



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 2012 PRESIDENT, George A. Arangio, M.D.



Cool and colorful Fall is my favorite season. We all look forward to gathering with family and friends in Thanksgiving for our blessings. The "Attitude of Gratitude" is worth nurturing and can turn small things into big things.

The political "hoopla" is reaching a crescendo and as we look to November, Medicine and our Country are at an ideological and financial crossroads. Will we have smaller government and bipartisan fiscal responsibility? The wall Street Journal reports that the Medicaid "tax" for 17 million young, healthy and working citizens will drive up expenses for small businesses and the increased prices will be passed on to consumers. The debate intensifies and on November 6, we the people will decide. We are grateful for the freedom to vote our conscience.

In these times of financial stress, the cost

and effect of recertification has been in the headlines. In 2010, 2.2 Billion dollars were collected by 694 certification entities. There has been no peer review study to support the cost in time or money spent on certifying exams. LCMS encourages members to follow the research and debate on this topic. http://www.accme.org/sites/default/files/null/604_2010_Annual_report_20120702_0.pdf <http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2012/07/02/pr110702.htm>

The LCMS Education Committee lead by Dr. James Wu completed a well-attended "Five Star" CME Symposium entitled "Anatomy of the Malpractice Lawsuit". We learned that the size of the 2011 malpractice awards in PA have increased 12%, that "best practices decrease occurrence of severe adverse outcomes" and that the best defense against Malpractice is a good offense. We learned about Government mandated Hospital peer review for employed physicians and the National Data Bank. The expert faculty presented guidelines to healthcare service leading to "Five Star" patient satisfaction. The common theme was that satisfied patients are a marker of good Medicine and Surgery and that satisfied patients accept complications better than unsatisfied patients. We are grateful to Dr. Wu and his faculty.

The PAMED, the Hospital Association of Pennsylvania and the Department of Health support HB 1570 and the "Cutler Amendment" which allows hospitals to apply for exemptions to add non-physician healthcare professionals to medical staffs. Your LCMS leadership had meetings with your state and Federal representatives and we have reinforced that the well trained and experienced physician is the best leader in healthcare. LCMS urges you to con-

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.

Preserve Your County Medical Society - The Grassroots of Organized Medicine

tact your representatives and voice your opinion.

Physicians, nurses and hospitals will care for an additional 30,000,000 or more people by 2016. The message to physicians is loud and clear. Our patients need and want Valuable Care and Quality Care and “5 Star” Service for less money spent. Co-operation “without walls” between the 1,000 Lehigh Valley Independent physicians and 1,000 Employed physicians is needed more now than ever. Efficiencies of scale from co-operative physicians “without walls” who share information systems, administrative staffs and share diagnostic tools is needed. Savings from reduction in duplication of services and Tort Reform is needed now. Lehigh Valley physicians are adapting and uniting and co-operating with hospitals, businesses and insurance companies to add Value for our patients. The Lehigh County Medical Society supports these efforts.

On September 11, the Lehigh County Bar association sponsored a meeting with the LCMS. Leaders from the Northampton County Bar and the NCMS were guests. It was an evening of collegiality, good food and we were educated by a “mock deposition”.

Your Lehigh County Medical Society has been selected by the Pennsylvania Medical Society Board of Trustees to receive this year’s \$5,000 grant for Healthy Living in Ethnic Communities. We congratulate Dr. Gertner and the LCMS outreach team. Stay tuned for more on this program.

Physician’s availability, affability, knowledge, experience and compassion are the engine of Medicine and Surgery and our “pens” deliver all of healthcare. The challenge for 2,000 Greater Lehigh Valley Physicians is to Unite their energy no matter what our status of practice and to co-operate with ONE VOICE for our patients. Physicians have the final responsibility for our patient’s life and death and we have a significant influence on the future of Healthcare. We put our words into action and our moral compass in our front pockets and our patients and the community and we benefit.

I thank you for the honor of serving as LCMS President. I encourage you to read the LCMS “Mission Statement” on the first page as it is more important now than ever. It has been a productive year and your LCMS is strong, we have influence and we are relevant. I pass the baton into the capable hands of Dr. Eric Gertner our next President.

It is worth \$2.00 dollars a day for more than \$14 dollars a day of services. Renew your membership and call a colleague who is not a member of LCMS and the PAMED and have him join now.

Poll Confirms What Physicians Already Know: PA’s Lawsuit Climate Needs Improvement

A recent poll by Harris Interactive and the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform (ILR) reaffirms what physicians across the state have known for many years—Pennsylvania’s lawsuit climate needs improvement. One improvement would be apology legislation.

The poll, which ranked Pennsylvania 40th nationwide, below all neighboring states other than West Virginia, was announced to the public in a news conference held recently in Philadelphia. The Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) spoke at the conference.

