



Election Day

By *Thomas Lee, MD*
WCMS Legislative Committee Chair
and
Joseph Tartaglia, MD
WCMS President



The Westchester County Medical Society hosted a Legislative Brunch on Sunday, September 26, 2010, at Knollwood Country Club in Elmsford. More than 50 physicians and guests had an opportunity to meet, question and discuss healthcare issues with one congressional candidate, one senator, three senate candidates, five assemblypersons and five assembly candidates. Unfortunately, not all Westchester legislators or their challengers were able to attend because of prior commitments.

The format was questions and answers from two moderators, Thomas Lee, MD, Chair of the Legislative Committee, and Andrew Kleinman, MD, Chair of the Socioeconomic Committee. After thanking the legislators and candidates for their efforts and willingness to come and speak to their physician constituents, the moderators took written questions from the audience. Dr. Kleinman set the tone by explaining that there is a physician health care crisis in New York State. He pointed out that there is a flight of physicians from New York State which according to a recent survey on "physician friendly states" published in *Physicians Practice* in September 2010 (www.physicianspractice.com), New York ranks as one of the least friendly states to practice medicine. The state does poorly in areas such as cost of living, state taxes, malpractice expense (only Florida is higher), and has one of the highest number of physicians per capita. Although we have a large number of graduate medical education programs, relatively few medical residents remain in the state. The average age of a New York State physician has risen to 53. High cost of living, taxes, high malpractice fees, and diminishing reimbursements from a few monopolistic insurance companies were some of the reasons given for the exodus of physicians from the state.

Candidates were educated and asked questions on various issues important to our physician membership, such as:

- implications and practical aspects of federal healthcare reform
- state tort reform effort and caps on non-economic damages
- physician practice environment
- economic contribution of physicians to Westchester and New York State
- the shortage of NY state practicing physicians
- non-assignment of healthcare benefit/payment

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333 Westchester Avenue
Suite LN-01
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(914) 967-9100 / FAX (914) 967-9232

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Mark Your Calendar

November 8, 2010
CME Meeting—5 pm

November 11, 2010
WCMS Board Meeting—6:30 pm

November 16, 2010
Membership Committee—6:00 pm

November 25-26, 2010
WCMS Office Closed—Thanksgiving Holiday

December 6, 2010
CME Meeting—5 pm

December 9, 2010
WCMS/WAM Holiday Party—6-9pm
Knollwood Country Club, Elmsford

**All meetings held at WCMS offices unless otherwise specified.*

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

We encourage our members to submit articles, letters to the editor, announcements, classified ads, members in the news, etc. for publication in the *Westchester Physician*.

The deadline for the November issue is October 31st.

Please email these to Peter Acker, MD, *Editor* at peterrba@aol.com and Lori Van Slyke, *Newsletter Coordinator* at lvanslyke@gmail.com

2011 Membership Dues

You should have now received your 2011 Dues Statement. Please remit your dues as soon as possible so that we can continue to work on your behalf.

THE STRENGTH OF THE WCMS COMES FROM THE SUPPORT OF ITS MEMBERSHIP!

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FROM THE EDITOR

Remembering Dr. Christine Fusillo

By Peter Acker, MD

Christine Fusillo-O'Boyle, a pediatric allergist who had practiced in Tarrytown for many years, died on September 26th surrounded by her husband Bob O'Boyle, and her three children Brian, Katie and Maureen, after a short illness. Christine and I go back a long way – she was a senior resident at NYU in pediatrics when I was an intern. We worked together on 8 North, the preadolescent and adolescent ward at Bellevue Hospital and I have vivid memories of sitting with her and the rest of the team in the small doctor's station talking in minute detail about the patients on the floor. She had an easy, almost languid air about her as she talked which belied her sharp intelligence. Having rounded with some pretty intense people above me in the hierarchy, it was a pleasure to discuss cases in a Socratic fashion, delving evermore deeply into the details and teaching points in the case and every idea and suggestion was treated seriously and considered. I do confess, however, to a certain impatience when we rounded at 2 AM and Christine would ponder each patient with the same degree of thoroughness as in the morning. I would stand trying to listen, while pining silently for my on-call room bed.



Dr. Fusillo-O'Boyle

She completed her residency and went on to do a fellowship in allergy/immunology while I continued my residency. Soon I found myself on 8 North again, now as a senior resident and found myself trying to run rounds in "Fusillo" fashion, giving full voice to each resident and med student as we pondered the patient in front of us. I ignored the exhausted intern who kept looking at his watch, though I'm sure I never uncovered half of what Christine had.

