

## President's Perspective



George P. Smith, MD, *President*

**T**hank you members of the Medical Society for your support during these first hectic months of my tenure as President. My fellow members and the support staff of the Medical Society have been tremendously generous with their time and always quick to offer assistance. It is very much appreciated.

The holiday season is upon us again. It seems the older I get, the quicker it comes! And like the rest of us, I too, can get easily lost in the hustle and bustle and commercial grandiosity of it all. But I needed to take a moment to get back to the basics of what this season was meant to be about: Goodwill and peace to us all – and that's universal no matter what the nationality or denomination.

Participation of all of our community doctors in our Medical Society is crucial. There's strength in numbers. Growing the Medical Society will strengthen our position with our political leaders for tort reform in our crippled health care system. So this season, while you're rubbing elbows spreading holiday cheer, don't forget to spread the word. The Richmond County Medical Society is an advocate to doctors and, as a result, the community we serve.

It is only through our united voice as a strong Medical Society, can we hope to affect the changes in our health care system today. Changes that are vital for the survival of quality medical care; Changes to the ever-rising costs of malpractice

insurance and continued plummet of reimbursement; Changes to the current "accepted practice" of ordering unnecessary diagnostic procedures to avoid malpractice. And conversely, HMO's denying authorization for clinically necessary diagnostics that, ironically, yield the doctor the same result... malpractice

The beaurocracy that plagues our system is in dire straights. There is no doubt that each of us is facing more and more uninsured or under-insured patients in our practices than ever before. Our patients grow more and more frustrated at the mountain of paperwork that awaits them at an office visit.

The system that currently exists has turned us into insurance-driven, code-savvy, billing specialists instead of medical practitioners. This is unacceptable for the patient and it's unacceptable for us. For us who first swore to "Do No Harm"... not "Collect the Co-Pay." It is taking the very spirit out of our chosen life's work; the spirit of helping our patients and developing a doctor/patient relationship. Cultivating that relationship is now a rarity, even a luxury that shamefully, none of us can afford.

Do you remember the first patient you encountered in whose life you truly made a difference? Maybe it was during residency. Maybe it was in those first few years of private practice. But remember how it made you *feel* to know you made a difference in this one life. That feeling was the reason why you went into medicine in the first place.

In this harried system that we practice now, can you tell me, when was the last time you felt that? Again, I say to you: back to basics. And the only way we can get back to the basics of medicine is with our collective voice to our leaders, our lawmakers, and our lobbyists.

I am reaching out to you to reach out to everyone else in our phenomenal profession. With over 1000 doctors on Staten Island, the fact that we have less than half as members is unacceptable. The irony is that most doctors are so busy running on the hamster wheel that our system demands, that they will say they don't have time to commit to this membership. But, we

must convince them that THIS Medical Society will provide them with the voice to finally get off the hamster wheel.

And we can't stop there. We have to educate everyone around us about the perils of the system, as it exists today. Don't forget, our patients are also voters or potential voters. The word "doctor" is from the latin "doctoris," meaning *teacher*. Educate them.

Our patients are outraged that the name of their insurance carrier is deemed more important than their own name. Share in their outrage. It's not unreasonable to commiserate with them at your disappointment in the system. Let them know that this is not what you envisioned when you went to medical school to help people. Then, tell them how their voice can make a difference. Doctors – teach your patients! Help them help themselves.

We are undoubtedly, members of an exclusive club – members of the world's noblest profession. This comes with enormous responsibility to both each other and the community we serve. It is my wish for the New Year that we begin to chip away at the many challenges we are faced with. It is my goal to increase membership to the Richmond County Medical Society so that we may do that with strong numbers of strong voices.

I'll leave you with a quote from Sir William Osler (*pronounced with a long 'o'*), a Canadian physician who was one of the four founding professors of Johns Hopkins Hospital....

*"The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head. Often the best part of your work will have nothing to do with potions and powders, but with the exercise of an influence of the strong upon the weak, of the righteous upon the wicked, of the wise upon the foolish."*

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season!

Thank you.

## RCMS

### Welcomes New Members

Dr. Nanette Alexander-Thomas  
Dr. Simon G. Kokkinakis

#### Reinstatements:

Dr. Jeffrey Kalman  
Dr. Robert Laudicino

#### Residents:

Dr. Isabelle Michel Ayoub  
Dr. John Laldin  
Dr. Deliana Peykova

### Remember to Update Your Physician Profile

In order to update your profile on  
[NYDoctorprofile.com](http://NYDoctorprofile.com)  
call 888-338-6998  
Profiles must be updated  
annually.

