

## Chapter Member Spotlight



**Name: Rebecca Dudovitz, M.D., M.S.H.S.**

**Practice Location: UCLA Pediatrics**

**Number Of years In Practice: 16 years**

I am an academic general pediatrician and health services researcher at UCLA. I was born and raised in Los Angeles and absolutely love this city. I left L.A. briefly for my undergraduate education at UC Davis and then returned for medical school at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

I did my residency training at UCLA in the Child Health and Advocacy Track (CHAT) where I was introduced to public health concepts and discovered health services research. This inspired me to pursue fellowship training in the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar's Program (now known as the National Clinician Scholars Program) where I received a master's in health services research through the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. During my fellowship, I became interested in the role that school systems play in influencing health and began partnering with schools to study how the experiences kids have in schools shapes their trajectories. I then joined the faculty at UCLA where I remain today. In addition to practicing as a primary care doctor, I conduct school health research and lead the General Pediatrics Division.

### **What do you do before work that sets the tone for your day?**

I start the day by making a cup of tea I can drink on my way into the office. I give some love to my dog (Molly) and two cats (Reggie and Louie). Then I make sure my two kids are up and getting ready for school before I say goodbye and head out the door.

### **What are some challenges or struggles that you face at work?**

There is never enough time in the day to accomplish everything I want to do. The nice thing about being in academia is that I get to do so many different things, but the downside is that sometimes it's hard to figure out what to prioritize. Especially these days, so many of the families we care for are struggling to keep their kids healthy while making ends meet and are worried about the future for their family. We still see significant unmet mental health needs in our patients and parents struggling to make healthcare decisions amidst a deluge of misinformation. At the same time, science is under threat, and research faces steep funding challenges.

**How do you work through or overcome your challenges or struggles?**

Being part of a vibrant community of clinicians, educators, and researchers definitely keeps me going. I love working as part of a team and problem-solving together. The medical students, residents and fellows give me a lot of hope for the future and bring a fresh perspective and new insights to solving long-standing problems. Even though there are a lot of challenges to overcome, our communities have many assets and bright spots, too!

**After work, what do you do for your own wellness?**

I am a huge UCLA women's basketball fan (go Bruins!) so love catching a game. We love playing board games in our family, playing music or going to concerts, and watching our pets do cute stuff. Most evenings my husband and I finish the day by taking our dog for a walk around the neighborhood. It's a nice way to process the day together.

**From what/whom does your inspiration or motivation stem?**

Our kids! Taking care of kids gives me both a sense of urgency and joy. I love being able to help kids become and stay healthy - whether through treating the patient in front of me in the clinic or thinking about how our child-serving systems could function better to more effectively meet their needs. Although there is a lot of need out there, kids are also joyful. They make me laugh every day, so it's impossible to be grumpy when you spend your time around them.

**Wellness Tip: What is the one thing you would recommend to our readership to do each day to take care of oneself?**

I find it helpful to practice gratitude and appreciation. Every day, I witness something beautiful or kind or something I am grateful for. That helps me stay optimistic and appreciate the opportunity we have to contribute to that positivity by repairing things in the world that need fixing.