President’s Perspective

Serving as the Richmond County Medical Society President has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my medical career. It’s also been a huge learning experience. I’ve always been aware of the overwhelming burdens that my fellow physicians endure alongside me, however, this past year has not just enlightened me to the depths of the issues, but sparked a true passion for resolution of those issues.

My hope is our newly elected local officials share in our concerns, embrace our goals and lobby for reform. The constant barrage of new mandates, decreasing reimbursement, increasing insurance paperwork, etc., has certainly taken its toll on the doctor-patient relationship. We seem to have more to do and less time to do it. But we mustn’t forget the reason we opted for careers in medicine for our life’s work – the patient. While the circumstances under which we practice medicine can often times be frustrating, even outrageous, we must still take the time to listen to our patients to form a bond. Patients want to trust their physicians, but that trust must be earned.

The current state of our healthcare system is deplorable and it’s the patient that suffers the most; whether they are denied necessary testing or forced to undergo unnecessary testing, the result is the same – they are forever trudging through miles of red tape, just as we are. Our Medical Society works tirelessly to cut this red tape and clear the path. However, we are only as strong as our members. We don’t just need your membership – we need your commitment.

It’s your Medical Society – make it work for you! Let your voice be heard. Our voices have already been heard on many key issues such as eliminating the surcharge on malpractice insurance. But I know we can do even more, not with just your membership – but with your active membership.

On the horizon of Healthcare Reform, are Accountable Care Organizations, which promise patients that a network of doctors will ensure continuity of care and communication between practitioners for Medicare patients. Of course as we all know, this is just an HMO in disguise and while they will roll out the red carpet for us to participate, they will slowly but surely, rip it out from under us.

Another tremendous issue is the cut in Medicare reimbursement which can be counteracted by the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula which must be revisited. As the first wave of the Baby Boomer generation hits retirement age in the next year or two, this will quickly become a crisis situation. The amount of patients receiving Medicare will skyrocket rapidly while reimbursement decreases just as quickly.

The outcome of these issues will be vital to the way we practice medicine and render patient care. It’s the grassroots organizations like our Richmond County Medical Society that not only ignites the flame, but also fans the fires. We are each responsible for our own futures within our chosen profession. We cannot ignore what is happening in our country, nor can we afford to throw our arms up in disgust and give up. The only way to get it done – is to get it done! And that means getting involved in the political process. The more voices that speak, the louder the message. Don’t you want a say in the matter?

For those of us who are active in our Medical Society, reach out to those who aren’t. Remind them that the society is here for them and, by their activity at meetings, they will be kept abreast of all these critical issues as they occur. Reach out to those colleagues that haven’t joined and bring them on board. – let them know how vital it is to their practice.

There is no question that these are tumultuous times for our country. We must change our outlook. We must view this state of flux as an opportunity to affect real change. The pendulum is swinging and collectively, we have the power to influence it in our direction.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the core of the Richmond County Medical Society - the phenomenal staff that works tirelessly for the vision we all share. I am so grateful for all your support during my tenure as President as well as all the years prior.

Like any doctor, I am only as good as the people that I’m surrounded by daily. My sincerest thanks to my Nurse Coordinator Ida Centineo, RN and my entire office staff. All of you make my office a very comfortable second home. It is your hard work and dedication that make the practice a success and the patients cared for to the highest standard possible. You have my sincerest thanks.

I proudly and confidently pass the torch to Dr. Giovannie Jean-Baptiste whom, I know will continue our mission with diligence.
Why the other side hates to see us on your side.

- We go to bat for you and preserve your good name.
- We aggressively defend and resist any payment for frivolous claims.
- We are a tough team to beat and we don’t give up.
- We have the finest defense attorneys in the State, respected medical experts, and the country’s largest and most experienced claims staff.
- We are not just your liability insurer. We are your legal guardians.

We are MLMIC. Our defense never rests.

Medical Liability Mutual Insurance Company (MLMIC) is the one ally you want when you enter the courtroom and your practice and reputation are on the line. The jury may be out. But, you can feel confident, knowing you are protected by the one company that has successfully defended more New York physicians than all other insurers combined.

Exclusively endorsed by MSSNY since 1975, MLMIC is a mutual company, owned and operated by the physicians we insure. For more information and an application, call 800-275-6564 (NYC), 800-356-4056 (Syracuse), 877-777-3560 (East Meadow), or 800-635-0666 (Latham).
MUTUAL OF OMAHA COMPANIES

Offers discounted Disability and Long Term Care Insurance to Richmond County Medical Society Members. For information on how you can take advantage of this member benefit, contact Frank Ruggiero by phone at 201-288-0880 or 212-490-7979, ext,238, or by email at RuggieroF@aol.com

THE COMITIA MINORA MEETING PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 7TH HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, MAY 31. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 7:30PM IN THE JUNEBERRY ROOM AT THE SI HILTON GARDEN INN

HAVE YOU LAUGHED TODAY?

