



Established 1852

Lehigh County Medical Society

The mission of the Lehigh County Medical Society is to encourage physicians and healthcare professionals to have the highest moral and ethical standards; to counsel and censure them when necessary; to serve as a strong and united voice for our Lehigh County physicians, our patients and our community; to promote healthful living and well-being and to advance the highest standards of healthcare and service in our region through education, service and advocacy.

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The DR Bulletin

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Student Opportunities in Organized Medicine

Samson (Sen) Lu, MS3

When I first joined the Lehigh County Medical Society (LCMS) last May, I inquired about the goals of the organization. A member replied simply, "We are here to look after our profession." I soon learned how multifaceted this could be, from exploring physician culture through exchanges of ideas on controversial topics to creating health education opportunities for the local community to participating in the democratic process at the county, state, and national levels. I quite firmly believe that the LCMS provides a solid infrastructure and support for medical students to maximally contribute to the field of medicine. This year marks the introduction of the Medical Student Section (MSS) of the LCMS, and medical students are already giving back to the community. Two medical stu-

dents attended a pre-health fair at Muhlenberg College to give pre-medical students advice and guidance. Medical students also organized a health mentorship program, led by fellow third year medical student Jose Soto, at Allen High School for disadvantaged students interested in health professions.

My personal involvement with LCMS peaked with the sponsorship of my trip to the PAMED House of Delegates meeting in Hershey, PA, last October. It was my first time attending a state-level meeting of medical professionals. An active democracy was unfolding before me. While conversation and argument were bountiful, the productive actions set into place for the next year were many, including getting \$200 million returned to physicians who were erroneously paying into an Mcare insurance fund, setting standards for Telemedicine, petitioning Medicare for coverage of Tdap vaccines, and creating a research committee to decide whether the membership dues to PAMED are too high. The most notable victory for the medical students was a bill drafted by Diana Huang from Temple University School of Medicine that protected funds from PAMED to sponsor student delegates and alternates to attend the national AMA House of Delegates meetings. The funding had been cut during the year, but this bill passed with a unanimous decision to restore funding, after which there was such enthusiastic applause that a chill went down my spine. We made progress, and as a voting member of the MSS, I had helped ensure this bill made it out to the floor. Those moments reminded me of a video I watched of the legalization of same-sex marriage in New Zealand; right after the bill

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Manuscripts offered for publication and other correspondence should be sent to 1620 W Highland St, Allentown, PA.

The DR Bulletin is published six times a year bi-monthly, beginning in January, by the Lehigh County Medical Society.

The editorial board reserves the right to reject and/or alter submitted material before publication. All manuscripts and letters should be typed double-spaced on 8 1/2" x 11" stationary.

The opinions expressed in these pages are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the Lehigh County Medical Society.

The ad material is for the information and consideration of the reader. It does not necessarily represent an endorsement or recommendation by the Lehigh County Medical Society.

Preserve Your County Medical Society - The Grassroots of Organized Medicine

passed, the room erupted in applause and a spontaneous a cappella rendition of their national anthem, which to me was a beautiful demonstration of human spirit. At the end of the meeting, I realized that LCMS and PAMED are significant and tangible avenues of widespread change, and I am grateful for learning how to get involved and put forth my voice to help shape the practice of medicine.

Member Physicians Vital to MOC Changes Just Announced by ABIM

The Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) and many of its member physicians that served on a task force have been expressing physician concerns about Maintenance of Certification (MOC) to the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) for much of the past year. The ABIM addressed many of those concerns with its announcement on Feb. 3, 2015.

“The Pennsylvania Medical Society applauds the ABIM for listening and being open to change,” said Scott Shapiro, MD, president-elect at PAMED. “We look forward to continuing to work with the ABIM to make the MOC process more effective for physicians.”

