



**The Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy,  
Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School**

*Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2025  
July 2024–June 2025*

## Introduction

In Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), the Petrie-Flom Center's broad and deep work on health law policy, biotechnology, and bioethics issues remained steady and strong. Our leading projects included fully funded research initiatives on artificial intelligence in health care and psychedelics and the law. Our work appeared in numerous high-profile peer-reviewed journals, and we provided expertise and commentary to reporters, researchers, and others. Our digital media impact continued to grow from our increased social media presence and our successful blog, *Bill of Health*, and its digital symposia.

We expanded our busy event schedule to include options for all our audiences: in-person, virtual, hybrid, and invitation-only events, with more in-person formats planned for fiscal year 2026 (FY26). Through internships, research assistants, and especially our thriving student fellowship program, we invited students into all aspects of the Center's research work, and provided mentorship for independent research projects to help train the next generation of health law scholars.

Our Executive Director, **Susannah Baruch**, who joined Petrie-Flom in June 2023, had a successful and active second year, working closely with Faculty Director, **I. Glenn Cohen**, **Laura Chong** continued oversight of the Center's day-to-day and long-term operations as the Financial and Administrative Director, and **Lisa Gorelik** took on additional responsibilities as Digital Specialist while continuing to support events, communications, and finance. Our new Communications Manager, **Erin Lynch Scott**, joined us in December 2024, and has overseen the functioning of the newly redesigned *Bill of Health* blog, as well as social media strategy and media relations for scholarship published in major publications.

In FY26 we will celebrate the Petrie-Flom Center's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## I. Edited Volumes

Each year in conjunction with our annual conference, the Petrie-Flom Center organizes and publishes an edited volume featuring 4-5 editors and 25-30 authors. Editors select the authors from a large pool of abstracts and all authors attend a one-day writing workshop leading to a published volume. This process and these volumes support scholars – both established and early career – in the field, creating critical academic connections. We have published 15 edited volumes and counting, and have a strong relationship with Cambridge University Press which has published most of our recent volumes. Through the generosity of our funders, we have been able to make our recent volumes Open Access.

In FY25, we worked on three different volumes at different stages in the publication process.

For the launch of our volume **Health Law as Private Law: Pathology or Pathway** published in March 2025, we hosted an all-star panel on April 15, 2025, in collaboration with Boston University Law School. This edited volume focuses on the intersection of private law and health care, and how private law can be a tool for achieving health care reform or addressing public health problems.

We commenced in earnest work on our upcoming volume ***Psychedelic Medicine: Law and Policy*** based on our 2024 Annual Conference, which examined challenges and opportunities resulting from increased clinical research, private investment, and political interest in psychedelic medicines. Our four editors, 20+ authors, and four HLS student research assistants have worked hard to get the manuscript ready for submission. This book is under contract with Cambridge University Press and we expect publication in 2026.

Finally, in June 2025, we hosted the 2025 conference **Law, Health Care, and the Aging Brain and Body**, which examined how law, public policy, and health care entities can create systems that promote the well-being of older adults and their families in a world of enhanced longevity, and explored what lessons can be drawn from emerging scientific understandings of the aging brain and body. This book is newly under contract with Cambridge University Press.

## II. Events

The Petrie-Flom Center is known for its timely, cutting-edge events that convene leaders in the health law field as well as medical and scientific researchers, interdisciplinary scholars, policymakers, and thoughtleaders. Highlights include:

### **Petrie-Flom Center Open House: Health Law, Biotechnology, and the Future**

September 19, 2024, Hosted in-person at HLS

### **Sentencing Children: Bridging Neuroscience, Justice, and Reform**

October 9, 2024, Hosted in-person at HLS

*Part of the Project on Law and Applied Neuroscience, a collaboration between PFC and the Center for Law, Brain and Behavior at Massachusetts General Hospital.*

### **Introducing PULSE: Psychedelic Use, Law, and Spiritual Experience**

October 24, 2024, Hosted virtually on Zoom

*Part of the Project on Psychedelics Law and Regulation (POPLAR) with support from Mahindra Humanities Center's Study of Psychedelics in Society and Culture.*

### **Book Talk: The Constitution of the War on Drugs**

November 21, 2024, Hosted in-person at HLS

*Part of the Project on Psychedelics Law and Regulation (POPLAR).*

### **Five Years Later: A Book Talk on the Events of 2020**

February 13, 2025, Hosted in-person at HLS

### **2025 PULSE Conference: Sacred Rights: Psychedelics, Law, and Spirituality**

February 14, 2025, Hosted in-person at HLS

*Part of the Project on Psychedelics Law and Regulation (POPLAR) with support from Mahindra Humanities Center's Study of Psychedelics in Society and Culture.*

### **Ethics and the Law and Regulation of Medical AI**

March 7, 2025, Hosted virtually on Zoom

*Organized by the Harvard Medical School Center for Bioethics and PFC.*

### **The Evolutionary Purpose of Adolescent Vulnerability: Decoding and Depathologizing Adolescent Neurobiology and Behavior**

April 8, 2025, Hosted in-person at HLS.