Three years later I had completed my own fellowship in Ambulatory Pediatrics at Bellevue and joined the group in Rye Brook where I now practice. I was delighted to find Christine practicing in the same building, having joined an allergist two years earlier. We would run into each other in the parking lot and have short discussions about patients in common. She at this point was married and had young kids, who she brought to my practice. One Sunday, I got a call from her. She was worried about Maureen, who was 2 or 3 at the time. She had developed pain in her legs and was having trouble walking. Christine, at my behest, brought Maureen over to the office. Now Christine was a mother and I could see the worry etched in her face. I examined Maureen. I tried to elicit reflexes, but could not. Then the thought entered my head – Guillain-Barre – could it be? Rare, but rare happens. And here I am with my senior resident. Careful not to over react, but good god man, you can't under react. I lifted Maureen and put her on the floor and asked her to get to her feet and she couldn't. I sent her to the medical center and Dr. Ron Jacobson confirmed the diagnosis with a spinal tap.

Christine moved her practice to Tarrytown. Over the years we saw each other from time to time. She was one of those people that I admired and liked and always said to myself, we should get together socially. It never happened and now she is gone. At her wake, I chatted with Bob, Brian, Katie and Maureen. Bob remembered the spinal tap – he had to hold her during it and said it took almost all his strength. Maureen remembered it too, but didn't seem to hold it against me. I talked with Christine's twin sister, who had Christine's quality of fixing her eyes on the person talking to her as if that person was the only person in the universe. We will all miss her. ♦

Election Day *(continued from page 1)*

Several important questions were posed to the candidates. Nan Hayworth, MD, candidate for Congress in NY District 19, was specifically asked about the various provisions of the healthcare reform bill. Dr. Hayworth voiced her opposition to "The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act", as well as many of its provisions, and vowed to push to repeal and replace the healthcare bill, if elected. All state-level candidates supported the WCMS/MSSNY position in strong support of physician collective negotiation with insurance companies (A-4301A-Canestrari and S-5204-A-Breslin) to level the playing field, in view of the tremendous insurance industry consolidation in Westchester in the past few years. All candidates and legislators present supported tort reform, though several (Assemblyman Pretlow, Mr. Kaplowitz, and Mr. Abinanti) expressed reservation about the cap on non-economic damages on the grounds of the political environment in Albany and "fairness" issue. Senator Oppenheimer, Mr. Cohen, Mr. McLaughlin, and Mr. Bock were strongly in favor of the hard cap on non-economic damages. Candidates, when asked, supported repealing the non-assignment clauses in insurance contracts.

MSSNY Legislative Scorecard

For more information on how your representatives stand on specific issues, visit the following link for the 2009-2010 MSSNY Scorecard at:

http://www.mssny.org/mssnycfm/mssnyeditor/File/2010/In_the_News/eNews/Oct/2009_2010LegislatorScoreCard.pdf

Westchester County Medical Society continues to work on the behalf of practicing physicians to advance their goals and objectives. We are committed to securing a fair environment for the physician to work for his or her patients unencumbered by outside agencies, insurance companies, or government. This event is simply one of the many that the Society sponsors to inform our politicians of issues important to physicians. We invite you to join us in our continuing efforts to make physician practices rewarding and possible in the future. You may not have the time or money to lobby Albany or Washington. If not, don't worry; just join the medical society and your membership dues will enable us to lobby on your behalf. Members should renew their membership and even more importantly, tell their non-member colleagues about our important work. *(continued on page 5)*



L-R: Assemblyman Gary Pretlow, NY District 87 and Noella Kleinman



L-R: Assemblyman Robert Castelli, NY District 89, Bonnie Litvack, MD, Michael Ramondelli, Candidate, NY District 93

Election Day *(continued from page 4)*

Legislative Brunch Invitees

All current legislators and candidates representing Westchester County were invited to attend the Brunch; however, some had prior commitments and were unable to join us. *Those marked with an * were able to attend.*

Congressional

Congressman Eliot Engel (D)	NY 17th District
Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D)	NY 18th District
Jim Russell (R) (candidate)	NY 18th District
Congressman John Hall (D)	NY 19th District
Nan Hayworth, MD (R) (candidate)*	NY 19th District

