



# 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.

Established 1852  
www.lcmedsoc.org

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The DR Bulletin

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### FROM YOUR 2012 PRESIDENT, George A. Arangio, M.D.



Welcome from the Board of the Lehigh County Medical Society. We wish you Blessed Holidays, good health and prosperity. We thank Dr. Wu for leading the Board in organizing our present initiatives and we continue to execute the game plan.

Our representatives in Washington DC are planning more health care for fewer dollars. They plan to decrease physician reimbursement by 6% per year for three years (18%) and then freeze payments for 7 years. They ask the physicians, nurses and hospitals to care for an additional 30,000,000 more people by 2016. More patients and older and more chronically ill patients will require more physicians and caregivers and more hours of work, more products and more money. This plan will add an estimated 50 Billion dollars to healthcare expenses in 2012 and cost an estimated 760 Billion in 2016. We must "unite and adapt" and we must make our **One Voice** heard for best, efficient and fair healthcare for our patients.

The LCMS is our regional, unbiased patient and physician advocate and our primary

mission is to protect our patients. The LCMS unites its physicians and co-operates with the area hospitals and other healthcare providers and educates the Lehigh Valley community. There is power in large numbers and the Pennsylvania Medical Society is "our large **Grass Roots Voice**". Your LCMS/PMS team and you promote the **Best Evidence Based Care** delivered by a lean business model which eliminates unnecessary services. The LCMS and PMS help us prove our **Value** to our patients, our legislators and the united insurance industry.

In these challenging times, the LCMS/PMS team helps us find opportunities to help our patients. Many of us already share data and provide the **Best Evidence Based Care**. We must continue to adapt and educate the public as we help improve our region's healthcare. Our patients and others are watching us, so let us work smartly together. **Is it worth \$2.00 a day to have a voice? Please call a colleague who is not a member and have him join now.**

The LCMS Board is moving forward on six focused initiatives. Dr. James Wu and our Executive Director David Griffiths are working on our improved interactive website so that we may facilitate communication with each other and the Lehigh Valley Community. Log on and watch the progress.

Dr. John Maggioncalda leads the Community Activities efforts. His team is making us more relevant and the October joint Lehigh/Northampton Medical Society meeting hosted over 200 attendees and heard a lively discussion about the future of Lehigh Valley medicine the led by the CEO's of our Hospitals. The feedback has been very positive and other community outreach meetings will be held. It is in the best interest of our patients to work together. Look for upcoming events and results in the DR.

Dr. Charles Scagliotti and his team are organizing timely meetings with our State and Fed-

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

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

The DR Bulletin is published six time 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.

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eral legislators as we use our influence to shape future laws. We pass on information to them and prove that we provide the **Best Evidence Based Care** to our patients. This effort helps us negotiate fair payment for our good care. [Please call a colleague who is not a member and have him join now.](#)

The PMS staff has developed a core curriculum that teaches medical students, residents and physicians how to gather and use office data for better and more cost effective care. The PMS will help the physicians collect data and partner with hospitals and their physician employees. This curriculum teaches us to become future leaders. Dr. Scott Brenner and David Griffiths, our Executive Director, are bringing that process to members of the LCMS, local medical students and residents.

Dr. Morffi, our Finance Committee and your LCMS Board are happy to report that we had a balanced budget for 2011. We will increase our future growth with fiscal responsibility. It is paramount to grow our LCMS and PMS membership and Drs. Eddie Guarino, Judy Pryblich and Peter Rovito and physician volunteers and your Board members are calling hundreds of nonmembers and asking them to join. [We need your help so please call a colleague who is not a member and have him join now.](#)

Your LCMS is educating the public and in turn they will choose our political leaders. We encourage all the physicians in Lehigh County to join us and together we unite and adapt and increase our influence. Our unique proposition is "the **Best Evidence Based Medicine and Surgery for our patients for the Best Value**". We are cooperating with Northampton County Medical Society and with bordering Medical Societies. We speak with "**One Voice**" as we communicate the **Value** of our patient care and the **Value** of our leadership in healthcare in the Lehigh Valley region and in Pennsylvania.

