

For Immediate Release

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**Claire K. Ankuda, MD, MPH (Mount Sinai Health System) recognized with  
AFAR 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 **Claire K. Ankuda, MD, MPH, MSc** with the **2023 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. The award is a framed citation and carries a cash prize of \$5,000.



Dr. Ankuda is a hospice and palliative medicine physician and Associate Professor at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in the Brookdale Department of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine. As a clinician-investigator, Dr. Ankuda aims to improve Medicare policies to better support older adults with functional disability and serious illness, many of whom have Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. Her research focuses predominantly on the Medicare Advantage program, given its growing role in insuring older adults, as well as other policies that influence home-based support, including Medicare home health and hospice. She has first- or senior authored more than 20 publications included in leading journals, such as *Health Affairs*, the *NEJM*, *JAMA*, and *JAMA Internal Medicine*. Her scientific work has been recognized with an American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine Emerging Leader Award and an American Geriatrics Society New Investigator Award. Her research on the Medicare Advantage program has been cited in Government Accountability Office investigative reports. She is a 2020 Paul B. Beeson Emerging Leaders Career Development Award in Aging (K76) scholar.

Established in 2019, the award is named to honor Terrie Fox Wetle, PhD, who has devoted her professional career to improving the lives of older persons and advocating for the inclusion of aging-related health services research in Public Health. Dr. Wetle has served as the inaugural Dean of the School of Public Health at Brown University, and Deputy Director of the National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health, as well as former board president and current board member of AFAR.

"The needs of America's growing older population demand innovative health services," notes Stephanie Lederman, EdM, AFAR Executive Director. "The visionary work of Dr. Ankuda 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."

The Wetle Award is one of AFAR's three annual Scientific Awards of Distinction, in addition to the Irving S. Wright Award and Vincent Cristofalo Rising Star Award in Aging Research. Nominations for the awards are judged by an independent panel of leading aging researchers. To date, AFAR has presented 44 Wright Awards, 16 Cristofalo Awards, and 4 Wetle Awards.

Dr. Ankuda will receive the award and present a lecture at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America in November 2023.

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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 \$193 million to nearly 4,350 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).