New York State Senate

Senator Jeffrey Klein (D)	Senate District 34
Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D)	Senate District 35
Liam McLaughlin (R) (candidate)*	Senate District 35
Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson (D)	Senate District 36
Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D)*	Senate District 37
Bob Cohen (R) (candidate)*	Senate District 37
Greg Ball (R) (candidate)	Senate District 40
Michael Kaplowitz (D) (candidate)*	Senate District 40

New York State Assembly

Assemblyman Gary Pretlow (D) *	Assembly District 87
Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (D) *	Assembly District 88
Rene Atayan (R) (candidate)*	Assembly District 88
Assemblyman Robert Castelli (R)*	Assembly District 89
Thomas Roach (D) (candidate)*	Assembly District 89
Assemblywoman Sandra Galef (D)*	Assembly District 90
Bill Gouldman (R) (candidate)	Assembly District 90
Assemblyman George Latimer (D)*	Assembly District 91
Thomas Bock (R) (candidate)*	Assembly District 92
Thomas Abinanti (D) (candidate)*	Assembly District 92
Michael Ramondelli (R) (candidate)*	Assembly District 93
Assemblyman Michael Spano (D)	Assembly District 93
Steve Katz (R) (candidate)	Assembly District 99
Brendan Tully (D) (candidate)	Assembly District 99
Jim Borkowski (R) (candidate)	Assembly District 99

COMMISSIONERS REPORT . . .

Reducing Air Pollution Through Diesel Retrofit

*Natasha Court, PE, Associate Engineer
Cheryl Archbald, MD, MPH, Acting Commissioner of Health*

One important way the Westchester County Department of Health works to protect the health of Westchester residents is by controlling and reducing air pollution. Air quality is adversely affected by air pollutants produced by motor vehicles and other sources. Recently, the Health Department has begun targeting diesel particulate emissions from on-road and off-road diesel vehicles.

Diesel engine exhaust is a complex mixture of gases, solid particulate matter, and liquid droplets. The primary pollutants emitted include particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons and volatile organic compounds.

From a public health perspective, diesel emissions are a concern since they are easily respirable, contain irritants and toxic components, and are ozone precursors. Exposure to diesel exhaust primarily affects the respiratory system. It worsens asthma, allergies, bronchitis, and lung function. Long term exposure has the potential to cause an increase in the risk of heart problems, premature death, and lung cancer.

Inhalable particle pollution can be grouped into two categories: coarse particles, with diameters from 2.5 to 10 microns, and fine particles with diameters less than 2.5 microns. Particles that are 10 microns in diameter or smaller pose a health risk since these particles once inhaled generally pass through the nose and throat and enter the lungs. Ninety percent of diesel exhaust emissions are comprised of particulate matter less than one micron in size. The respiratory system in humans can filter out large particles (greater than 10 microns) but the finer particles become trapped in the lungs and enter the blood stream.

Under the Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six principal pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. The six pollutants are carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, PM (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), ozone and sulfur dioxide. There are two types of NAAQ standards, primary and secondary. Primary standards set limits to protect public health, including the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards set limits to protect public welfare, including protection against decreased visibility, damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings.

The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 define non-attainment areas as geographic regions that have been designated as not meeting one or more of these standards. The EPA has formally designated Westchester County, which is part of the New York Metropolitan area, as a non-attainment area for PM_{2.5} and ozone.

To address this problem, Westchester County's On-road and Non-road Vehicles Emission Standards became effective on February 10, 2006. This law applies to all on-road and non-road diesel vehicles and equipment owned, leased or operated by, or on behalf of, Westchester County to perform County work. Contractors and subcontractors who enter into an agreement with Westchester County to perform construction work for the County must comply with this law. Common carriers, shipping companies, manufacturers and delivery companies are exempt from this law.

The law requires that vehicles and equipment use a cleaner burning Ultra Low Sulfur Fuel (ULSF) and be equipped with a Best Available Technology (BAT) air pollution control system. ULSF fuel has a sulfur content of not more than 15 parts per million and Westchester County Health Department has determined that diesel particulate filters (DPF) are presently the best technology available.