## Contact Us

Richmond County Medical Society  
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

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HAVE YOU  
LAUGHED TODAY?



A man goes to the doctor and tells him that he hasn't been feeling well.

The doctor examines him, leaves the room and comes back with three different bottles of pills. The doctor says, "Take the green pill with a big glass of water when you get up. Take the blue pill with a big glass of water after lunch. Then just before going to bed, take the red pill with another big glass of water."

Startled to be put on so much medicine the man stammers, "Jeez doc, exactly what's my problem?"

The Doctor says, "You're not drinking enough water."

## Congratulations to the 2010 RCMS Organized Fellowship Winners

### Dr. Isabelle Michel Ayoub

is a Resident in the Internal Medicine Program at SIUH

### Dr. Debra Ortiz

is a Resident in the Ob/Gyn Program at RUMC

## The Award Goes To . . .



**Dr. Albert Accettola, Jr.** was presented with the Richmond County Medical Society's *Robert J. O'Connor, MD Award* recognizing his outstanding service to the Medical Society. The presentation ceremony took place at the Annual Scholarship Fundraiser hosted by the Alliance on October 9th.

**Dr. Vincent Calamia** was honored by the Richmond County Medical Society in recognition of his invaluable service as the immediate past president of the Society. The plaque and medal was presented to Dr. Calamia at the Alliance Annual Scholarship Fundraiser by Dr. George Smith, the current president of RCMS.

**Dr. Thomas Forlenza** was named the "Centennial Honoree" at the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church.

**Dr. Chitoor Govinaraj** has been named this year's Albert V. Maniscalco Community Service Award recipient by the borough president.

**Dr. Mark Jarrett** was recognized for his humanitarian work and support of the Red Cross at the Staten Island Chrysanthemum Ball hosted by the American Red Cross

**Dr. Michael Mantello** was honored for his community service at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Wagner College DaVinci Society Scholarship Dinner

**Dr. Pankaj Patel** was honored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness for developing new mental health services for children and adults, training many of the psychiatrists practicing throughout Staten Island, and consistently setting a standard of respectful collaboration with patients and their families.

## The Academy of Medicine of Richmond Upcoming Programs Offering CME credits

### Mandatory Infection Control Course

Tuesday, December 14, 2010, 4:00 PM  
at Dyker Beach Club, conveniently located just over the bridge in Bay Ridge  
at 86th Street & 7th Avenue. Light fare will be served.

This conference will allow you and/or your staff to fulfill the requirements imposed by the NYS Department of Health.

A *Certificate of Completion* as well as CME credits will be provided.

This course is **mandatory** for Doctors, Residents, Interns and Nurses and re-certification is necessary every 4 years.

Resident Workshop Scheduled for Spring 2011

For more information  
Call the Academy Office  
at 718-442-7267





# Celebrating *Women in Medicine*

Wednesday, September 22, 2010

The Staten Island Furrier, on Hylan Boulevard, was the setting for our celebration of "Women In Medicine" this year. The ladies had fun trying on all the furs and checking out the fancy cars supplied by Sovereign Mercedes. Citibank provided financial advice.



*Dr. George Smith, RCMS President, came to honor the women physicians.*



*Dr. Deeptha Nedunchezian*



*Drs. Judy Wright (left) & Giovannie Jean-Baptiste*

*(below, from left) Drs. Wright & Jean-Baptiste with Roberto Garcia and Terri's husband, Michael, who served as bar tender at the event.*



*Dr. Shamin Salman (right)*



*Alexa, Annmarie's daughter & our waitress for the night, posed with the Mercedes Benz automobiles that Roberto Garcia, Manager of Sovereign Mercedes brought for the ladies to "play with"*



  
They say "Diamonds are a girls best friend", but our *Women in Medicine* celebrated with Fine Wine, Aged Cheese, Fancy Cars and Beautiful Furs... Citibank was there to explain how everyone can partake in the luxuries!!



*Dr. Smith with his girlfriend, Jessica*



*Dr. Deeptha Nedunchezian*



*Drs. Deeptha Nedunchezian, Dorothy Wludyka and Shamin Salman*



*Dr. Sydney Chen*



Are you planning a party or special event? If you've tried cooking for a large party before, you know what a headache it can be. Leave all the planning, preparation, cooking and serving to professionals so you can actually enjoy your party. At your next event, why not serve your guests mouth-watering Italian specialties from the area's best salumeria, Giorgio's A & S Salumeria and Bakery. We would be happy to provide fresh meats, cold cuts, or even a hot and cold buffet for your guests. Contact Giorgio's A & S Salumeria and Bakery today to start planning your perfect event.

