

Philadelphia Medicine



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Highlights of 2006 PMS House of Delegates [HOD] meeting

Some of the key accepted measures that could influence policy in the coming year are:

- To convene a meeting of stakeholders to develop a plan to help employers improve the health and wellbeing of their employees.

The Society's long-term campaign for medical liability reform continues to include traditional players such as medical specialties, physician groups, and legislators but also extends from health systems to physician organizations and from public citizen groups to insurers. Continued Mcare abatement and retirement of the Mcare Fund are two key issues.

- To put into action a "Statement of Principles for Cultural Competency" and continue efforts to diversify the medical profession and reduce minority healthcare disparities.
- To ensure that physicians who are

seeking not to participate in insurance plans receive meaningful, objective information to help them with this decision.

- To encourage insurance companies to reimburse physicians for services related to the diagnoses of tobacco abuse and obesity.
- To de-link medical liability insurance from physician licensure.
- To persuade the Pennsylvania legislature to increase access to care for adults and children by finding creative ways to encourage physicians' participation in the care of Medical Assistance, uninsured, and indigent patients.

Major collaborative initiatives were discussed in areas such as patient safety and access to care.

The Society is currently investigating a variety of activities to improve access to healthcare and reshape the healthcare delivery and financing systems:

- Patient safety—Society members are working on initiatives to improve physician education, raise awareness of the dangers of antibiotic resistance,

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John A. Cacciamani, MD, Lawrence Robinson, MD, and Enrique Hernandez, MD, PCMS delegates at the PMS annual meeting

PCMS NEWS

PCMS winners at PMS HOD

Stephen L. Schwartz, MD, and **Anthony Padula, MD,** were re-elected as Delegates to the AMA. **Shailendra Vaidya, MD,** was elected as AMA Alternate Delegate.

Joyann A. Kroser, MD, was elected chair of the PCMS Caucus to PMS. **Enrique Hernandez, MD,** was elected vice-chair of the PCMS Caucus to PMS.

PCMS presides over public health workshop

The Philadelphia County Medical Society Block Captain Health Care Advisory Council Coordinators presented a workshop about the Block Captain Program to the Pennsylvania Public Health Association during its annual conference in Harrisburg.

The PCMS team, led by **Herbert Kean, MD,** presided over the 90-minute presentation which focused on the history of the program; how to develop partnerships and promote collaborations with the Block Captain leaders and how the PCMS Block Captain Program became such a success with the Philadelphia community.

The health promotion specialists and public health educators in attendance learned from the PCMS team how to utilize community resources and how our community of Block Captains helps us to educate neighbors about various healthcare issues and promotes access to quality healthcare.

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Editorial

Store-based clinics could affect quality and continuity of care

By Dell R. Burkey, MD

One of the hottest trends in healthcare is the for-profit store-based clinic, staffed by nurse practitioners and physician assistants. They are generally located in pharmacies, supermarkets, shopping malls and retail stores. Some experts estimate that there will be at least 2,000 such clinics by 2009. Clinics treat minor illnesses, such as colds and ear infections; perform screenings, such as for diabetes and blood pressure; and administer vaccines.



We support affordable and accessible medical care. However, we fear that store-based care may come at the expense of quality and continuity of care for the patient and a deterioration of the physician-patient relationship.

A review of the national trend indicates that the clinics may provide certain advantages for patients. They are usually open seven days a week. No appointment is necessary. Waiting time is minimal and patients are able to shop in the store before or after the visit. Cost is often less in the clinic than in a physician's office. Surveys show that the majority of patients believe that the clinics can provide fast and easy basic medical services.

We support affordable and accessible medical care. However, we fear that store-based care may come at the expense of quality and continuity of care for the patient and a deterioration of the physician-patient relationship.

The American Medical Association (AMA), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PMS) have issued similar guidelines that they believe are critical in order for patients to receive adequate quality, coordination and continuity of care.

These guidelines encourage patients to establish a relationship with a primary

care physician to ensure continuity of care. They advocate that clinics have a formal connection with physician practices in the local community and function as part of a team-based approach; have a well-defined list of services, consistent with state scope of practice laws; use standardized protocols derived from evidence-based practice guidelines; have a pre-arranged referral system to physician practices or other facilities for appropriate treatment if the patient's condition is beyond the scope of services provided; use electronic health records as a means of communicating patient information; inform patients in advance of the qualifications of those who are providing care; and establish appropriate sanitation and hygienic guidelines and facilities to insure the safety of patients.

Store-based clinics appear to be consistent with the long standing policy of organized medicine to support free market competition among all modes of healthcare delivery and financing, with the success of a system determined by the number of people who prefer it, not by government mandate.

They can also be consistent with policy regarding the appropriate use of allied health professionals within their scope of practice. Therefore, it appears wise at this time not to oppose such clinics, but to demand compliance with the guidelines developed by organized medicine.

We have posted on our website, www.philamedsoc.org, the guidelines developed by the AMA, the AAFP and PMS. We invite you to study them. We assure you that PCMS will monitor closely the evolution of these clinics. We welcome your thoughts and advice.