(continued on page 9)

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WCMS Public Health Corner

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)

The ACIP recommends that pregnant women and postpartum women receive the seasonal influenza vaccine even if they received the 2009 H1N1 or seasonal influenza vaccines last year. View the AMA's public health Web pages for a variety of flu vaccination resources. For further information, visit the link to the full recommendation at <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/public-health/vaccination-resources.shtml>

To access the CDC's 2010–11 Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), visit their website at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/>



“Adult Immunization: Highlights for 2010 and Beyond”

The Annual Rockland & Westchester Adult Immunization Coalition Meeting will be held at the Hilton Pearl River on October 22nd in Pearl River. The program is entitled “Adult Immunization: Highlights for 2010 and Beyond”.

To attend this meeting, please go to the registration link at the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) website at <http://www.nysacho.org/i4a/calendar/details.cfm?id=77>

Allen J. Dozor, MD to speak on “What's New in Pediatric Asthma”

The Hudson Valley Asthma Coalition and American Lung Association in New York invites you to attend its program entitled “What's New in Pediatric Asthma?” to be held on November 1, 2011 from 5-7pm at the Hilton Garden Inn, Newburgh, NY.

This program features Allen Dozor, MD, FCCP, FAAP, Director, Children's Environmental Health Center of the Hudson Valley; Chief, Pediatric Pulmonology, Allergy & Sleep Medicine, New York Medical College.

The cost to attend is “free”, however you must **RSVP by October 25th** by contacting Nancy Levine at the Hudson Valley Asthma Coalition at (914)347-2094, x 22 or nlevine@alany.org. You can also register on link by visiting their website at www.hudsonvalleyasthma.org.

Federal Health Care Reform in New York State Website

A “New” website has been created to provide information regarding health care reform in NYS. To visit this website go to <http://www.healthcarereform.ny.gov/>.

Individuals can also sign up to receive periodic updates by going to http://www.healthcarereform.ny.gov/implementation_updates/

COMMISSIONERS REPORT . . . *Reducing Air Pollution Through Diesel Retrofit*

(continued from page 6)

The intent of the law is to reduce particulate matter by at least 85 percent and achieve the greatest reduction in nitrogen oxides from diesel emissions. For those engines where DPF filters are not feasible, the law allows alternate control technologies. However, retrofitting diesel engines is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce diesel emissions.

The Department of Health has raised public awareness of the law through mailings to contractors and providing information on its website. The Department also provided awareness of the law through participation in an Environmental Retrofits Seminar sponsored by the Construction Industry Council, the General Contractors Association of NY and the Long Island Contractors Association. This seminar provided information on compliance with the law and similar regulations for the different regulatory agencies, to more than 300 representatives from the construction industry and retrofit vendors.

Westchester County Department of Health is authorized to enforce only those provisions in the law that concern contractors. This is accomplished by monitoring Westchester County construction contracts to determine if they meet the requirements of the law, reviewing retrofit technologies submitted by contractors for installation on diesel vehicles and providing technical assistance to contractors and vendors who are entering into contracts with Westchester County. The Department also inspects vehicles and equipment and affixes decals to those that meet the required standards and responds to complaints from the public related to the law. ♦

For more information, please contact Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000 or access www.westchestergov.com/health.



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ACADEMY 2010 GOLF OUTING & FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS!

Karen A. Gennaro, MD, President—Westchester Academy of Medicine



Blessed with the only sunny day of the week, over 40 golfers enjoyed the challenge of playing the beautiful Pelham Country Club golf course on September 29th at the "Inaugural Fall Westchester Academy of Medicine Golf Outing and Fundraiser."

In addition to the gorgeous weather, golfers enjoyed a wonderful brunch, a challenging layout, and full use of the Pelham Club facilities. After the golf, approximately 32 additional members and their guests enjoyed an evening of cocktails, dinner, golf prizes, raffle prizes and, of course, camaraderie. The Academy of Medicine wishes to thank all of its generous sponsors (listed below) for helping make this first event so enjoyable and successful. It is estimated that in excess of \$6,000 was raised to support the Academy's CME program, as well as its scholarship and educational activities. Not a bad start!

Thanks again to everyone who contributed to the outing's success and we look forward to seeing you next year!