*Part of the Project on Law and Applied Neuroscience, a collaboration between PFC and the Center for Law, Brain and Behavior at Massachusetts General Hospital.*

### **Book Talk: Health Law as Private Law**

April 15, 2025, Hosted in-person at Boston University School of Law and virtually on Zoom

*Co-organized by PFC and the Boston University School of Law.*

### **Mental Health and Climate Change: When a Global Crisis and Planetary Emergency Collide**

May 8, 2025, Hosted virtually on Zoom

*Co-sponsored by the Harvard Law School Project on Disability (HPOD), PFC, and GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard.*

## **III. Student Fellowship Program**

The Petrie-Flom Center's Student Fellowship program is an integral component of our contribution to student development. Open to any graduate student at Harvard, the fellowship is designed to support mentored scholarship in health law policy, biotechnology, and bioethics. As part of our increased commitment to digital outreach, we trained our Student Fellows on writing scholarly yet accessible pieces for digital media outlets, including our blog, *Bill of Health*. We also paired each Student Fellow with an outside mentor, often drawing upon our network of HLS alumni.

This year's impressive cohort of Student Fellows included four Harvard Law students, one joint Harvard Law School and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health student, and one Harvard Medical School Center for Bioethics student.

**Spencer Andrews**, Harvard Law School, JD '26

Paper: "Hiding Societal Failures from the Public Eye: How Localities Have Weaponized Civil Commitment and Anti-Homelessness Policies Following *Grants Pass v. Johnson*"

**Zain Khalid**, Harvard Medical School, MBE '25

Paper: "Coercion in Psychiatry: A Model for Ethical Reform"

**Abeer Malik**, Harvard Law School, LLM '25

Paper: "Bridging the Legal Gaps in AI-Generated Drugs: Toward a U.S. Regulatory Framework for Intellectual Property, Approval, and Accountability"

**Rebekah Ninan**, Harvard Law School, JD '25

Paper topic: "The Class Action Comeback: How Consumer Class Actions Are Replacing Mass Torts at the Forefront of Public Health Litigation."

**Rupa Palanki**, Harvard Law School, JD '26

Paper: "Gene Therapy in the Womb: Legal Responsibilities and Reproductive Rights"

**Jessica Samuels**, Harvard Law School and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health student, JD/MPH '25

Paper: "Are Designer Grandmas the Next Designer Babies? The Ethics of Epigenome Editing"

Student Fellow work published in *Bill of Health* this year includes:

- Could the Trump Administration Use CDC Powers to Enforce Hardline Immigration Policies? by *Spencer Andrews, JD '26*
- Rethinking Mental Health Reform: A case for reviving community-based care by *Zain Khalid, MBE '25*
- Houston, Do We Have a Lawyer? The Legal Black Hole of Astronaut Health Care by *Abeer Malik, LLM '25*
- Hims? Hers? It's Novo Nordisk's Semaglutide Market Now by *Rebekah Ninan, JD '25*
- The Unconscionability of Emergency Room "Cash Pay" Contracts by *Rupa Palanki, JD '26*
- Who's Gonna Pay? The Impact of Tariffs on Pharmaceutical Products by *Jessica Samuels, JD/MPH '25*

#### **IV. Digital and Social Media impact**

In early 2025 we unveiled a new dynamic redesign for our [website](#), [blog](#), and [newsletter](#) and have seen an 11 percent increase in daily traffic as a result.

The varied and provocative posts in our [Bill of Health](#) blog continue to make this forum a first stop for reporters and researchers interested in the many topics we cover. Our most-read topics in recent years include AI in medicine, psychedelics, pharmaceutical pricing, climate change, weight-loss medicine, social media and mental health, genetic engineering, and patient care.

This year, we hosted digital symposia (collections of blog posts by experts around a certain topic or issue in health law policy, guest edited by invited scholars) on [reproductive rights](#), [climate change and health](#), and [innovation and ethics in bioscience](#).