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## 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.



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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)

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# Medicare Information

**Medicare Self-Referral Disclosure Protocol** Section 6409(a) of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) ACA requires the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, in cooperation with the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, to establish a Medicare self-referral disclosure protocol (“SRDP”) that sets forth a process to enable providers of services and suppliers to self-disclose actual or potential violations of Section 1877 of the Social Security Act (the Act).

The SRDP requires health care providers of services or suppliers to submit all information necessary for CMS, on behalf of the Secretary, to analyze the actual or potential violation of Section 1877 of the Act. Section 6409(b) of the ACA, gives the Secretary of HHS the authority to reduce the amount due and owing for violations of Section 1877. The SRDP is located on the CMS website at <http://www.cms.gov/PhysicianSelfReferral/>.

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## PECOS (Provider Enrollment, Chain and Ownership System)

Currently, National Government Services MEDICARE reports that there are approximately 16,000 practices in New York State that are still not in PECOS. <https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov>

The following CMS website will let you know if you are in the PECOS file for ordering or referring services under Medicare. It is a list of over 13,000 pages. **So, please DO NOT try to print.** It is a PDF file that you should be able to open and scroll through:

[Medicare Ordering and Referring File](http://www.cms.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/downloads/OrderingReferringReport.pdf) OR <http://www.cms.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/downloads/OrderingReferringReport.pdf>

If your **NAME and NPI** is listed, then you are in the PECOS system and you don’t need to read any further.

If your **NAME and NPI** is not listed, you need to read further and think about expediting your enrollment in the CMS’ PECOS system if you order services for a patient or refer a patient to services under the Medicare Program.

If a physician has not done anything to their Medicare enrollment **since 2003** (i.e. changed a telephone number, moved the practice, changed the place where checks are sent, added or removed health care practitioners from the practice, etc.), then it is most probable that the physician/medical practice is not currently in the PECOS file.

For the Medicare Program, physicians can be:

- 1) Participating (PAR); or
- 2) Non-Participating (Non-par); or
- 3) Out-Out for private contracts with Medicare eligible persons.

In each of these instances, CMS expects physician to have a record in their PECOS System. If a physician is not in PECOS but orders or refers a Medicare patient for care or prescriptions, lab or x-ray, the physician needs to have a record in PECOS. If not, the entity providing the service that was ordered or referred will be denied Medicare benefits.

## Still Need help with Meaningful Use?



NYC REACH - PCIP’s Regional Extension Center serving New York City providers - is available to provide classes, tool kits, and on-site assistance. The Meaningful Use curriculum covers provider eligibility, how to meet the measures in your EHR, and how to apply for the rewards. Learn more: <http://www.nycreach.org>



## The **wants you to know your options: Medicare participation guide**

From mid-November through December 31, physicians will have their annual opportunity to review and perhaps change their participation status with the Medicare program. Given the severe Medicare payment disruptions caused this year as Congress established, and then missed, multiple deadlines to stop payment cuts caused by the sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula, the AMA is encouraging physicians to prepare for this opportunity and review their options carefully. To help them choose the direction that is right for their practices, the AMA has developed the “Know your options: Medicare participation guide.” This kit contains a detailed explanation of the three available options: participation (PAR), non-participation (non-PAR), and private contracting. It also includes a helpful revenue calculator and various sample materials to help physicians share information with current, new, and prospective patients.

The Medicare options kit is accessible to all physicians on-line at [www.ama-assn.org/go/medicareoptions](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/medicareoptions).

### **The Office of the Inspector General stated that Medicare contractors have noted an increased frequency of medical records with identical documentation across services.**

#### **Office of Inspector General increases auditing efforts**

In September 2010, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services published its 2011 Work Plan, which became effective on Oct. 1, 2010. The Work Plan describes the areas in which the OIG will focus specific audit, investigation, enforcement and compliance activities. The OIG indicated that it will review the extent of potentially inappropriate payments for evaluation and management (E&M) services. The OIG stated that Medicare contractors have noted an increased frequency of medical records with identical documentation across services. Visit the OIG Web site at <http://oig.hhs.gov/publications/workplan/2011/> to access its Work Plan.

**Resource can help physician practices prepare** The AMA's new Practice Analysis Tools for Healthcare (AMA PATH™) can help physicians analyze their individual coding and billing practices and compare them with national averages by specialty. Using AMA PATH, a physician can, for example, analyze his or her billing patterns with respect to individual E&M codes and, in so doing, enable the physician to identify and rectify any billing or coding practices or patterns that might draw the attention of the OIG or other governmental agencies. Visit [www.ama-assn.org/go/amapath](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/amapath) to learn more about this online tool, special introductory offers and AMA member discounts!