Counterclockwise from left:

- Mike Gemei and Elaine Healy, MD showcasing her closest to the pin prize;
- Joseph Tartaglia, MD, Mary Ellen Pilkington, Michael Grasso, MD and Steve Malfitano;
- Karen Gennaro, MD, Dr. Tartaglia, and Al Tinger, MD
- Dr. Gennaro, Joel Greenspan, MD, Alan Greenbaum, MD, Rob Antonelle, MD, Dr. Tartaglia
- Dr. Ann Cea celebrating her prize for women's longest drive with Dr. Tartaglia



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Membership Committee Reflections

Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, MD, MPH, Membership Committee Chair

The first meeting of the Membership Committee on October 7, 2010 at the WCMS office was an effort to pool together the collective talents and opinions of many physicians. Each member gave of his or her personal and professional time to reflect on their own involvement with the Medical Society, their experiences with the Medical Society and why they remain a member. In summarizing their thoughts, there were three themes:



*First, by far and away was the desire to belong to a **PROFESSIONAL** organization.* There is no doubt that those individuals who experience medical school, endure residencies and fellowships, and face the challenges of practicing their profession, have a unique bond. This reason alone is probably the one reason I joined. It defines our professional selves. I would continue to state that this best defines what the Medical Society stands for and how it is perceived in public and political venues. It becomes a place for camaraderie, idea exchange and support. As was stated by one of the committee members, *"no one but another doctor understands what our lives have been like and what we experience on a day to day basis."* Whether it is a concern over a health issue, an educational breakthrough, or how one juggles personal and professional lives, only a doctor knows what another doctor deals with on a regular basis.

*The second significant reason was that of **socioeconomic support**.* Even before the health care insurance industry takeover of health care delivery, physicians sought advice and counsel from the Medical Society to help them run efficient and stable practices. There is an extensive and still ongoing benefit and support service for physicians that include insurance benefits, dictation services, staffing service, financial advice and, very importantly, legal support. Even now in the new world order, the Society is even more valuable in representing the **PHYSICIAN** in the new financial and political environment. We continue to work on new products to offer our members, including information on practice options. This is regardless of whether the physician is running their own business or is employed by a large group or hospital.

*Hence, the last and very important role for the medical society is to represent you at the **legislative and executive level**.* Every medical specialty and subspecialty has their lobbyists, but **NOTHING** speaks more forcibly than **ALL** physicians and surgeons speaking with one voice on those issues that we hold in common. **The government and insurance industry have achieved victories because they have learned to conquer and divide.** The Medical Society is your only pathway to a singular significant representation against others who have assumed regulatory and financial control. Even if you cannot meet with legislators and regulators, if you support the Society, there are many members who can and will represent you. Without the Medical Society, our voices are dissonant.

"Mark your Calendar", for the WCMS/WAM Holiday Party on December 9th. Everyone is welcome to join us! Bring your family, friends and, most importantly, we are asking each member to bring just one other physician non-member! Details regarding the Holiday Party will be sent shortly.

Look for future updates! Our next meeting is November 16th at 6pm at the Medical Society offices in White Plains. Please Join Us!♦

WCMS Membership Drive/Pool Party Draws a Nice Crowd!

The WCMS hosted its inaugural Membership Drive/Pool Party on Saturday, August 21st, at the home of Dr.'s Kira and Robert Ciardullo, who graciously offered their beautiful backyard and pool. Over 50 physicians, including several non-members, medical students and guests attended the party and enjoyed an afternoon of great food, swimming, collegiality and networking. Many Board members were present to greet the new and prospective members and welcome them to the Medical Society. The WCMS hopes to make this an annual event to kick off the Fall Membership drive and hopes to double or triple its attendance next year, especially with new or prospective members. Don't miss it next year!



Counterclockwise from left:

- William Walsh, MD, Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, MD, Nan Hayworth, MD, Pat Levy and Abe Levy, MD
- Brian Foy and Iris Schwartz
- Denise Oneill, WAM CME Director, Kevin Lynch, NY Services
- Mary Ann Liebert and Peter Liebert, MD
- Stephen Schwartz, MD, Bryan Green, MD, Thomas Khoury, MD, Iris Schwartz, William Walsh, MD
- Antonella Tartaglia, Julia Tartaglia, Christine Sapka, MD and Justin Stenerson, MD



A special "Thank You" to the Ciardullo's for their hospitality and to Kevin Lynch of NY Services, Inc. for helping to sponsor this event!

