



# 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.



### Why does the Lehigh County Medical Society exist?

This question has been asked many times by prospective members, current members, and the public alike in recent years. The question is even more relevant in light of our desire as an organization to set strategic goals to increase our membership and improve the services we provide.

The Lehigh County Medical Society exists for the following reasons: First, to help protect physicians against proposed legislation that may hurt the practice of medicine. Second, to educate physicians and the public about the challenges facing medical practice in today's political and economic environment. And lastly, we provide physicians in our community with a collegial environment to discuss ideas and to socialize.

Why do physicians need protection in the state legislature? It's because physicians who are not united with one voice will be drowned in a sea of politics and legal jargon. The Lehigh County Medical Society along with the Pennsylvania Medical Society helps physicians to organize a single voice and raise awareness to important issues, lobbying on our behalf. The number of special interest groups will continue to peck away at physician autonomy and rights. M-Care, liability reform, budget cuts, physician oversight and scope of practice of non-physician providers are just a short list of hot topics that should concern all physicians whether in private practice or employed by large hospital systems.

Why do we need to learn the political and economic effects on the practice of medicine? The answer is simple: Because that's how the world works and if you chose to not keep up with the health care reform proposals, you're likely to be left behind. Most college graduates go into medicine because they want to help people. Yet few medical students have an understanding of the business aspects of medicine. This would explain why it's so hard to convince young physicians to contribute money and/or participate in policy making discussions and debates. Yet, engaging in politics and economics can literally help future physicians succeed not only in their own practices, but allow them to serve as future leaders guiding generations of physicians to come on how to preserve our honored profession.

Lastly, why is there a need to join Lehigh County Medical Society when you already belong to your national specialty association? Because, as they say, "All medicine is local." By joining

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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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**Preserve Your County Medical Society - The Grassroots of Organized Medicine**

us you can interact and socialize with your fellow physicians from different specialties, different health networks, and even different counties from across the state. These grassroots interactions undoubtedly will lead to better insights and a better understanding of our mutual concerns. To enhance these connections, in the coming months we will post educational and social meetings on our website and mailings. Stay tuned.

In the end, the “whys” are easy to answer. The harder questions to ask is “why not” participate and volunteer to be a leader in our Medical Society? I hope your answer to this final question will be “Yes, it’s time to do more!”



On April 15th 2011, Louis L. Eister retired after spending 18 plus years as Executive Director for Lehigh County Medical Society. Lou's goal was to retire young and be able to enjoy the his outdoor hobbies to his fullest abilities. You won't be catching Lou in a rocking chair anytime soon. We will miss you Lou.

## Lehigh County Medical Society ATTENTION 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

## AMA meeting: Proceed with caution on social media tools

Doctors should be responsible in their communications and regularly track their online presence, the AMA advises.

By [CAROLYNE KRUPA](#), amednews staff. Posted Nov. 22, 2010.

San Diego — Social networking websites and blogs can be an effective and efficient way to communicate, but the AMA is advising physicians and medical students to proceed with caution.

Physicians writing blogs or using Facebook, Twitter and other social media should be responsible in their communications, routinely monitor their online presence, use security settings to limit access to personal information and abide by patient privacy laws, according to a policy approved at the Interim Meeting.

“Using social media can help physicians create a professional presence online, express their personal views and foster relationships, but it can also create new challenges for the patient-physician relationship,” said AMA Board of Trustees Member Mary Anne McCaffree, MD.

A recent Google study found that 86% of U.S. physicians use the Internet in their professional careers to gather health and medical information. Most doctors also use the Internet for personal communications beyond the workplace.

It’s important to maintain appropriate doctor-patient boundaries and separate professional and personal content online, according to the policy. Physicians should be mindful that their online communications are searchable, long-lasting and available to millions of people, said Julia Halsey, student member of the Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs.

Though the Internet can foster a feeling of anonymity, doctors should not post anything that could have negative professional repercussions, delegates said. The policy advises professional self-regulation and reminds physicians to be cognizant of their obligations to patients and not do anything to jeopardize patient privacy or confidentiality.

On social networking websites, physicians should use privacy settings to block their information from public view, but they need to recognize that those settings may not completely or permanently prevent outside access, the policy says.

Cont.

### Careful communication

Physicians are cautioned against having non clinical communications with patients, because doctors may see something about a patient online that could have implications for their medical care. In the report that led to the policy, CEJA members gave the example of a photo posted online of a patient smoking, when the patient had told the physician he or she was a nonsmoker.

Seeing the photo and knowing the patient may not have been truthful could affect how the physician interacts with the patient in subsequent visits.

“Physicians must recognize that actions online and content posted may negatively affect their reputations among patients and colleagues, may have consequences for their medical careers [particularly for physicians-in-training and medical students], and can undermine public trust in the medical profession,” the CEJA report said.

The print version of this content appeared in the **Nov. 29** issue of *American Medical News*.

## Learn How to Impact Politics at the PAMPAC Political Seminar

Learn how to effectively communicate your advocacy message with legislators and make an impact on local politics at **PAMPAC's political seminar** being held Sept. 24, 2011. If running for public office sparks your interest, more information will be provided on how to get started.

This seminar, presented by AMPAC, will be held at the Pennsylvania Medical Society from 9 AM to 3 PM. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. The registration fee of \$50 will be waived for 2011 PAMPAC members.

To register, email your contact information to:

[PAMPAC@pamedsoc.org](mailto:PAMPAC@pamedsoc.org)

or call: 717-558-7822 by July 31.

### NOTICE

#### Day with the Doctor Program

Registration information for the program of Physicians mentoring Pre-Med students from Muhlenberg College will be mailed out in August.

The Lehigh County Medical Society is trying to create a list of members e-mail addresses to be able to send information instantly and in a green fashion. Please send us an e-mail, just so we can keep your information up to date. Thank you

### Health reform's first change: tax reporting rule cut

The AMA was among those supporting the rescission of the 1099 rule, which would have increased practices' administrative work.

By **DOUG TRAPP**, *amednews* staff.

Posted April 18, 2011.

**Washington** — The first successful legislative attempt to amend the national health system reform law is a bipartisan measure repealing an expense reporting provision that would have increased the amount of paperwork medical practices and other small businesses must file with the government.

The health reform law required businesses to file a 1099 form with the Internal Revenue Service for each vendor from whom the businesses purchase at least \$600 in goods and services annually. By increasing tax collections from those vendors, the provision was expected to raise about \$20 billion over a decade to help offset the cost of the health reform law's coverage expansions.

On April 5, the Senate approved a House-passed bill rescinding the reporting provision in the reform law. On April 14th President Obama signed the bill into law.

### 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 Membership Roster by calling the Lehigh County Medical Society at 610-437-2288.**

### REMEMBER

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

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