



Established 1852

# Lehigh County Medical Society

## Mission Statement:

The purpose of this society shall be to unite physicians to speak with one voice at the local, state and national level to influence health policy, thereby achieving the highest standard of health care for our community.

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The DR Bulletin

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### FROM YOUR 2011 PRESIDENT, James K. Wu, M.D.



As I was finishing my O.R. case the other day, I was commiserating with my anesthesiologist about the advanced age and complexity of our patients. And yet, as challenging as our patients are today, the future patient population is going to be even more daunting. Starting this year, as the first of the baby boomers turn 65, there will be an additional 10,000 people everyday reaching this milestone for the next 20 years! How are we going to provide all of the care needed and, more importantly, how are we going to pay for it?

Simply put, we're entering a crisis in healthcare which has never seen before in our nation's history. The implications of 10,000 baby boomers per day become

Medicare eligible are alarming. No doubt the way we practice medicine will need to change. As this population ages, there will be huge surges in the number of patients with cancer, heart and vascular disease, and Alzheimer's disease, to name a few. Healthcare spending will need to increase to accommodate the aging population and the corresponding age-related diseases. The estimated cost for Medicare will balloon from the current estimates of \$500 billion per year to \$929 billion by 2020! Medicare is already underfunded with bankruptcy looming.

The implications for physicians are equally challenging. There will be a need to train more physicians, who in turn will need to work longer hours and see more complex cases than in the past. The restricted hours residents are mandated in their training may result in a culture shock when they face the realities of clinical practice. Furthermore, it's hard to imagine that our medical schools can produce more aspiring primary care physicians when they are graduating with hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. The potential increase in patient volumes in the future will likely be offset by lower reimbursement and less time to spend with each patient—hardly an advertisement to encourage more talented students to go into medicine as a career. Lastly, as more doctors align with hospital systems out of

Lehigh County Medical Society, 1620 W Highland St, Allentown, PA 18102-1033  
Phone: 610-437-2288 Fax: 610-437-0910 [www.lcmedsoc.org](http://www.lcmedsoc.org)

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

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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.

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necessity, the physician of the future will undoubtedly have even less of independence and political voice.

What does this say about the future health of our aging society? Ironically, our baby boomers enjoyed unprecedented post-WWII prosperity and growth, yet they may not be able to afford modern medical therapy in their retirement. This is not just a baby boomer problem. These changes will affect everyone. It will impact our nation's economy and well-being. For every dollar spent on healthcare, one dollar less is spent on infrastructure, education, security, and other social needs. The worrisome thing is that we all know this is coming and yet we seem to be waiting—waiting for someone else to come up with a solution. Yes, we can vote for the politicians who seem to support our profession, but most of us are just trying to get through our daily work and have little time or energy to get involved in the political process.

Benjamin Franklin once said, “You may delay, but time will not.” I say, “Let's not wait anymore!” We all CAN do something to contribute NOW. We should educate ourselves on the healthcare issues in depth. There are people who we can in turn educate, there are civil debates to be held, and there are many brilliant people and ideas that need to be heard. Talk to your patients, talk to your residents, and talk to your medical students about the challenges and opportunities that lay in front of us. Participate on hospital and community committees. Write letters to your legislators and publish editorials in the newspapers. Most of all support your Medical Society and consider contribution to PAC funds.

If we don't act now, if we don't participate in the process and voice our concerns, 10,000 birthday wishes per day may never come true.

### **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](http://www.lcmedsoc.org)**

Call: 610-437-2288

## **Allentown School District**

### **VOLUNTEER PHYSICIANS WANTED**

Looking for health care providers to serve as volunteer tutors in our College & Career Access Network. Our students will constitute the workforce of the future in the Lehigh Valley. One-on-one tutoring is a highly effective way to increase student achievement. Successful students make healthier life choices. Your membership can lead the way towards revitalizing our community one student at a time. Please contact me at your earliest convenience if you would like more information or to discuss our program further. I look forward to working with you.

Katie Gill, District Tutoring Coordinator

Allentown School District

phone: 484-765-4192

email: [gillk@allentownsd.org](mailto:gillk@allentownsd.org).

## **American Medical Association For Your Information**

With the Medicare Recovery Audit Contractor audits that became a national program last year, the Office of the Inspector General's plan to increase its auditing efforts this year and ongoing health insurer audits, your members need to evaluate their audit risk.

Thousands of dollars and years of headaches are at stake—your members can't afford to let their practices go unprotected.

There's now an affordable “online consultant” that can help your members see how their practices look to auditors and then implement process improvements to safeguard their practices against these audits. The AMA's Practice Analysis Tools for Healthcare (**AMA PATH™**) is only \$299 for those who purchase by Mar. 31 and only \$224 for AMA members. Visit: [www.ama-assn.org/go/amapath](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/amapath) to watch a video demonstration and access sample reports.

## Pennsylvania Medical Society For Your Information

### Avoid 2012 e-Rx penalties by reporting in 2011

CMS announced in the final Medicare physician fee schedule rule that they plan to use 2011 data to determine 2012 penalties for e-prescribing (e-Rx), something the AMA vigorously opposed. In order to avoid a penalty for e-prescribing in 2012, physicians must now engage in claim-based reporting of G-code G8553 10 times between January 1 and June 30, 2011. Penalties will not apply to physicians (or group practices) where less than 10 percent of their allowed charges for this time frame are comprised of codes in the 2011 e-Rx measure.

### Medical Assistance Policy on Charging for "No-Shows"

The Department of Public Welfare (Department) continues to receive questions from providers regarding whether they may bill MA recipients or the MA Program for missed appointments, also known as "No Shows".

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which is responsible for administering the Medicaid Program, has an existing policy that prohibits MA providers from billing recipients or the Medicaid agency for missed appointments. According to CMS, a missed appointment is not a distinct reimbursable Medicaid service, but a part of the provider's overall cost of doing business. As such, it is included in the MA rate and providers may not impose separate charges on Medicaid recipients. State Medicaid programs, including Pennsylvania's MA Program, must comply with the CMS policy on this subject; therefore MA enrolled providers who render services to MA recipients may not bill recipients for missed appointments.

### RACs Looking at Physician Services

DCS, the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) for Pennsylvania, updated their list of audit issues and physicians are now included. Current review is post-payment, automatic claims review. Place of Service coding and multiple procedures, specifically 'add-ons', have been targeted in the audit activity.

## Lehigh County Medical Society Welcomes the following New Members

Eileen Bahler, M.D., (FM)  
5662 Interchange Rd.  
Lehighton, PA 18235

Robert Barraco, M.D., (GS)  
1240 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Ste. 308  
Allentown, PA 18103

Kimberly Corba, D.O., (FM)  
1150 Glenivet Dr., Ste. A17  
Allentown, PA 18106

David DeRose, M.D., (OPH)  
1251 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Ste. 307  
Allentown, PA 18103

Mammen Mammen, Jr., M.D., (ID)  
Infectious Disease Consultant  
Government/Military

Tania Martinez-Jimenez, M.D., (P)  
462 W. Walnut St.  
Allentown, PA 18102

Richard Massaro, D.O., (IM)  
1240 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Ste. 410  
Allentown, PA 18103

Anavi Shah, M.D., (OPH)  
401 N. 17th St., Ste. 103  
Allentown, PA 18104

Holli Warholic, D.O., (OBG)  
440 S. 15th St.  
Allentown, PA 18102

## **NOTE**

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

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