We put our words into action and your LCMS/PMS team, your patients and you benefit. The Lehigh County Medical Society appreciates your efforts. [It is worth \\$2.00 a day to have a voice. Renew your membership and call a colleague who is not a member and have him join now. Forward the membership form that is found with this mailing to him or her.](#)

### Take Action: Tell Congress to Reform Medicare's Flawed Payment System - Urge Congress to reform Medicare payment formula

The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction failed to reach agreement on a deficit reduction proposal, and physicians still face a 27.4 percent cut in Medicare physician payments scheduled to take effect Jan. 1 unless Congress intervenes.

For a decade, Congress has continued to implement short-term fixes that do nothing more than put a Band-Aid on the broken Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula for Medicare physician reimbursement.

"Each of us should contact our members of Congress today and urge them to act," said Marilyn Heine, MD, president of PAMED. "The imminent steep Medicare cut would reduce 2012 practice revenues by nearly \$27,000 per Pennsylvania physician and make it increasingly difficult for physicians to 'keep the lights on' and provide care for our patients and health care jobs for our employees."

Take action now and tell Congress these cuts would have dire consequences on access to care for Medicare and TRICARE participants and cannot be allowed to occur.

"Ask your representatives and senators what specific steps they will take to end the annual SGR fiasco," said the American Medical Association (AMA) in a recent alert. "If they tell you that they are 'with you,' remind them about the multiple missed deadlines in 2010. Physicians and their patients need action rather than vague expressions of support."

SGR legislation would prevent a loss of \$1.02 billion for the care of elderly and disabled patients in Pennsylvania in 2012 alone. Approximately 155,776 employees of medical practices, 2.2 million Medicare patients, and 168,228 TRICARE patients in Pennsylvania would be helped by legislation that averts these cuts.

The size of SGR cuts will only get larger the longer Congress delays finding a permanent solution. In addition, another temporary patch will only significantly increase the future cost to taxpayers. If Congress were to wait until 2016, the estimated cost would reach approximately \$600 billion.

Current law also required across-the-board cuts in 2013 of \$1.2 trillion if the super committee did not achieve this amount in a deficit reduction proposal. These cuts would be equally divided between defense and non-defense programs. Medicare cuts are limited to two percent, but would be on top of any potential SGR cuts. Due to the severe impact of such cuts, Congress is discussing the passage of new legislation to prevent sequestration from occurring.

"There is bipartisan support to avert the severe cut in Medicare payment to physicians, but Congress has yet to act and time is running out," said Dr. Heine.

### Delegates Debate New Strategies and Policies for the Coming Year

While steering the organization in a new strategic direction—one which engages physicians and helps position them as leaders—was a key focus of the Pennsylvania Medical Society's (PAMED) annual meeting, more than 200 physicians and medical students debated numerous issues ranging from medical liability to collective bargaining to regulation of medical spas.

PAMED's House of Delegates meets annually to set Society policy and strategies for the coming year. Delegates considered 23 resolutions during the two-day meeting held Oct. 15 and 16, 2011, in Hershey.

Some of the resolutions adopted by the House include:

- Energy sources, risks to public health: Supporting energy sources that decrease environmental risks to public health and studying the state's public health infrastructure
- State regulation of medical spas: Collaborating with state and national medical organizations to advocate for state regulation of medical spa facilities
- Professional liability coverage for physician volunteers: Seeking legislation requiring the state to provide free professional liability coverage in return for volunteering at free non-government clinics
- Medical Staff Code of Conduct: Adopting the American Medical Association's (AMA) Model Medical Staff Code of Conduct
- Observation care codes; Medicare reimbursement: Advocate for an increase in Medicare reimbursement for observation care codes
- Physical fitness guidelines: Work with other organizations to develop a checklist to identify risk factors in patients starting physical fitness programs
- Water fluoridation: Working in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Dental Association to urge the state to adopt federal fluoride standards and apply them through legislative or regulatory initiatives
- Collective bargaining: Supporting federal legislation authorizing collective bargaining

Several issues were referred to PAMED's Board of Trustees for further study or decision, including Medicare as a public option, reforms to address problems with health plan pre-authorization programs that are outsourced to benefit managers, and controlling children's misuse of prescription drugs. From pamedsoc.org

## Concussion Bill to Protect Student Athletes Signed by Governor

Legislation that provides better monitoring of concussions in Pennsylvania's interscholastic athletes was signed into law by Gov. Tom Corbett on Nov. 9, 2011.