Social media was a particular focus in FY25, and we concentrated on the following platforms: LinkedIn (3,000 followers), Instagram (443 followers), Facebook (1,600 followers), X (7,000 followers), and BlueSky (105 followers). We co-posted several times with Harvard Law School's flagship Instagram account, which caused a lasting increase in both engagement and followers.

We have also set up dashboards on Google Looker Studio to track our social media and website analytics, and continue to bolster our understanding of what posts perform better on what platforms.

## **V. Research Programs**

Our research programs also experienced a successful year. The Petrie-Flom Center has developed a strong reputation for leading scholarship at the forefront of health law policy, biotechnology, and bioethics.

Our ongoing scholarly research collaborations continued to flourish: [Global Health and Rights Project](#) led by Senior Fellow [Alicia Ely Yamin](#); the [Project on Law and Applied Neuroscience](#) led by Senior Fellow [Stephanie Tabashneck](#); and the [Project on Advanced Care and Health Policy](#). Our Senior Fellows leading these projects mentored [up-and-coming scholars](#), engaged with students, published scholarship and commentary, and [hosted high-profile events](#).

Our affiliates continued to publish articles in leading academic journals, such as [JAMA](#), [NEJM](#), [Health Affairs Forefront](#), [Nature](#), and [Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics](#), and were quoted in leading press outlets such as [NBC News](#), [ABC News](#), [Bloomberg](#), [Axios](#), [Forbes](#), the [Atlantic](#), [STAT News](#), the [Boston Globe](#), [MIT Technology Review](#), and [Yahoo News](#).

### **The Project on Psychedelics Law and Regulation (POPLAR)**

In October 2023, a new [gift](#) from the Gracias Family Foundation expanded our work on the law and policy of psychedelics, which [started in June 2021](#) with a grant from the Saisei Foundation (Tim Ferriss and Matt Mullenweg). This funding has enabled the project team (including [I. Glenn Cohen](#), [Mason Marks](#), and [Susannah Baruch](#)) to expand events, student opportunities, and

new research. In July 2024, we hosted the first of two Psychedelic Bootcamps over three days on Harvard Law School campus. We received more than 200 applications for 60 spots and received enthusiastic feedback from our participants. We look forward to welcoming a new cohort of participants to Bootcamp in 2025. We have received 198 applications and have accepted 66 participants to join us in early July 2025.

In FY25, we also received a grant from the Mahindra Humanities Center’s Study of Psychedelics in Society and Culture to support a new project, PULSE (Project on Psychedelic Use, Law, and Spiritual Experience). We hosted two events: Introducing PULSE: Psychedelic Use, Law, and Spiritual Experience and 2025 PULSE Conference: Sacred Rights: Psychedelics, Law, and Spirituality. The project team has published articles in many peer-reviewed journals including the Yale Law Journal, American Journal of Bioethics, and JAMA, and numerous law reviews. In FY26, we will continue to host convenings, including a second iteration of our bootcamp, and publish articles and commentary.

### **The International Collaborative Bioscience Innovation & Law Programme (Inter-CeBIL)**

In November 2023, PFC received a second generous five-year grant from the Novo Nordisk Foundation that enables our Project on Precision Medicine, Artificial Intelligence, and the Law (PMAIL) to continue its close collaboration with the International Collaborative Bioscience Innovation & Law Programme (Inter-CeBIL). Inter-CeBIL, led by Principal Investigator and NNF grant-holder Professor Timo Minssen at the University of Copenhagen’s Faculty of Law, aims to support the life science ecosystem by understanding and tackling legal and regulatory barriers to the development of innovative solutions within health and sustainability. The project published Research Handbook on Health, AI and the Law co-edited by Glenn Cohen, and published articles in New England Journal of Medicine and Nature Digital Medicine, among other venues. We recently hired Sofia Palmieri as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Medicine, Artificial Intelligence, and the Law. Sofia’s appointment is for two years.

## **VI. Courses Taught by Petrie-Flom Center Affiliates**

Petrie-Flom Center affiliates make substantial contributions to Harvard University’s health law curriculum through various courses and frequent guest lectures. In FY25, Petrie-Flom affiliates offered the following courses for credit:

### **Health Law, Policy, Bioethics, and Biotechnology Workshop**

#### **I. Glenn Cohen**

Fall 2024

This seminar featured the presentation and discussion of cutting edge scholarship on health law, health policy, biotechnology and bioethics. The evaluation mechanism is that students submitted brief written comments on a number of the papers during the course. Presenters came from a wide range of disciplines and departments, and papers featured doctrinal, economics, philosophical, political science, or other methods, but students need not have prior training in these disciplines.