“Money wasted in unnecessary lawsuits is money that can’t be reinvested into health care, said Marilyn Heine, MD, president of PAMED, in a recent news conference statement. “Diverting this money away from health care means practices may not be able to buy or upgrade equipment or offer more health care jobs. It hurts not only your care, but also your local community and the economy.”

Pennsylvania physicians and PAMED agree that a good first step toward improving the state’s lawsuit climate would be the passage of apology legislation.

House Bill 495, which awaits consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee, would allow physicians and patients to have a full and open conversation after an adverse outcome without fear that anything said by the physician could be used against them in a medical liability lawsuit.

Dr. Heine also urged the legislature to extend the venue shopping reform, adopted in 2002 for medical lawsuits, to businesses.

“The standard should be, ‘Where is the right place to file a lawsuit,’ not ‘where might I win the biggest award,’” said Dr. Heine. “Getting rid of venue shopping in medical lawsuits was a positive step, and PAMED believes the same rule should apply to lawsuits against businesses.”

A 2011 study conducted by NERA Economic Consulting for ILR found that Pennsylvania could save up to \$1.7 billion in tort costs and increase employment by as much as 1.53 percent if it were to improve its lawsuit environment.

Call to Action: Ask Your Representative to Help Preserve the Physician’s Role as Medical Team Leader and Update State Hospital Regs

Your voice is needed now to urge your representative to vote YES on a bill to update the state’s 30-year-old hospital licensing regulations and allow physicians to continue to lead team-based care for patients in acute care hospitals.

House Bill 1570 would modernize the state’s hospital licensing process by allowing national accreditation to entitle hospitals to a Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) license, exempting them from duplicative routine DOH inspections. It also would preserve physician membership and leadership on hospital medical staffs, so that physicians keep their critical role in advocating for patients in acute care facilities.

Please take advantage of the great opportunity you have this summer to influence your representative while they’re close to home. A personal visit or phone call is best, but you can also send an email asking for their support through PAMED’s Grassroots Advocacy Center.

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

Ask them to vote YES on HB 1570 and on the amendment to be offered by Rep. Bryan Cutler, while opposing all other amendments.

Rep. Cutler proposes a common sense amendment that would retain the current process that permits hospitals to apply for exceptions to the provision limiting medical staff membership to physicians, dentist, and podiatrists. This is a process that has worked well for Pennsylvania hospitals for many years.

After the House votes on HB 1570 the Senate is anticipated to consider the bill. The precise message to the Senate will depend on the House's action. Physicians should, however, speak now with senators about the issue's importance.

Read more and print out talking points to help you when you meet with your legislators.

After six months of negotiations, PAMED, the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), and DOH fully support HB 1570 in its current form, with the addition of the Cutler amendment.

Congress Needs to Act to Prevent Medicare Cuts and Protect Access to Care

Unless Congress takes action, physicians are faced with approximately 29 percent in Medicare payment cuts come January, threatening access to care for Medicare patients nationwide, including 2.2 million in Pennsylvania alone.

These cuts, combined with potential penalties physicians already face for non-participation in several Medicare programs, would be devastating to physicians' practices and the nation's Medicare population. Take action now and tell Congress that these cuts cannot be allowed to occur.

On Sept. 12, 2012, the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED), along with 124 other state, national, and specialty societies, sent letters to the U.S. House and U.S. Senate urging Congress to take action now to prevent these cuts.

"The combination of a sequestration cut (2 percent) and looming Medicare SGR payment cut (approximately 27 percent) would not only impede improvements to our health care system, it could lead to serious access to care issues for Medicare patients as well as employment reductions in medical practices," said the physician groups in the letter.

"We strongly urge Congress to work diligently during the fall to reach a bi-partisan agreement to pass legislation nullifying the Medicare physician payment cuts called for under the Budget Control Act's sequestration provision and the SGR formula."

The organizations reaffirmed their commitment to work with Congress on the shared goal of Medicare delivery and payment reform to promote high-quality, high-value, and better coordinated patient care.

Leaving things the way they are is not a viable option, the groups told Congress.

"Congress has a responsibility to ensure that sufficient funding is available to sustain adequate payment for medical services provided to our nation's seniors and disabled populations under the Medicare program. The status quo is unsustainable and will do considerable harm to the Medicare program as well as the broader health care delivery system."

PAMED and the American Medical Association continue to strongly advocate for permanent SGR repeal rather than the short-term patches that have been used over the past decade to avert these cuts.

Lehigh County Medical Society Welcomes the following New Members

Matias Elijevich, MD (EM)
2872 Suncrest Dr., Allentown, PA 18104;

Preeti Satyanarayana, M.D. (FM)
Sacred Heart Hospital, Family Practice Center,
450 Chew St., Allentown, PA 18102;

Ali Shah, MD (PM) – Good Shepherd Plaza,
850 S. 5th St., Allentown, PA 18103.



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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.

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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