Dr. Burkey is President of PCMS.

Host your event at PCMS

Host your next party or conference/ seminar at PCMS headquarters. Ample free parking. Contact Louise Eder on 215-563-5343, ext. 107 to schedule an appointment.

Highlights of 2006 HOD, continued

respond to hospital acquired infections, and look at model programs to prevent the spread of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA).

- **Quality of care**—The Society collaborates with stakeholders in the legislative and regulatory arenas on a range of issues including telemedicine, smoking prevention, immunization, and end-of-life care. Some of the Society's statewide collaboratives include initiatives on overweight and obesity, patient-centered care, domestic violence, and family wellness.
- **Medical liability reform**—The Society's long-term campaign for medical liability reform continues to include traditional players such as medical specialties, physician groups, and legislators but also extends from health systems to physician organizations and from public citizen groups to insurers. Continued Mcare abatement and retirement of the Mcare Fund are two key issues.
- **Reimbursement and fair contracting**—The Society supports a number of legislative measures to level the playing field for physicians and improve the practice of medicine in collaboration with medical specialties and other stakeholders. These include Medicaid physician payment reform, certificate of need, licensing and scope of practice, and working with insurers on medical policy development.

Mark A. Piasio, MD, MBA, a DuBois-area orthopedic surgeon, was sworn in as the 157th president of the Society on October 21. Daniel J. Glunk, MD, an internist from Wil-

liamsport, was elected by his peers to serve as vice president for the upcoming year.

Participants saw several departures from tradition this year. The meeting, which was shortened from three days to two several years ago, was condensed further by trimming many formal presentations.

A CME session on "Reducing MRSA Transmission" was added, and opportunities for informal exchange of ideas with colleagues were expanded, including a HOD blog.

Mcare abatement passed for 2007

The 2007 Mcare abatement bill received final approval in the General Assembly on October 23 and Governor Rendell signed it on October 27, 2006.

Physicians who have not yet applied for the 2006 abatement should do so now to avoid the crush in January.

Physicians may now certify eligibility for abatement by completing an electronic online 2006 abatement applica-

Government panel adds vaccine for shingles for older adults

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices voted to recommend Merck & Co.'s new Zostavax vaccine for shingles in people over age 60.

The committee of doctors and immunization experts convenes three times a year to shape vaccination policy for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and its recommendations help determine both medical practice and insurance coverage policies.

Until now, the major vaccines recommended for older Americans have been to protect against flu and pneumonia.

tion. Physicians are no longer required to submit a signed hard copy application and certificate of retention if the applicable e-signature parts of the application are completed.

The 2007 Mcare assessment percentage is 23%, which is a drop from the 2006 assessment of 29%.

For more information visit the Mcare Fund website at www.mcare.state.pa.us.

New Electronic Preventive Services Selector tool unveiled

A new Electronic Preventive Services Selector (ePSS) tool for primary care clinicians to use when recommending preventive services for their patients was unveiled by the Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

The interactive tool—which can be viewed and is available for download from the AHRQ website at <http://www.ePSS.ahrq.gov>—is designed for use on a personal digital assistant or desktop computer to allow clinicians to access the latest recommendations from the AHRQ-sponsored US Preventive Services Task Force.

The ePSS is designed to serve as an aid to clinical decision-making at the point of care and contains 110 recommendations for specific populations covering 59 separate preventive services topics.

The 'real-time' search function

allows a clinician to input a patient's age, gender, and selected behavioral risk factors, such as whether or not they smoke, in the appropriate fields, while the software cross-references the patient characteristics entered with the applicable Task Force recommendations and generates a report specifically tailored for that patient.

The PCMS Website accepts typical classified ads. We also advertise upcoming events such as CME programs and seminars. Phone (215) 563-5343, Ext. 102 for more information.

PCMS people wanted!

Your colleagues would like to know what you're up to. Send news about academic or other appointments, achievements, awards, promotions, etc., to Philadelphia Medicine 2100 Spring Garden Street Philadelphia, PA 19130

pcms people

Francis E. Rosato, MD, died on October 18, 2006. Dr. Rosato was President of PCMS in 1983 and winner of the Strittmatter Award in 2000. He was chairman of surgery at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital from 1978 to 2005. He performed the region's first liver transplant.

Bernard A. Eskin, MS, MD, has published the 5th Edition of his popular textbook "The Menopause: Endocrinologic Basis and Management Options." It is published by Informa Healthcare, a British company and will be released in Europe and the US at the end of the year.

Dr. Eskin is Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Director of the Menopause-Geripause Center, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Adjunct Professor of Pharmacology at Drexel University College of Medicine. He is a former PCMS Board member and a current delegate to the Pennsylvania Medical Society.



Doris G. Bartuska, MD, PCMS Past President and delegate, greets Philadelphia medical students at the PMS annual meeting.



Carol A. Love, MD, and Rajendra Seth, MD, PCMS delegates at the PMS annual meeting



Dell R. Burkey, MD, President, welcomes Heather Ragozine to the PCMS Board representing the PCMS Medical Student Section.

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