

## President's Perspective



George P. Smith, MD, *President*

**S**erving 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.

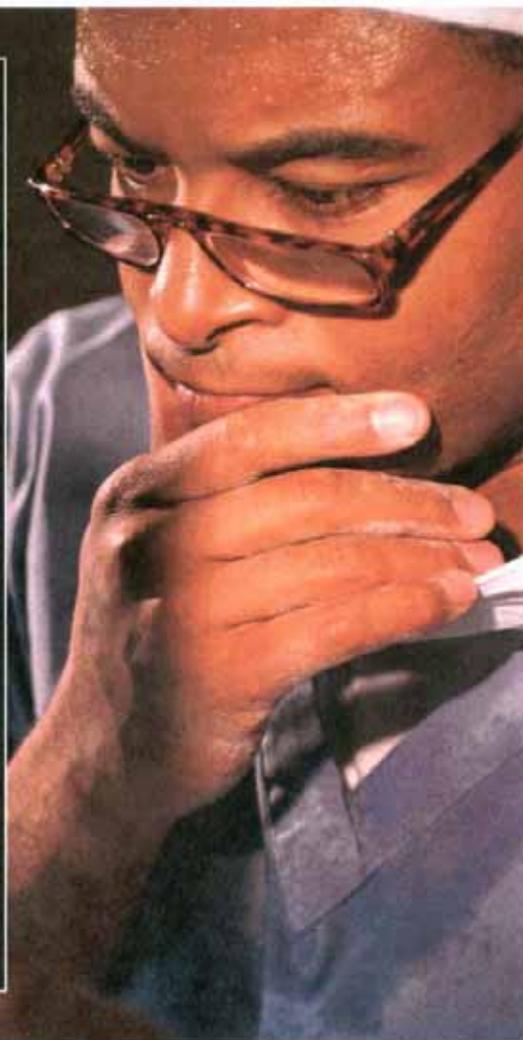
Like any doctor, I am only as good as the people that I'm surrounded by daily. My sincerest thanks to my Nurse Coordinator Ida Centineo, RN and my entire office staff. All of you make my office a very comfortable second home. It is your hard work and dedication that make the practice a success and the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



Endorsed by  
MSSNY



Our defense never rests.

New York  
Latham  
Syracuse  
East Meadow  
© 2010 Medical Liability  
Mutual Insurance Company

Visit [www.rcms.org](http://www.rcms.org) frequently to keep updated on **Health Advisories** from the NYC Department of Health



**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 JUNE BERRY 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."

### RCMS Welcomes New Members

*Dr. Kenneth Chapman  
Dr. Nicholas Karanikolas  
Dr. Jessie Saverimuttu*

*Reinstatement:*

*Dr. Paul C. Gazzara*

*Residents:*

*Dr. Pramod Mambalam*

### 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*

### The Academy of Medicine of Richmond

#### Annual Dinner &

#### Resident Research Competition

Tuesday, June 14 at 6:30 PM

Boccellis's Restaurant, 1250 Hylan Boulevard

Honoring..

*Dr. Lina R. Merlino & Dr. Allan B. Perel*

Special Recognition Award...

*The Medical staff offices of  
RUMC & SIUH*



*Tickets for Academy members and guests \$50 each  
RSVP by June 5 718-442-7267*

### 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/>

## 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](mailto:RuggieroF@aol.com)



### Remember to Update Your Physician Profile

In order to update your profile on [www.NYDoctorprofile.com](http://www.NYDoctorprofile.com) or call 888-338-6998

**Profiles must be updated annually.**



# 2011 HOUSE OF DELEGATES

*at right...Sherry Messo, past president of the Alliance with the Richmond County Medical Society is pictured with her husband, Dr. Ralph Messo. We are proud to announce that Sherry has been elected as Co-President of the AMSSNY*



*(above) Delegates from Richmond County and Kings County*



*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)*



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

## Annual Legislative Meeting



*Dr. Giovannie Jean-Baptiste*



*Dr. Deeptha Nedunchezian (left)*



*Dr. Zoltan Brody (right)*

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



*(from left) Drs. Vincent Calamia & George Smith*



*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*

## Upcoming Events

J  
U  
N  
E

### 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

S  
E  
P  
T  
E  
M  
B  
E  
R

### Tuesday, September 6

Comitia Minora Dinner Meeting  
7:30 PM  
SI Hilton Garden Inn  
1100 South Avenue

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](http://www.RCMS.org)



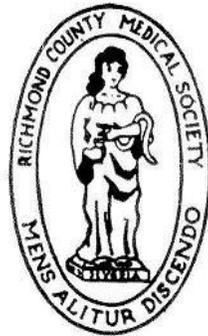
Follow us

on

facebook

and/or

twitter



## SAVE THE DATE

Saturday Evening, October 15

The Alliance Annual Scholarship Dinner Dance & Fundraiser

Honoring

*Dr. George P. Smith*

***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.

***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](mailto:EXECRCMS@AOL.COM)

**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](http://www.MSSNY.org), click on **Grassroots Action Center** and follow the links till you see tabs like this . . .