The changes included the following:

- Effective immediately, ABIM is suspending the Practice Assessment, Patient Voice, and Patient Safety requirements for at least two years. This means that no internist will have his or her certification status changed for not having completed activities in these areas for at least the next two years. Diplomates who are currently not certified but who have satisfied all requirements for MOC, except for the Practice Assessment requirement, will be issued a new certificate this year.

- Within the next six months, ABIM will change the language used to publicly report a diplomate's MOC status on its website from “meeting MOC requirements” to “participating in MOC.”

- ABIM is updating the Internal Medicine MOC exam. The update will focus on making the exam more reflective of what physicians in practice are doing, with any changes to be incorporated beginning fall 2015, with more subspecialties to follow.

- MOC enrollment fees will remain at or below the 2014 levels through at least 2017.

- By the end of 2015, ABIM will assure what it calls new and more flexible ways for internists to demonstrate self-assessment of medical knowledge by recognizing most forms of ACCME-approved CME.

Your Voice and Advocate in 2015 and Beyond

Many Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) members have told us how important state advocacy is to them — on behalf of physicians, their profession, and their patients.

What are our top advocacy priorities in Harrisburg in the New Year? PAMED's robust legislative and regulatory

agenda includes:

- Opposing legislation authorizing independent practice for non-physician practitioners, while supporting initiatives that promote physician-led, team-based care.

- Assuring patient safety in regulations being issued per state law allowing pharmacists to manage patient medication levels with a physician collaborative agreement.

- Supporting legislation requiring prompt physician credentialing by payers.

- Protecting employed physicians' ability to exercise clinical judgment and prohibit non-compete clauses in employment contracts.

- Supporting increased medical student loan forgiveness in underserved areas. An additional \$1 million was allocated in the 2014-2015 state budget that will increase loan forgiveness programs and provide more residency slots.

- Opposing legislation authorizing tax on physician/patient encounters.

- Remove barriers to the expansion of telemedicine, improving access to care while ensuring patient safety.

- Requiring providers to be straightforward and fully transparent about licensing and board certification in advertisements through truth in advertising legislation.

The 2013-2014 state legislative session also saw many wins for medicine.

We also advocate in Washington D.C. on important federal issues such as the flawed Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) Medicare physician payment formula, which will result in devastating cuts in reimbursement to physicians and negatively affect access to care across the nation.

But, we can't do it alone. We need your support. Watch the Daily Dose (PAMED's daily all-member email) and other communications for updates. More importantly, watch for calls to action, when legislators need to hear physicians' voices on important issues, and let your voice be heard.

“Our voices have power, not only as constituents, but also as Pennsylvania physicians,” said PAMED President Karen Rizzo, MD. “Let your voice be heard on issues that may affect us, our profession, and/or our patients. After all, who better understands the issues facing physicians today than physicians.”

To find out how else you can get involved in advocacy, contact Larry Light, senior vice president of physician advocacy and political affairs at PAMED.

“If you are a member, thank you for your continued support, and I hope that you will be renewing your membership” said Dr. Rizzo. “If you are not currently a member, I strongly encourage you to consider joining our efforts so that we can continue to do the work that we do on behalf of physicians and patients in the commonwealth.”

- See more at: <http://www.pamedsoc.org/Stories/Hero4/2015-advocacy.html#sthash.wjB6QFsL.dpuf>

Save the Date - Annual Social
April 25th, 2015
Lehigh Country Club

Medical Marijuana: To Legalize or Not, That Is the Question

The debate over medical marijuana is once again heating up at the state capitol. A recent news release, issued by the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) on Jan. 27, takes a look inside the medical marijuana state debate.

On one side are Senators Mike Folmer and Daylin Leach, who are seeking to legalize marijuana.

"I'm not saying marijuana is a cure, but people ought to have the opportunity for help," Sen. Folmer recently told the Philadelphia Inquirer, citing anecdotal evidence from parents of children suffering from epilepsy who believe an oil derived from marijuana could work. "It was very compelling," he said. "I learned that it is nontoxic, no one's going to die. So I figured, no harm, no foul. There are too many sick people."