Expensive Doctor . . .
A young woman wasn’t feeling well, and asked one her co-workers to recommend a physician.

"I know a great one in the city, but he is very expensive. Five hundred dollars for the first visit, and one hundred dollars for each one after that.”
The woman went to the doctor's office and, trying to save a little money, cheerily announced.

"I'm back!"
Not fooled for a second, the doctor quickly examined her and said, “Very good, just continue the treatment I prescribed on your last visit.”

The Award Goes To . . .

Dr. Kenneth Chapman will be honored by the University Hospice Circle of Life at their annual Gala on June 17.

Dr. John Maese has been awarded a Mastership in the American College of Physicians. He is only the second physician on Staten Island to receive this award

Dr. Salvatore Volpe has been recognized by HIMSS (Health Information and Management Systems Society) as the Chapter Leader of the Year for 2010.

If you have been honored, or know of another RCMS member who has been honored, please let us know

Follow this link...

http://www.rcms.org/blog/latest-news/latest-news

to read about Accountable Care Organizations; Clinical Integration & several other interesting articles

U.S Department of Health & Human Services

New Viral Hepatitis Action Plan

HHS’ new action plan to prevent and treat viral hepatitis outlines comprehensive actions to raise awareness; and creates more opportunities to train health professionals to diagnose, treat, vaccinate, and ultimately save lives. The plan builds upon the Affordable Care Act to improve patient access to comprehensive viral hepatitis-related prevention and treatment services through expanded coverage. Learn more at http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/hepatitis/

Remember to Update Your Physician Profile

In order to update your profile on www.NYDoctorprofile.com or call 888-338-6998

Profiles must be updated annually.

Visit www.rcms.org frequently to keep updated on Health Advisories from the NYC Department of Health

RCMS Welcomes New Members
Dr. Kenneth Chapman
Dr. Nicholas Karanikolas
Dr. Jessie Saverimuthu

Reinstatement:
Dr. Paul C. Gazza
d Residency:
Dr. Pramod Mambalam
Attending the 2011 HOD (from left): Drs. Anthony Sgarlato, substituted as the FDB Delegate from Richmond; Drs. Jack D’Angelo, Zoltan Brody, Deeptha Nedunchezian and Ralph Messo; also attending was president of RCMS, Dr. George Smith (far right)

We are proud to announce that Sherry has been elected as Co-President of the AMSSNY

The Alliance with the Medical Society of the State of New York (AMSSNY) at the 2011 HOD

Annual Legislative Meeting

Dr. Giovannie Jean-Baptiste

(from left) Drs. Jack D’Angelo, Vincent Calamia, George Smith addressing the issue of prescription drug abuse on the Island

Dr. Deeptha Nedunchezian (left)

Dr. Zoltan Brody (right)

(seated from left) Dr. Giovannie Jean-Baptiste, Councilwoman Debi Rose & Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis

(standing from left) Dr. Vincent DeGennaro, Congressman Michael Grimm, Dr. George Smith & Senator Andrew Lanza

(from left) Drs. Vincent Calamia & George Smith
The Members and Staff of The Richmond County Medical Society are grateful to Dr. George P. Smith for his dedication to the Society during his Presidency 2010-2011.

At the same time, we congratulate and welcome Dr. Giovannie Jean-Baptiste as President along with all the newly elected officers for 2011-2012.

Contact Us
Richmond County Medical Society
The Academy of Medicine of Richmond
The Alliance with RCMS
460 Brielle Avenue
Administration Building; Room 202
Staten Island, NY 10314
phone: 718-442-7267 fax: 718-273-5306

visit our website
www.RCMS.org

Follow us on

facebook
and/or
twitter

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, June 1
Conference: Accountable Care Organizations
6:00 PM Registration
6:30 PM Program
The Regina McGinn Center at SIUH
475 Seaview Avenue
Sandwiches will be served

Tuesday, June 7
Tuesday, May 31
Comitia Minora Dinner Meeting
7:30 PM
SI Hilton Garden Inn
1100 South Avenue

Wednesday, June 22
Annual Meeting & Installation of Officers
Dr. Giovannie Jean-Baptiste, President
7:30 PM
SI Hilton Garden Inn
1100 South Avenue
$85.00 per person

Tuesday, September 6
Comitia Minora Dinner Meeting
7:30 PM
SI Hilton Garden Inn
1100 South Avenue

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday Evening, October 15
The Alliance Annual Scholarship Dinner Dance & Fundraiser
Honoring Dr. George P. Smith
REMINDER

Unless you are using an “encrypted” email service, it is a HIPAA violation to send patient information via e-mail.

LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY PURCHASED A “SECURE” EMAIL ACCOUNT
CONTACT TERRI AT EXECRCMS@AOL.COM

READ YOUR DUES STATEMENTS CAREFULLY

Please note: the dues statement you receive from MSSNY contains an additional $50.00 included in the amount of State dues, which will be allocated toward MSSNYPAC membership. Your invoice contains a statement that allows you to “opt out” from paying this additional amount.

MSSNY Officers for 2011-2012

On April 9, delegates to the Medical Society of the State of New York's (MSSNY) 2011 House of Delegates meeting in Tarrytown, NY, elected the following physicians to serve as officers of MSSNY’s executive board until April 21, 2012.

Dr. Paul Hamlin – President
Dr. Robert J. Hughes – President-Elect
Dr. Sam L. Unterricht – Vice President
Dr. Malcolm D. Reid – Secretary
Dr. Joseph R. Maldonado – Assistant Secretary
Dr. Andrew Y. Kleinman – Treasurer
Dr. Charles Rothberg – Assistant Treasurer
Dr. Jerome C. Cohen – Speaker
Dr. Kira A. Geraci-Ciardullo – Vice Speaker

MSSNY Grassroots Action Center

visit www.MSSNY.org, click on Grassroots Action Center and follow the links till you see tabs like this . . .

then follow the simple step by step directions that will urge legislators to support the bills that will help physicians and oppose those that could devastate your practice.
AMA recommends Medicare payment reforms to House committee
On Apr. 26, the AMA sent a letter in response to a bipartisan request from the House Energy and Commerce Committee dated Mar. 28, asking for suggestions on reforming the Medicare physician payment system. In the letter, the AMA laid out a three-pronged approach for reform: (1) repeal the sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula; (2) provide five years of stable payments with positive updates; (3) transition to an array of new payment structures. The proposal envisions using the five-year transition period to develop and test various new payment structures designed to enhance care coordination, quality and appropriateness, and to reduce costs. The letter also provides background on some of these options, such as accountable care organizations and episode of care bundles, as well as some transitional models. Dr. Cecil B. Wilson, President of the AMA, also testified before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health regarding the AMA’s proposal at a hearing on May 5, entitled, “The Need to Move Beyond the SGR.” In his testimony, Dr. Wilson highlighted the AMA’s support for creating a new Medicare payment option that will allow patients to contract freely with physicians without penalty.


AMA presses Administration for flexibility in e-prescribing program
Since the Administration announced that physicians must participate in Medicare’s Electronic Prescribing (e-prescribing) program during the first six months of 2011 in order to avoid penalties in 2012, the AMA has repeatedly pointed out that the issue needs to be revisited. The AMA has asserted to the Administration in several senior-level discussions that the current policies will place undue hardship on physicians and more flexibility is needed. Administration officials acknowledge that they understand our concerns and say they are working to address them. The AMA continues to urge the Administration to announce any policy changes as soon as possible.

AMA weighs in on usability of EHRs
In its continuing advocacy efforts for reasonable requirements and flexibility in the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive program, the AMA submitted testimony to the Health IT Policy Committee’s Certification and Adoption Workgroup concerning usability issues with EHRs. The AMA’s statement raised a number of issues: usability and its impact on EHR adoption and use; best practices; consequences for patient safety; impacts on coding; and legal issues.

A Rhode Island doctor was fined, disciplined and lost some hospital privileges after she inadvertently shared patient info on her Facebook page.

The case highlights the challenges and ethical dilemmas health care workers face when using social media. The physician in question wrote about her experiences working in the ER on her Facebook page — careful to not include patient names or other identifying information. Or so she thought.

An unidentified third party was able to guess the identity of one of the patients based on the doctor's description of the person's injuries. The state board found her guilty of unprofessional conduct, although it noted that the physician didn't intend to disclose any patient's information. The board also fined her $500.

As a result of the board's action, the doctor lost her privileges at one of the two hospitals where she worked.

Physicians can learn about a wide range of health IT solutions and resources that can help facilitate high-quality, cost-effective patient care by visiting the AMAGINE™ physician portal, a secure, online platform offered by Amagine, Inc., a subsidiary of the AMA.