## **Civil Procedure 4**

**I. Glenn Cohen**

Fall 2024

This course examined the theory and practice of civil litigation, and the rules and statutes that govern the process by which substantive rights and duties are enforced in federal and state courts (with a focus on the federal courts). Topics included the proper reach of judicial authority, personal and subject matter jurisdiction, pleading, motions practice, joinder of parties and claims, pretrial discovery, the relationship of procedure to substantive law, the Erie doctrine, post-trial procedure and claim and issue preclusion.

## **Writing Group: Health Law/Bioethics/Pharmaceuticals and the Law**

**I. Glenn Cohen**

Fall 2024 – Spring 2025

This small group writing workshop led by Professor Cohen helped students advance work in the fields of health law, bioethics, and pharmaceuticals and the law. HLS Student Fellows were strongly encouraged to enroll in the writing group in FY25.

## **Psychedelic Law and Policy**

**I. Glenn Cohen and Mason Marks**

Fall 2024 – Spring 2025

This reading group analyzed local, state, federal, and international laws governing psychedelic substances such as psilocybin, mescaline, ibogaine, and dimethyltryptamine (DMT). Topics of discussion included the regulation of psychedelic production, possession, sales, and use in the contexts of research, health care, commerce, spirituality, and Indigenous traditions. Students learned about current legal debates, relevant statutes such as the Controlled Substances Act and Religious Freedom Restoration Act, applicable international treaties and sections of the U.S. Constitution, the role of agencies such as the FDA and DEA, and ongoing local, state, and federal psychedelic policy reforms.

## **Reading Group: Comparative and International Legal Struggles Over Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**

**Alicia Ely Yamin**

Fall 2024

A recent wave of conservative populism has brought a sharp backlash against sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) not just in the United States but around the globe. Drawing on examples from multiple regions, as well as in supra-national human rights forums, this reading group critically explored strategies used to assert legal claims relating to SRHR of LGBTQ+ persons; involuntary sterilization; abortion; maternal health care; obstetric violence; and assisted reproductive/gestative technologies. Tremendous achievements in advancing normative standards related to SRHR in comparative and international law can provide insights for advocacy in the United States. At the same time,

this group considered the constraints on achieving reproductive justice imposed by evolving political economies.

**Reading Group: Transformative Constitutionalism in Latin America: Focus on Health Rights**

**Alicia Ely Yamin**  
Spring 2025

Latin America is arguably the region of the world that has experimented most widely with transformative constitutionalism, the idea that courts could be engines of progress toward more egalitarian, inclusive legal infrastructures and social orders. Health outcomes and access to care are acute reflections of patterns of inequality in society; therefore, examining health rights presents opportunities to assess achievements and limitations of catalyzing democratic progress through adjudication. Against backdrops of extreme social inequality in Latin America, with poor responsiveness from executive and legislative branches of government, as well as chronic regulatory failures, people frequently take claims for health care and health-related policy issues to courts. Some apex courts have issued dialogical remedies in efforts to address structural inequalities in health systems and environmental health while still preserving democratic legitimacy. In exploring case studies from countries around the region, students heard directly from Supreme Court justices engaged in the adjudication of landmark cases.

**Health, Human Rights and Social Justice**

**Alicia Ely Yamin**  
Spring 2025, Harvard Medical School Center for Bioethics

Human Rights is now the dominant language for claims of human emancipation around the world; human rights theory and practice have permeated many domains beyond the law, including health. Yet the landscape of global health is marked by vast inequities and brutal deprivation, and it is not yet clear how bringing human rights concepts and strategies to bear will change the lives of the millions of people around the globe who are suffering. In this course we will explore these questions and see how human rights provides not the only, but one, critical framework and set of tools through which to advance social justice in health. Nonetheless, the use of human rights to advance social justice faces vexing challenges, including being reduced to rhetoric by powerful actors and becoming overly legalistic.

The class explored the conceptual and practical implications of adopting human rights frameworks relating to health policymaking and programming, including emphasis on accountability, participation and non-discrimination. It examined how human rights discourses are shaped and contested, and how this determines the relevance of 'human rights-based approaches' to addressing the health needs of different populations. Throughout the course, the class discussed specific issues and examined potential limitations as well as strengths of using human rights to improve global health.