

For Immediate Release

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## **Benjamin Han, MD, MPH (UC San Diego) recognized with Rising Star Award in Health Services and Aging Research**

New York, NY – The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR), a national non-profit organization whose mission is to support and advance healthy aging through biomedical research, is proud to recognize the outstanding contributions of **Benjamin Han, MD, MPH**, with the **2022 Terrie Fox Wetle Rising Star Award in Health Services and Aging Research**.

This award honors a health services researcher in an early or middle phase of his/her career who has already made important contributions with work that respects the value of multidisciplinary health services science and that is likely to be highly influential in shaping practice and research for decades to come.



Dr. Han is a geriatrician, addiction medicine physician, and clinician-researcher in the Division of Geriatrics, Gerontology, and Palliative Care in the Department of Medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine and a primary care physician at the San Diego VA Medical Center. His work focuses on the intersection of chronic medical disease and substance use with a career goal to improve the health of older adults with substance use disorders. Currently, his National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)-funded K23 grant aims to deliver evidence-based geriatric interventions into opioid treatment programs. A nationally recognized expert on psychoactive substance use among older adults, he has given multiple oral presentations at national meetings and his research has been showcased in national media interviews with the Today Show, NPR, CNN, and The New York Times. Dr. Han has published 54 papers in major journals including JAMA Internal Medicine, Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, and the Journal of General Internal Medicine.

The award is named to honor Terrie Fox Wetle, PhD, who has devoted her professional career to improving the lives of older persons. She has been a tireless advocate for inclusion of aging-related health services research in Public Health. She has mentored hundreds of new investigators in a broad array of disciplines. As inaugural Dean, she built a thriving School of Public Health at Brown University, while leading efforts to improve aging-relevant content in public health curricula. Professor Wetle sets an example of visionary leadership, mentoring and administrative excellence. In her honor, AFAR established the Terrie Fox Wetle Rising Star Award in Health Services and Aging Research in 2019.

"The needs of America's growing older population demand innovative health services," notes Stephanie Lederman, EdM, AFAR Executive Director. "The visionary work of Dr. Han and Dr. Wetle exemplify applying research to improving the wellness of seniors and communities. AFAR is proud to support the future of health services and aging research with this award."

Nominations for the award are solicited in early spring and are judged by an independent panel of aging researchers. The award is a framed citation and carries a cash prize of \$5,000.

Dr. Han will receive the award and present a lecture at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America in November 2022.

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**About AFAR** The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR) is a national non-profit organization that supports and advances pioneering biomedical research that is revolutionizing how we live healthier and longer. For four decades, AFAR has served as the field's talent incubator, providing more than \$184 million to more than 4,200 investigators at premier research institutions nationwide. A trusted leader and strategist, AFAR also works with public and private funders to steer high quality grant programs and interdisciplinary research networks. AFAR-funded researchers are finding that modifying basic cellular processes can delay—or even prevent—many chronic diseases, often at the same time. They are discovering that it is never too late—or too early—to improve health. This groundbreaking science is paving the way for innovative new therapies that promise to improve and extend our quality of life—at any age. Learn more at [www.afar.org](http://www.afar.org) or follow AFARorg on Twitter and Facebook.