

Chapter Member Spotlight



Name: Karinne Van Groningen, MD

Practice location: UCLA Health and Primary care pediatrics at clinic at the High Desert Regional Health Center (Part of LA-DHS).

Number of years in practice: 2 years

Karinne Van Groningen, MD, MPH is a UCLA preventive medicine and public health fellow physician and board certified pediatrician. She grew up in Fremont, CA and attended Georgetown University for both her undergraduate and medical school education. She then returned to CA for pediatrics residency at UCLA. This past year she received her MPH with an emphasis in health policy and management from the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. Dr. Van Groningen is interested in pursuing a career in health policy with part-time clinical practice to promote health equity and justice. She is currently involved in various policy projects including writing policy briefs for Whole Person Care - Los Angeles. She is also the AAP California Chapter 2 legislative and policy analyst.

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

I listen to the Daily by the New York Times. It's a 20-minute podcast that gets me up to date on the biggest news of the day. I love feeling informed and it allows enough time for my coffee to sink in so I can start being productive!

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

I currently work in a clinical capacity as a primary care pediatrician at a FQHC in Lancaster (North LA County). A significant portion of my patients face food, housing, and/or financial insecurity and within Lancaster, there are few services. Over the past year I have struggled to find resources to address my patients' social needs. And on top of that, as a new physician fresh out of residency, I often second guess my clinical decision making. Some days are stressful! However, it's been a privilege to serve my patients and they have taught me more that I could have ever imagined in a short amount of time.

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

My fellow physicians, including Dr. Lisa Gantz (another AAP-CA2 member), have been incredibly supportive and helpful. I also spend a significant amount of time pre-charting before clinic and reading up on various topics so that I walk into clinic prepared & ready to go!

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

I'm fortunate to live by the beach in Santa Monica so I take long walks with my rescue dog, Shorty, along the coast. I'm also part of the Peloton "cult" and will take spin classes with my friends – it's been a great way to stay active during the pandemic.

From what/whom does your inspiration or motivation stem?

My Grandfather, Tom Van Groningen, is the son of Dutch immigrants and grew up on a small farm in central CA. He was the only member of his family to finish high school. He then went on to receive his bachelor's degree and then PhD in education from USC. Ever since I was little, he instilled in me the power of education and learning as a tool to make the world a better place. He has been a huge inspiration for me as I worked towards my goal of becoming a physician and most recently, obtaining my MPH in Health Policy and Management from UCLA.

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

Practice mindfulness. I like to write down 3 things for which I'm grateful every morning. It is grounding and gets my day started on a positive note.

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