

Chapter Member Spotlight



Ilan Shapiro, MD, FAAP, FACHE is the Medical Director of Health Education and Wellness for a federally qualified health clinic at AltaMed. In addition to being a practicing physician, Dr. Shapiro is actively involved in creating binational public health programs to reach Hispanic communities on both sides of the border. He acted as the Medical Advisor for the General Consulate of Mexico in Chicago and was a Member of the Editorial Board for A Tu Salud (For Your Health), a health bulletin representing Hispanic health topics and resources. Dr. Shapiro is part of the National Hispanic Medical Association and

a spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics. Dr. Shapiro earned a medical degree from Anahuac University in Mexico, practiced medicine in several main hospitals in Mexico, and served in federally qualified health clinics in Chicago, IL, Fort Myers, FL, and Los Angeles, CA. For our chapter, Dr. Shapiro is a Member-At-Large. Connect with Dr. Shapiro on Twitter @dr_shaps.

Practice location: Boyle Heights, CA

Number of years in practice: 10+

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

I start at 5am. My wife usually needs to kick me out of bed, start, and do a meditation (THANKS TO COVID-19, I started doing this, and it is amazing!) with a great app (Headspace). After 20 minutes, I gear up and do a 30- to 45-minute run. By 6am, I wake up my kids, and we go for a walk/run for 20 to 30 minutes. By 7:15am, I have my first radio intervention, and the “official” day starts at 8am.

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

Adapting to technology -- we switched in 2 weeks an entire operation that was going to adopt digital care in 2021-2022. This was a moment of reflection. In reality, it ended up great. I actually feel now closer to my patients when I get to interact with them. I still remember when my pediatrician used to come and see me at home; technology can actually bring us together.

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

Deep breath and start writing the real objective data. Sometimes when overwhelmed that there is a lot of information, we end up creating mental stories (usually subjective) of the event or problem to solve. If it is still not clear what needs to follow, having a quick check-in with someone removed from the conversation can help give perspective. If everything else fails and a response can wait, I will try to walk or run to clear the mind for it.

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

Usually my bulk of activities are before 6:15am, that way, I'm ready for the family and professional life after. I do enjoy cooking with the kids, weekend long walks with my CEO (my wife), and the Board of Trustees (my kids). When the stress is hitting the fan, my biggest therapy is to come home and play with the kids. It reminds me about the important things in life and to project that energy to my patients.

From what/whom does your inspiration or motivation stem?

Dr. Sajay Gupta reflects my values and mission in life. He is not selling secret potions or products. He is sharing important information for our world, giving us a choice to learn a little more. He has the power to spark conversation and ideas.

Recently, I started following Daniel Habif. He is from Mexico City and has created this mystical way of inspiring speeches and events, straight forward with a clear understanding on how we work as humans, giving a great perspective about life.

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

- 1) Learn how to use the vaccine called “NO”. Sometimes we are afraid of using it, but it can protect us against extra “workitis” (or also known as “not need it” or “not related work”).
- 2) Routines are basic to improve mental and physical well being... Burnout is on the rise, and we need to start doing the “say something, do something.” This starts with the 5 basics things that need to be active:
 - a. Do the Shapiro diet (my own innovative approach): I throw away all snacks, refreshments, and goodies from the home.
 - b. Movement: Same as we do for brushing our teeth, we need to have some movement scheduled in the daytime.
 - c. Sleep: Make sure that you get your time. This is the moment to breathe and rest your mind.
 - d. Stress: It can be helpful when we need to run away (or here in California, swim away from a shark), but now we are getting to toxic stress. We need to create resiliency circuits to detect and mitigate that. Everyone is different, showcase your own “secret potion.”
 - e. Community: Yes, we are social distancing, but we can still help in other ways -- call, volunteer, or cook something for a neighbor can get us in a better mood.