However, state physicians led by PAMED say don't be so quick to outright legalize medical marijuana.

Karen Rizzo, MD, president of PAMED, explains that legalizing medical marijuana without solid research doesn't help build a path for the medical decision for the patient and the patient's health care team to discuss.

"It's like building a house without a foundation," she said. "Maybe you'll get lucky and the house will stand, but maybe not."

As reported in the Dec. 11, 2014, edition of Neurology Advisor, "despite patients' and parents' perception of marijuana as an effective treatment for epilepsy, there is little evidence that proves this is not a placebo effect."

Within the studies, researches carefully stated that no firm conclusions could be reached until better trials are conducted; thus leaving the door open that medical marijuana may or may not be helpful. During the last legislative session, then-Governor Tom Corbett supported in-state research, giving lawmakers an opportunity to advocate for necessary funds. But, with the state budget crisis and the necessary research potentially costing millions of dollars, nothing was funded through the state last session.

"The worst thing we could do would be to sell medical marijuana as a 'home run' medication and the answer for patients with epilepsy," concluded Dr. Rizzo in the news release. "If we do, that could be selling false hope to some parents who are desperate to help their children. Physicians are in the business of both caring and curing. We've got to fully understand how to use medical marijuana and who it will work on so that we're not selling false hope to families."

ATTENTION

Lehigh County Medical Society MEMBERS

Does your Physician Group have a Website?

Contact the Lehigh County Medical Society
and have your Website linked onto the
Lehigh County Medical Society Website.

www.lcmedsoc.org

Call: 610-437-2288

REMEMBER

If you change your business or home address and/or phone
or fax number, please notify the Lehigh County Medical
Society. Call: 610-437-2288

Lehigh County Medical Society Welcomes the following New Members

Kenneth M. Andrejko, DO (IM-PAN)
24 S 18th St, Allentown, PA 18104

Asare Christian, MD (PM)
850 S 5th St, Allentown, PA, 18103

Clemens Esche, MD (D)
2895 Hamilton Blvd, Ste 202, Allentown, PA 18104

Kiran Mohan Goli, MD (NEP)
1230 S Cedar Crest Blvd Ste 301, Allentown, PA
18103

Wael A. Samuel Hanna, MD (HOS)
400 Bridle Path Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18017

Kyle C Klitsch, DO (PM)
850 S 5th St, Allentown, PA 18103

Christian W Oram, DO (D)
1259 S Cedar Crest Blvd, Ste 100, Allentown, PA
18103

Jeena Mary Jacob, MD (FM)
801 Ostrum St, Bethlehem PA, 18015

Vasudev Govardhan Magaji, MD (END)
1243 S Cedar Crest Blvd Ste 280, Allentown, PA
18103

Vu Thanh Nguyen, MD (FP)
3178 W Tilghman St, Allentown, PA 18104

Sandeep Singh, MD (PCC)
850 S 5th St, Allentown, PA, 18103

Samuel Umaru, MD (PD)
Cedar Crest & I-78, Allentown, PA 18103

NOTE

Members of the
Lehigh County Medical Society can now view the
membership roster (Physician Directory) at our
website: www.lcmedsoc.org or request a Member-
ship Roster by calling the Lehigh County Medical
Society at: 610-437-2288.

LCMS is looking for members
Interested in participating on the Board of
Trustees or various committees.

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The vision of the Lehigh County Medical Society is to be a relevant and influential leader in the Pennsylvania Medical Society; to unite our physicians and to empower them to deliver compassionate, ethical and evidence based healthcare of the highest quality and value to our community.

The Lehigh County Medical Society will accomplish its mission and its vision by the following:

Legislative Advocacy within our State Medical Society and our Government
Community Education within the Public Health Arena
Member Education, Collaborative Relationships and Collegiality
Service Activities for our members and our community

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