Strongly supported by the Pennsylvania Medical Society, Senate Bill 200 (now Act 101) requires any student-athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion or head injury to obtain clearance by a licensed or certified medical professional trained in concussions before being allowed to resume playing sports.

Other highlights of the bill include:

- The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Education will develop guidelines and other relevant materials to educate students, their parents, and their coaches about the nature and risk of concussions.
  - A student participating in an athletic activity and the student's parent or guardian will be required to sign and return to the student's school an acknowledgment of receipt and review of a concussion and traumatic brain injury information sheet.
  - On an annual basis, coaches will be required to complete the concussion management certification training course offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Federation of State High School Associations, or another provider approved by the DOH.
- About 300,000 Americans will get a sports-related concussion this year. Of those at risk, high school student-athletes tend to be more vulnerable than older athletes because their central nervous systems are more immature, concussions are often not recognized, and high school coaches and trainers rely on subjective self-reported symptoms.

This legislation, which was introduced by Sen. Pat Browne (R-Lehigh), takes effect July 1, 2012. From pamesoc.org

## Bill Banning Drivers from Texting Signed into Law

Legislation that bans texting while driving was signed into law by Gov. Tom Corbett on Nov. 9, 2011. Introduced by Sen. Robert Tomlinson (R-Bucks), Senate Bill 314 (now Act 98) makes reading, writing, or sending a message while driving a primary offense, meaning police officers could stop drivers for this violation alone.

This new law takes effect March 8, 2012, and the fine for a violation is \$50.

SB 314 previously passed the House by a vote of 188-7 on Oct. 31, 2011, the Senate by a vote of 41-8 on June 8, 2011, and received a concurrence vote from the Senate on Nov. 1, 2011.

During the past few legislative sessions, the General Assembly has attempted to pass legislation to impose this ban, but the legislative caucuses had failed to reach an agreement in the past.

PAMED also supports a ban on talking on a handheld cell phone while driving. HB 146, which addresses cell phone use while driving, may soon be considered by the House. From pamedsoc.org

### 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

## Lehigh County Medical Society Welcomes the following New Members

Jami Avellini, M.D. (OBG)  
4533 Jasmine Dr.  
Center Valley, PA 18034-1177

Karen I. Dacey, M.D., (OPH)  
McDonald Ophthalmology & Associates, PC  
522 Delaware Ave  
Fountain Hill, PA 18015-1180

Kimberly S. Kuchinski, M.D., (PD)  
Good Shepherd Pediatric Unit  
2855 Schoenersville Rd  
Bethlehem, PA 18017-7306

Robert J. Motley, M.D. (FPG)  
Lehigh Valley Family Health Center  
1730 W. Chew St.  
Allentown, PA 18104-5549

Avani K. Patel, M.D. (AN)  
Allentown Anesthesia Associates, Inc.  
1245 S. Cedar Crest Blvd, Ste 301  
Allentown, PA 18103-6258

Andrea G. Schellenberg, M.D. (AN)  
Northeastern Anesthesia Physicians PC  
24 S. 18th St  
Allentown, PA 18104-5622

Hiral Shah, M.D. (GE)  
Eastern PA Gastroenterology & Liver Specialists, PC  
1501 N. Cedar Crest Blvd, Ste 110  
Allentown, PA 18104-2309

We are hoping to get your feed back on both the DR Bulletin and web site. Please let us know what you would like to see. Email us with your ideas at [lcmedsoc@rcn.com](mailto:lcmedsoc@rcn.com)

### 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

**LEHIGH COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY**  
1620 W. Highland St. Allentown, PA 18102-1033

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