

CLBB News

A newsletter from the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior

Special Focus: Coronavirus Updates

March 24, 2020

A Message from CLBB's Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I write today with a special update on how the MGH Center for Law, Brain, and Behavior is responding and adjusting to the new challenges introduced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As one of the nation's leading clinical, research and teaching hospitals, Massachusetts General Hospital has taken a leadership role in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. At the policy level, this has meant spearheading an international "Virtual Grand Rounds" in conjunction with MIT and Harvard Medical School and engaging in international coordination efforts in an attempt to give policymakers and the public cutting edge information. At the systems level, MGH has undertaken institutional preparedness with the streamlined intentionality characteristic of wartime preparations (See [MGH President Peter Slavin on NBC News Meet the Press](#)).

In an effort to anticipate and meet the challenge of unprecedented urgent care demand, there has been a massive effort to postpone all non-essential hospital visits, transition to appropriate virtual on-line care and transfer hospital personnel and resources to COVID-19 settings. This includes mobilizing all personnel, from technicians to nurses to physicians, for on-call surge/testing clinic (for COVID-19 Ambulance Bay testing) and Respiratory Infection Clinics. MGH has over 25,000 employees, and as an MGH Center we join the entire MGH community in supporting these efforts.

In addition to the necessary logistical changes (see updated events schedule below), a top priority has been to help our many CLBB student research assistants with this transition. I can report that all of our students are healthy and safe, and are now spread across three continents. They continue to work virtually, and we will continue to support their research experience.

In addition, we have turned our attention to the many legal implications of the pandemic. Judge Gertner has written about the [impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable prison populations](#), and in the coming weeks you will see more updates about CLBB work in this new space.

The social, political, and economic ramifications of the outbreak are intertwined with our Center's core focus on criminal justice, elder justice, and immigration and asylum justice. We will continue to work in these areas, sensitive to the many new demands placed on the system.

As always, we invite your input and we look forward to staying in touch.

Best,



Francis X. Shen
CLBB Executive Director

CLBB Highlights - Responding to COVID-19



[Compassionate Release Now for Prisoners Vulnerable to the Coronavirus](#)

Nancy Gertner and John Reinstein | The Boston Globe
March 23, 2020

CLBB Managing Director Nancy Gertner and CLBB Board Member Atty. John Reinstein published an Op-Ed in the Boston Globe noting the importance of protecting prisoners at high risk of contracting COVID-19. *Highlight:* "Proposals to limit pretrial detention, release those within six months of completing a sentence, or who are detained for technical violations of probation and parole are important, but the release of vulnerable and elderly prisoners in high-risk categories is essential to protect them from contracting COVID-19."



[Seven Ways to Support Kids and Teens Through the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)

Gene Beresin | The Clay Center for Healthy Young Minds
March 12, 2020

CLBB Affiliated Faculty Member Dr. Gene Beresin offers seven tips to help parents and caregivers talk to children about COVID-19 while addressing their concerns and stress. He was interviewed by [Boson 25 News](#), where he spoke further about his work.

Event Updates



[Detecting Dementia: Technology, Aging Brains, and the Law](#) **- CANCELLED**

April 1, 2020 | 12:00pm
Harvard Law School | Wasserstein Hall, Milstein East C

Event Description: Advances in neuroimaging, genetics, and mobile health apps are creating unprecedented opportunities to detect subtle brain changes that may predict the onset of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia. But how much trust should we have in these new technologies, who will have access to them, and how should the law respond when litigants proffer novel evidence of their brain states? This panel will explore technological innovations in dementia detection, and their ethical, social, and legal implications.

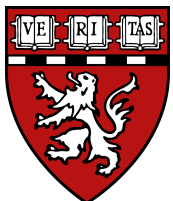
This event is part of the [Project on Law and Applied Neuroscience](#), a collaboration between the Center for Law, Brain & Behavior at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School.



[Anatomy of a False Confession](#) - CANCELLED

April 2, 2020 | 6:30-8:30pm EST
Bornstein Amphitheater, Brigham & Women's Hospital

Event Description: Why would criminal defendants confess to crimes they did not commit? Join CLBB Co-Director Dr. Judith Edersheim, JD, MD as she presents the Anatomy of a False Confession. This talk is sponsored by the Boston Society of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry. All are welcome. Reception begins at 6:30 pm, with the program to follow from 7:00-8:30 pm.



[2020 HMS Symposium on Medical Student Education in Psychiatry: Integrating Neuroscience in Psychiatry Teaching](#) - CANCELLED

April 15, 2020
Harvard Faculty Club

Event Description: CLBB's Dr. Kerry Ressler, MD, PhD will give a keynote talk: "Why Neuroscience Matters in Clinical Psychiatry Education: From PTSD to

Addiction" at 4:15-5:30 pm.

News on COVID-19 and the Law

General

[Our Brains on Coronavirus](#) | CNN Op-Eds | March 13, 2020

[DOJ Seeks New Emergency Powers Amid Corona Pandemic](#) | The New York Times | March 21, 2020

[Trial by Videoconference](#) | Reason - The Volokh Conspiracy | March 20, 2020

['Complete Chaos': How the Coronavirus Pandemic is Upending the Criminal Justice System](#) | USA Today | March 19, 2020

[Will Rikers Island Free Inmates Because of the Coronavirus?](#) | Intelligencer | March 17, 2020

COVID-19 and Juvenile Justice

[Juvenile Defense Resources](#) | National Juvenile Defense Center

[PJDC Statement on COVID-19 and Youth in the Juvenile Justice System](#) | Pacific Juvenile Defense Center | March 16, 2020

[Youths in Detention Should be Released to Reduce Coronavirus Risk, Advocates Say](#) | Los Angeles Times | March 17, 2020

COVID-19 and Immigration Justice

[Suit Seeks Release of Immigrant Families Due to Virus Risk](#) | Politico | March 22, 2020

[Close Immigration Prisons Now](#) | The New York Times | March 19, 2020

[Immigrant Detention During COVID-19 Is a Worsening Nightmare](#) | The American Prospect | March 23, 2020

COVID-19 and Elder Justice

[Coronavirus Scammers Targeting Vulnerable Older People, Say Police](#) | The Guardian | March 21, 2020

[An 'Unprecedented' Wave of Coronavirus Scams is Coming, U.S. Attorney Warns](#) | Forbes | March 18, 2020

[Coronavirus Scams: What Your Should Know](#) | Center for Elder Law and Justice | March 17, 2020

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