD, MS

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Tell us about yourself.

After college at Northwestern University, where I was a sociology major and engaged in poverty research, I moved to central Virginia. I worked at an animal shelter before medical school at UVA. I've been at Penn since 2008 and I have 2 amazing kids.

Please describe your academic work.

Clinical research informed by my clinical inpatient and outpatient work and complemented by medical education and community engagement. My central objective is to improve the experience of seriously ill patients and their families, particularly how we can improve complex, preference-sensitive medical decision making and deliver equitable and responsive patient- and family-centered care, particularly to marginalized and medically underserved groups.

What are your passions in life?

Outside of work, my favorite activities are traveling to places we can invest in and learn from the local culture and people, cuddling foster kittens until they find forever homes, watching my son's hip hop dance performances, and helping my kids grow up to be forces for good.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

I hope that I will continue to be conducting clinical research that has tangible impact on how patients and their families experience life-altering illnesses. I hope that in 5 years, I will also see more of those I have mentored find their paths to individually defined success.

What are you looking for in future collaborators?

Collaborators who share my commitment to centering patients and their families in clinical care and research. I look for ways that my skills can complement other investigators' so that we can learn from one another to achieve a shared goal.



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Academic Work:

Family engagement is a key component of high-quality critical care, with known benefits for patients, care teams, and family members themselves. The COVID-19 pandemic led to rapid enactment of prohibitions or restrictions on visitation that now persist, particularly for patients with COVID-19. The prolonged COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to set family-centered critical care back decades through ongoing visitation restrictions, with a particularly devastating impact on patients with COVID-19 and their families. Reevaluation of these policies in response to advances in knowledge and resources since the early pandemic is critical because COVID-19 continues to be a public health threat and future pandemics are likely. I and my co-authors reviewed the rationales and evidence for restricting or permitting family members' physical presence. We developed and provided broad guidance for health care systems to develop and implement policies that maximize benefit and minimize risk of family visitation during COVID-19 and future similar public health crises. Health care systems can now leverage knowledge and evidence gained over the first year of the pandemic to promote the safe return of families to the bedside, which will promote the well-being of patients, families, and physicians.

<https://pair.upenn.edu/covid19/patientfamilycenteredcare>



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Published manuscripts in ATS journals.

- Kohn R, Vachani A, Small D, Stephens-Shields AJ, Sheu D, Madden VL, Bayes BA, Chowdhury M, Friday S, Kim J, Gould MK, Ismail MH, Creekmur B, Facktor MA, Collins C, Blessing KK, Neslund-Dudas CM, Simoff MJ, Alleman ER, Epstein LH, Horst MA, Scott ME, Volpp KG, Halpern SD, Hart JL. Comparing Smoking Cessation Interventions among Underserved Patients Referred for Lung Cancer Screening: A Pragmatic Trial Protocol. *Ann Am Thorac Soc.* 2021 Aug 12. doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.202104-499SD. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 34384042.
- Ashana DC, Lewis C, Hart JL. Dealing with "Difficult" Patients and Families: Making a Case for Trauma-informed Care in the Intensive Care Unit. *Ann Am Thorac Soc.* 2020 May;17(5):541-544. doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.201909-700IP. PMID: 31944818; PMCID: PMC7193814.
- Hart JL. Conflict Management by Physicians: A Heavy Hand in Preference-Sensitive Decisions. *Ann Am Thorac Soc.* 2018 Feb;15(2):171-172. doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.201711-842ED. PMID: 29388811; PMCID: PMC7051531.
- Hart JL, Pflug E, Madden V, Halpern SD. Thinking Forward: Future-oriented Thinking among Patients with Tobacco-associated Thoracic Diseases and Their Surrogates. *Am J Respir Crit Care Med.* 2016 Feb 1;193(3):321-9. doi: 10.1164/rccm.201505-0882OC. PMID: 26436758; PMCID: PMC4803058.

Published manuscripts in non-ATS journals.

- Hart JL, Taylor SP. Family Presence for Critically Ill Patients During a Pandemic. *Chest.* 2021 Aug;160(2):549-557. doi: 10.1016/j.chest.2021.05.003. Epub 2021 May 8. PMID: 33971149; PMCID: PMC8105126.
- Hart JL, Turnbull AE, Oppenheim IM, Courtright KR. Family-Centered Care During the COVID-19 Era. *J Pain Symptom Manage.* 2020 Aug;60(2):e93-e97. doi: 10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2020.04.017. Epub 2020 Apr 22. PMID: 32333961; PMCID: PMC7175858.



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