

MetroHealth physician receives \$7.2 million to study TB transmission in Uganda

Lydia Coutré

Dr. Charlie Bark, an infectious-disease specialist at MetroHealth and assistant professor at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, has received a \$7.2 million federal grant to study patterns of tuberculosis (TB) transmission in Kampala, Uganda.

The five-year National Institutes of Health grant will allow Bark, principal investigator for the research, and his team to study how TB is transmitted in the community in hopes of identifying strategies to prevent transmission, according to a news release.

The grant will allow a new blood-based marker of recent *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection to be developed in collaboration with Caprion Biosciences, according to the release. GPS technology will also be used to locate areas of high TB transmission.

The World Health Organization reports that TB is the leading cause of infectious-disease death in the world, with more than 10 million new cases each year and about 1.3 million people dying annually, according to the release.

The co-principal investigators for the research are Dr. Christopher Whalen, professor of epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Georgia, and Noah Kiwanuka, associate professor and chair of epidemiology and biostatistics at the Makerere University School of Public Health, Kampala, Uganda.