The AMAGINE™ portal, now available nationally after a successful pilot program in Michigan, provides a single point of access to more than 20 health IT solutions and resources, such as clinical decision support tools and laboratory management tools. These resources can help physicians with a wide range of common practice management challenges, including adopting an electronic medical records system, setting up an ePrescribing system, revenue cycle management, using patient registries and educating patients.

For physicians in the early stages of adopting health IT, the most important step is determining how ready both they and their practices are to adopting a system. AMAGINE™ consultants offer a complimentary, comprehensive assessment to determine their practice's readiness to adopt health IT. They also can help physicians develop a health IT strategy so they can take steps to obtain incentives with qualifying health IT solutions.

If you know a physician already on the road to adopting health IT, AMAGINE™ consultants can help them identify modular solutions on the portal that may increase their chances of achieving meaningful use.

To learn more or to complete the free online AMAGINE™ practice assessment today, physicians can visit http://www.elabs10.com/ct.html?rrt=on&es=x8pbgr,hf75,2ke5,e00t,jpmq,kzw8,1fs or call (800) 262-0411.

Give a simple stethoscope, make a world of difference...

This spring, physicians can make a world of difference with one simple donation: a stethoscope. WorldScopes, a global philanthropic initiative of the AMA and AMA Foundation, works with leading humanitarian organizations to collect and distribute stethoscopes to those around the world who do not have ready access to this basic medical instrument. To date, almost 9,000 stethoscopes have been collected and distributed in more than 50 countries.

Every stethoscope donated goes into the hands of health care professionals who need one. For instance, more than 500 stethoscopes were collected and sent to physicians treating patients in Haiti after the earthquake in January. And at the University of Zimbabwe, stethoscopes were used to help train African medical students. The medical school places particular emphasis on helping those throughout the region who are afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

Don't have a stethoscope to donate? For a donation of as little as $10, you can help WorldScopes purchase the stethoscopes for you. Every dollar you donate is used to purchase new stethoscopes. No money is used for administrative or shipping costs—these are covered by the AMA.

Visit the WorldScopes Web page at www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/worldscopes/index.shtml for instructions on shipping a stethoscope, or on how to make a financial donation. You can also organize a collection drive at your hospital or practice with resources found on the website.

If you collect 20 or more stethoscopes, the AMA will cover your shipping costs. For more information, contact us by e-mail worldscopes@ama-assn.org.

Doc disciplined, fined over Facebook posts HealthExecNews April 26, 2011 by Carol Katarsky

A Rhode Island doctor was fined, disciplined and lost some hospital privileges after she inadvertently shared patient info on her Facebook page.

The case highlights the challenges and ethical dilemmas health care workers face when using social media. The physician in question wrote about her experiences working in the ER on her Facebook page — careful to not include patient names or other identifying information. Or so she thought.

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As a result of the board's action, the doctor lost her privileges at one of the two hospitals where she worked.
At no cost to you, you are invited to join our **Group Purchasing Organization (GPO)**, which provides services devoted to the needs of medical practices and facilities.

**Medical and Pharmacy Supplies** - Typically practices can expect savings of 10-50% on medical supplies for daily practice needs. In addition, our pharmacy program provides access to your everyday needs at significant savings. If, like most practices, you use one of the major medical supply companies you do not have to change your current supplier or ordering procedures to participate. On your end nothing changes except an increase in your savings.

**Capital Purchases, Office Equipment** - You will save on purchases of office supplies and office equipment (through Staples), computer needs (through Dell), furniture (through Steel Case, Herman Miller and Kimball) and on major capital purchases such as G.E. ultrasound machines, exam, operating, recovery room and Lab.

**MedTech For Solutions Financial Services Program**

- **Credit and Debit Card Processing** - state-of-the-art credit and debit card processing through Wells Fargo Merchant Services, a trusted financial organization and leader in payment processing services.

- **Financing** - in partnership with Wells Fargo Leasing and Americorp Financial we offer specialized leasing and financing programs designed for the needs of a physician practice.

- **Patient Financing** - through myMedicalLoan.com your patients can finance from $1,500 to $25,000 for their IVF treatment.

**Overnight Shipping** – our relationship with Federal Express will save you 55% or more on all of your overnight shipping.

**Billing, Collection and Practice Management** - maximize charges, increase collection rates, decrease denials and minimize days outstanding in accounts receivable. AthenaCollector, developed by AthenaHealth, is the state-of-the-art web based system with no upfront costs for software or hardware that can reduce your billing and practice management costs while increasing your revenue.

**Maintenance and Repair** – Through an agreement with Masterplan, a national vendor providing a complete range of maintenance and repair services for biomedical and imaging equipment, you can save between 6% and 8% on their extremely competitive service fees.