**TAKE ACTION**

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.

The AMA's letter to the Energy and Commerce Committee can be viewed at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/resources/doc/washington/ec-committee-medicare-pathways-letter.pdf>. Dr. Wilson's testimony can also be accessed at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/resources/doc/washington/the-need-to-move-beyond-sgr-testimony.pdf>.

## **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.

## **Medicare private contracting legislation introduced**

On May 3, Rep. Tom Price, MD (R-GA) introduced H.R. 1700, the Medicare Patient Empowerment Act. This bill, based on policy adopted by the AMA House of Delegates, would allow Medicare patients and their physicians to enter into private contracts without penalty to either party. In such contracts, full payment rates for individual services are agreed upon in advance by the patient and the physician. Under terms of the Price bill, beneficiaries would be able to use their Medicare benefits to offset a portion of the costs of their care, rather than paying the entire contracted fee out-of-pocket as required under current law. The legislation would also eliminate the currently required two-year Medicare program "opt out" for physicians who choose to enter into private contracts with their Medicare patients.

### **AMA position**

The AMA strongly supports H.R. 1700 and encourages Federation members to participate in its efforts to secure cosponsors for this important legislation.

*This information has been extracted from  
the AMA Advocacy Update  
dated 5/5/2011*

## **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.

The testimony can be found at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/resources/doc/hit/ama-ehr-usability-statement.pdf>.



## Physicians can take control of health IT with the AMAGINE™ portal

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?rtr=on&cs=x8pbgr,hf75,2ke5,e00t,ipmq,kzv8,1fs> 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](http://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](mailto: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.

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.



## Group Purchasing Organization

MedTech For Solutions, Inc  
475 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10016

Dwight Ryan, President & CEO  
dryan@medtech4solutions.com  
914-924-1426

[www.medtech4solutions.com](http://www.medtech4solutions.com)

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.

MedTech For Solutions, Inc  
475 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10016

[www.medtech4solutions.com](http://www.medtech4solutions.com)

Dwight Ryan, President & CEO  
dryan@medtech4solutions.com  
914-924-1426



# What to Tell Your Patients About Smoking

*A Report of the Surgeon General: How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease*



## 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 lozenge; 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](http://www.smokefree.gov) and [www.ahrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm)).

\*Excerpted from *Helping Smokers Quit: A Guide for Clinicians* (Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update, A Clinical Practice Guideline) found at [www.ahrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/path/tobacco.htm)

“ You can quit, and I can help. ”



## Summary of Findings from the 2010 Report of the Surgeon General

1. **There is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke.** Any exposure to tobacco smoke – even an occasional cigarette or exposure to secondhand smoke – is harmful.
2. **Damage from tobacco smoke is immediate.** Tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals and chemical compounds, which reach your lungs every time you inhale. Your blood then carries the poisons to all parts of your body. These poisons damage DNA, which can lead to cancer; damage blood vessels and cause clotting, which can cause heart attacks and strokes; and damage the lungs, which can cause asthma attacks, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis.
3. **Smoking longer means more damage.** Both the risk and the severity of many diseases caused by smoking are directly related to how long the smoker has smoked and the number of cigarettes smoked per day.
4. **Cigarettes are designed for addiction.** The design and contents of tobacco products make them more attractive and addictive than ever before. Nicotine addiction keeps people smoking even when they want to quit.
5. **Even low levels of exposure, including exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke, are dangerous.** You don't have to be a heavy smoker or a long-time smoker to get a smoking-related disease or have a heart attack or asthma attack triggered by smoke.
6. **There is no safe cigarette.**

# 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](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm198176.htm))
- [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)
- [www.women.smokefree.gov](http://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.



Contracted Medical Transportation for Staten Island University Hospital



**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.**

- Transport Ventilator-Dependent Patients
- Medicaid/Medicare
- HMO's & Private Pay
- Basic Life Support
- Advanced Life Support
- Ambulettes Equipped with Electric Lifts



**718-975-0600**  
24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK

*"Your Patient is our  
Primary Concern"*



**THE CORPORATE PARK**  
OF STATEN ISLAND



## **WE'RE LOOKING FOR ANOTHER GOOD DOCTOR!**

### **MEDICAL OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE**

**MOVE IN CONDITION • 2,431 SQ FT ON THE FIRST FLOOR**

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**

**sbs@nicotraonline.com**

**718.477.2100 ext. 242**



**THE NICOTRA GROUP** LLC.  
1110 South Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10314-3403

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