### **The Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has posted the final 2011 Physician Fee Schedule Rule at**

[http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2010-27969\\_PI.pdf](http://www.ofr.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2010-27969_PI.pdf)

### ***CMS Will Cover Counseling Services to Prevent Tobacco Use***

The Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) has released **MLN Matters Article #MM7133** to inform providers that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will cover counseling services to prevent tobacco use for outpatient and hospitalized beneficiaries. Effective for claims with dates of service **on and after August 25, 2010**, CMS will cover tobacco cessation counseling for outpatient and hospitalized Medicare beneficiaries 1) who use tobacco, regardless of whether they have signs or symptoms of tobacco-related disease; 2) who are competent and alert at the time that counseling is provided; and 3) whose counseling is furnished by a qualified physician or other Medicare-recognized practitioner. This article is based on Change Request (CR) 7133 and is available at <http://www.cms.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM7133.pdf> on the CMS website.

## **2011 MEDICARE UPDATE MEETING**

The Medicare Update Seminar, offered annually by RCMS, will be held on Friday, December 17, 2010 at LiGreci's Staaten. Registration is at 8:00 AM and the program will begin promptly at 8:30 AM. The program is sponsored by the **Richmond County Medical Society** and presented by **James D. Bavoso**, Provider Outreach & Education, National Government Services

#### **Registration Fee:**

\$25.00 Physician Members & Staff

\$60.00 Non-Member Physicians & Staff

call 718-442-7267 to register

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED

Make check payable to:

**Richmond County Medical Society**

460 Brielle Avenue

Administration Building; Room 202

Staten Island, NY 10314

## Medicare Improves Access to Preventive Services for 2011; New Physician Payment Policies Emphasize Role of Primary Care

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a final rule with comment period that will implement key provisions in the Affordable Care Act of 2010 that expand preventive services for Medicare beneficiaries, improve payments for primary care services, and promote access to health care services in rural areas. The new policies will apply to payments under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) for services furnished on or after Jan 1, 2011.

The final rule with comment period implements provisions in the Affordable Care Act that expand beneficiary access to preventive services and, for the first time, provide coverage under the traditional fee-for-service program for an annual wellness visit beginning Jan 1, 2011. This visit augments the benefits of the Initial Preventive Physical Examination (IPPE or "Welcome to Medicare Visit") with an annual visit that allows the physician and patient to develop a personalized prevention plan that considers not only the age-appropriate preventive services generally available to Medicare beneficiaries, but additional services that may be appropriate because of the patient's individual health status. CMS will accept comments on certain aspects of the final rule with comment period until Jan 3, 2011.

To view the rule and supporting documentation, visit <http://www.cms.gov/PhysicianFeeSched/PFSERN/itemdetail.asp?itemID=CMS1240932>. To read the entire CMS press release issued on Wed Nov 3, visit [http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press\\_releases.asp](http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp). CMS also issued fact sheets with additional details, available at [http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/fact\\_sheets.asp](http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/fact_sheets.asp).

## Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) Code Set Update

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is pleased to announce the scheduled release of modifications to the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code set. These changes have been posted to the HCPCS website at <http://www.cms.gov/HCPCSReleaseCodeSets/ANHCPCS/list.asp>; changes are effective as of the date indicated on the update.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS EXPO      September 28th

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC) partnered with City Councilman James Oddo and the Northfield Bank Foundation to turn the Staten Island Hilton Garden Inn into a clearinghouse for all things health in the borough. Seminars were held throughout the day on topics including Health Care Reform, Men's and Women's Health, making better food choices among others.

Some of Richmond County Medical Society's past presidents, pictured below, were presenters at the expo that was attended by over 2,500 people.



*Dr. Mark Jarret (left) and Dr. John Maese (center) both presenting information on health care reform*

*Right: Dr. Joseph Motta as he presented the latest information on Men's Health.*

## Upcoming Events

### Tuesday, December 7

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

### Tuesday, December 14

Mandatory Infection Control Course  
4:00pm Registration  
Dyker Beach Club  
86 Steet & 7 Avenue, Bay Ridge,  
Brooklyn (Just over the bridge)

### Friday, December 17

Medicare Update for 2011  
8:00am Registration  
Program begins promptly at 8:30am  
LiGreci's Staaten  
607 Forest Avenue, Staten Island

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### Tuesday, January 4, 2011

