



# It's a DRY HEAT

## A spotlight on the Arizona Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (AZ-GWEP)

### Hearing device aims to improve pre-surgical talk with the doc

The Arizona GWEP is piloting the use of hand-held amplification devices in clinical settings to improve communication between patients with hearing loss and medical professionals. One initiative is a collaboration with the Banner University Medical Center preoperative clinic.

Using commercially available Pocket Talkers®, the initiative aims to reduce the communication barriers that are common in many clinical settings due to fast pace interactions, a noisy environment, and the complexity of health information. In the preoperative clinic, communication barriers can limit the patient's understanding of their surgical procedures and recovery process. Age-related hearing loss adds to this challenge.

As many as two-thirds of adults age 70 and older have age-related hearing loss that often goes unaddressed. Some are unaware of their hearing loss because of the slow progression of symptoms. Others do not seek help



Dr. Mindy Fain demonstrates the use of a pocket-talker to improve communication with older adults who have hearing loss.

because they are embarrassed about the changes or unable to afford hearing aids. If Pocket Talker use is efficient for providers and normalized for patients, these communication barriers will be minimized and patient care improved.

In collaboration with the nurse managers of the clinic, the AZ-GWEP team will provide training and educational resources on communicating with older adults who have hearing loss, in addition to just-in-time training on using the hearing amplification devices.

The pilot project will assess the acceptability and reactions to the devices by the medical team as well as patients.

### Chief Residents Train at 9th Annual IP-CRIT

More than 40 new chief residents from 16 specialty departments at Banner University Medical Center improved their skills in the care of older adults and other complex patients at the 9th Annual Interprofessional Chief Resident Immersion Training Program (IP-CRIT), hosted by the University of Arizona Center on Aging.

The two-day weekend event was sponsored by the Center's AZ-GWEP grant from the Health

Resources and Services Administration, Banner University Medical Center, and the UA College of Medicine Graduate Medical Education Office.

The interactive training gives residents from diverse specialties a rare opportunity to network and develop skills in leadership and teaching to provide better coordinated care for complex patients, and improve quality and safe-

ty in their respective clinics and hospitals. Residents also benefit from the expertise of inter-professional faculty who participate as facilitators of table discussions.

“Sharing expertise and building collaborative relationships is an important part of the program,” noted Dr. Fain, co-Director of the Center on Aging and Chief of the Division of Geriatrics, General Internal Medicine and Palliative Medicine.