**IT Support Services** – another extension of the Staples brand is Staples Network Services by Thrive. Through Thrive, your practice will receive a dedicated team of experts, specifically assigned to you, who become your on-site and/or remote IT manager.

We are always looking for new partners to expand our GPO services and increase your opportunity to save on all the products and services needed by your practice.
Quitting Will Save Your Patients' Lives
Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. Recent studies show that brief advice from a clinician about smoking cessation yielded a 66% increase in successful quit rates. Talk to your patients. Tell them that quitting smoking is the most important step they can take to improve their health. They will listen to you.

How to Help Patients Quit*

**Assist the tobacco user to:**
- Set a quit date, ideally within 2 weeks.
- Remove tobacco products from the environment.
- Get support from family, friends, and coworkers.
- Review past quit attempts—what helped, what led to relapse.
- Anticipate challenges, particularly during the critical first few weeks, including nicotine withdrawal.
- Identify reasons for quitting and benefits of quitting.

**Give advice on successful quitting:**
- Total abstinence is essential—not even a single puff.
- Drinking alcohol is strongly associated with relapse.
- Allowing others to smoke in the household hinders successful quitting.

**Encourage use of medication:**
- Recommend use of over-the-counter nicotine patch, gum, or lozenges or give prescription for varenicline, bupropion SR, nicotine inhaler, or nasal spray, unless contraindicated.

**Provide resources:**
- Recommend 1-800-QUIT NOW (784-8669), the national access number to state-based quitline services.
- Refer to Web sites for free materials (www.smokefree.gov and www.shrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm).


“You can quit, and I can help.”
What to Tell Your Patients About Smoking and Chronic Diseases

High Blood Pressure and Heart Disease
Smoking causes dangerous plaque buildup inside your arteries. Plaque clogs and narrows your arteries. Poisons from tobacco smoke also quickly damage blood vessels and make blood more likely to clot. This can block blood flow and lead to heart attack, stroke, or even sudden death.

Quitting smoking will improve your heart health. After just one year your risk for a heart attack drops sharply, and even if you've already had a heart attack, you cut your risk of having another one by a third to a half if you quit smoking. Two to five years after you quit, your risk for stroke falls to about the same as a nonsmoker's.

Diabetes
If you have diabetes and smoke, your risk for kidney disease is 2 to 3 times higher than if you don't smoke. Smokers with diabetes also have higher risk for heart disease and eye disease that can cause blindness, nerve damage that causes numbness, pain, weakness, and poor circulation; and amputations. You will also have more difficulty recovering from surgery.

After you quit smoking, you will have better control over your blood sugar levels. When you quit, you will be less likely to have heart or kidney disease, blindness, or amputations.

Cancer
Tobacco smoke contains toxic chemicals that can damage your DNA and lead to cancer. Nearly one-third of all cancer deaths are directly linked to smoking. Continuing to smoke weakens the cancer-fighting systems of your body. It can also interfere with your cancer treatment.

Fertility and Pregnancy
Smoking reduces a woman's chance of getting pregnant and damages DNA in sperm. Damage to sperm could decrease fertility and lead to miscarriage or birth defects. Women who smoke during pregnancy have a higher risk for pregnancy complications, delivering their babies early, and stillbirth. Their babies are more likely to have low birth weight or to die from sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS. Tobacco smoke also damages the tissues of your unborn baby's growing brain and lungs and could interfere with the growth of the placenta, the organ that feeds the baby in the womb. This could lead to miscarriage, premature delivery, or low birth weight.

Men and women who are planning to have children should not smoke. Pregnant women should avoid exposure to secondhand smoke.

Resources for Quitting
• Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW
• Nicotine replacement or prescription drugs (www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm198176.htm)
• www.smokefree.gov
• www.women.smokefree.gov

Most people find a combination of resources works best. Many people do not quit on their first attempt. Many smokers need several tries to successfully quit. But the benefits are well worth it. Keep trying.
Primary Care Ambulance provides emergency and non-emergency transportation in the newest fleet of vehicles on Staten Island. We provide both stretcher and wheelchair carrying vehicles for trips to doctor appointments, dialysis, and radiation centers. We specialize in inter-borough and inter-state transports. Primary Care employees are trained extensively in emergency patient care, comfort and safe driving techniques. We are proud to serve your needs.

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- Advanced Life Support
- Ambulettes Equipped with Electric Lifts

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Your patients will be impressed by your beautiful conveniently located office with ample free parking. You’ll be impressed with our elegant facilities with additional space available as your practice grows.

Samuel B. Stein
Senior Vice President
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718.477.2100 ext. 242

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25% of profits from The Corporate Commons will be donated to local charities through the Lois & Richard Nicotra Foundation.