Comitia Minora Dinner Meeting  
7:30 PM  
SI Hilton Garden Inn  
1100 South Avenue  
**Stated Meeting will immediately follow the Comitia Minora to approve the budget for 2011**

### Tuesday, February 1

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

### Tuesday, March 1

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

# The Alliance with the Richmond County Medical Society Annual Scholarship Fundraiser and President's Gala Honoring Dr. Vincent Calamia, Immediate Past President



October 9, 2010  
Staten Island Hilton Garden Inn



Past Presidents of RCMS (standing, from left: Drs. Thomas Vazzana, Allan Perel, Joseph Motta & Ralph Messo. (seated, from left: Drs. Vincent Calamia, honoree, John Maese, Donna Seminara, Jack D'Angelo & Tano Carbonaro



Past Presidents of the Alliance (standing, from left: Sherry Messo, Corrie Verde, Susan Perel & Iris Accettola. (seated, from left: Donna L'Insalata, Maria Ravelo & Tano Carbonaro



from left: Dr. Albert Accettola, honoree; Dr. George Smith, President; Dr. Vincent Calamia, Immediate Past President & honoree; and Congressman Michael McMahon, honoree



from left: Assemblyman Lou Tobacco, Dr. Brian McMahon, RUMC Medical Staff President & Noreen Pietras



from left: Borough President James Molinaro, Tony Ferreri, CEO of SIUH, Joan Cusick, Congressman McMahon & Assemblyman Tobacco



from left: Susan Perel, Dr. Jack D'Angelo, Dr. Allan Perel and Dr. Leah McCormack, MSSNY President



from left: Camille Carbonaro, Jack D'Angelo & Joseph Motta & Iris Accettola.



from left: Dr. Albert Accettola, Jr. (honoree) & Iris Accettola with Corrie & Dr. Robert Verde



from left: Judge Judith McMahon, Dr. Edith Calamia & Congressman McMahon



Michael Schoppmann, General Counsel to MSSNY and RCMS with RUMC Medical Staff Office personnell, Amy Aromin, left and Jane Bosignone



Dr. & Mrs. Louis Grecco



from left: Kathleen & Dr. Tom Vazzana, Judge Judith & Congressman McMahon



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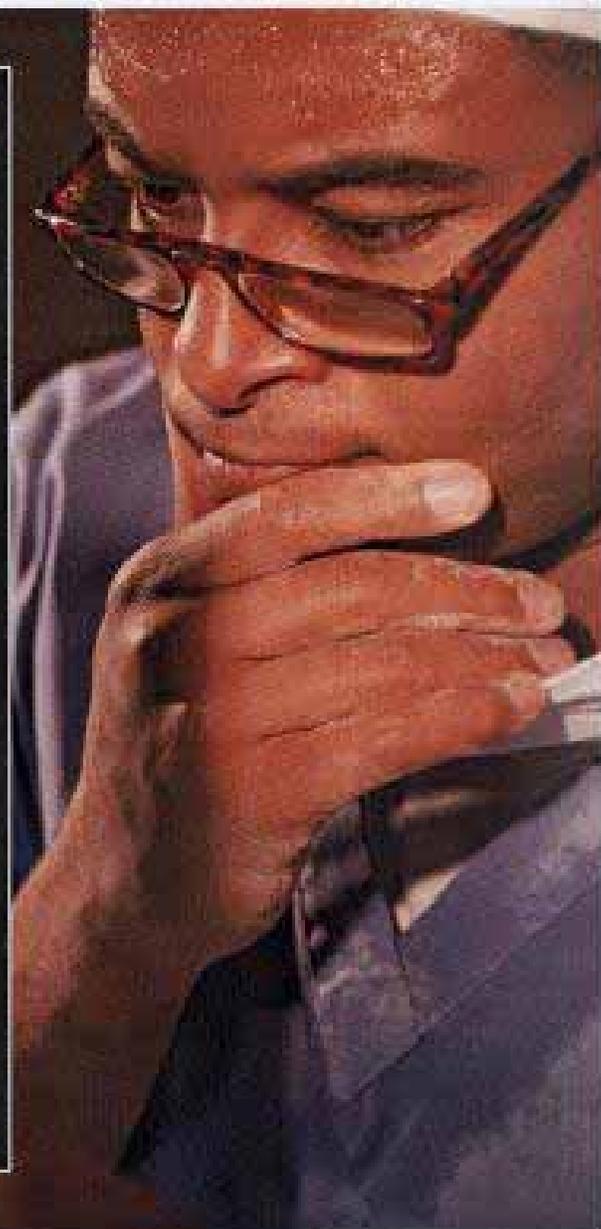
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