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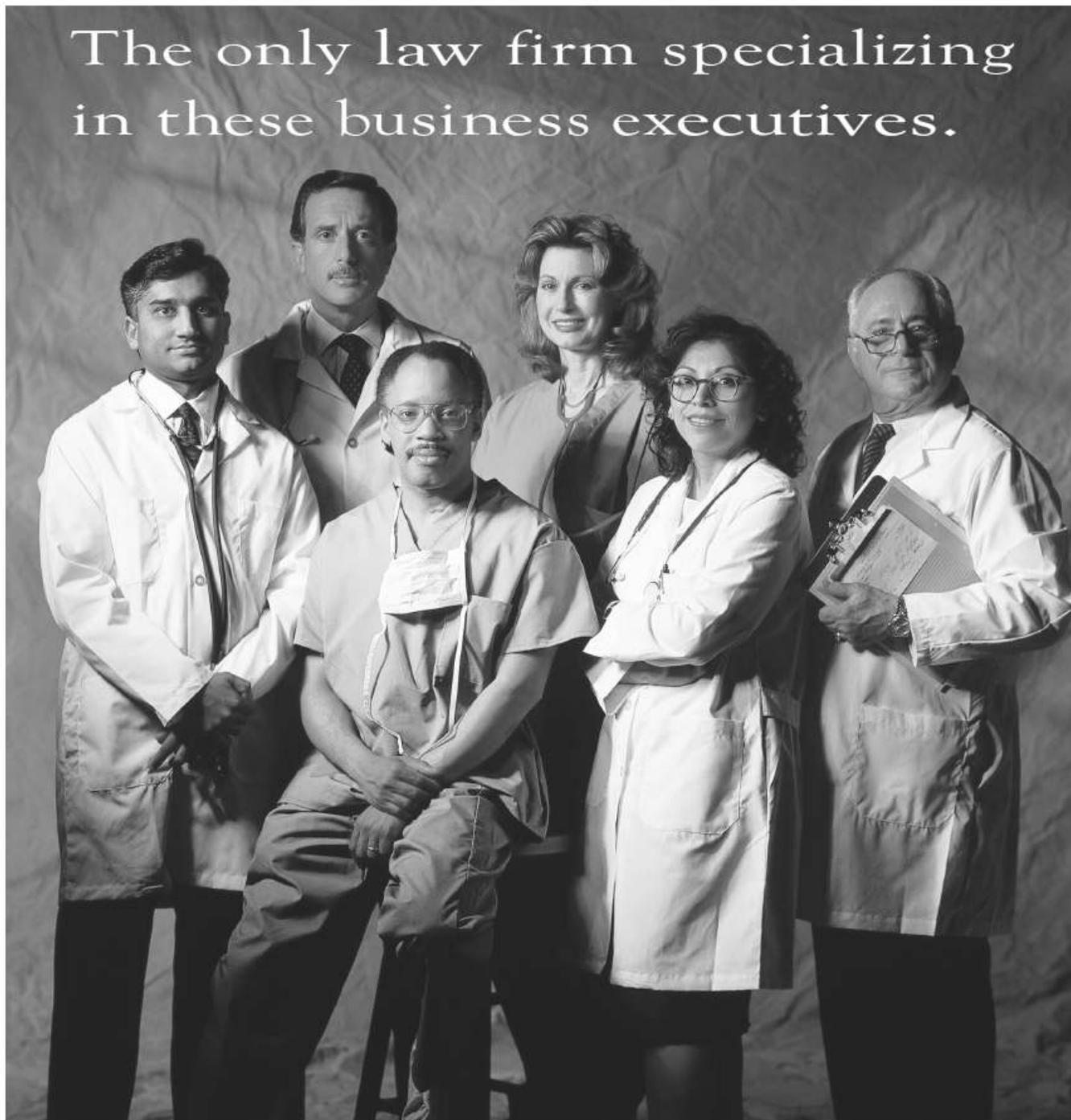
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Welcome to our New WAM/WCMS Members



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Keith Edwards, MD
Internal Medicine
Mount Vernon, NY

Richard Kay, MD
Internal Medicine
Hawthorne, NY

Orest Kozicky, MD
Internal Medicine
Yonkers, NY

Laure Lauriston, MD
Obstetrics & Gynecology
Scarsdale, NY

Lawrence Minowitz, MD
Anesthesiology
New Rochelle, NY

Jacqueline Mueller, MD
Ophthalmology
Harrison, NY

Mangala Narasimham, MD
Internal Medicine
Sleepy Hollow, NY

Mark Sandigursky, MD
Internal Medicine
Yonkers, NY

Zhenqing Wu, MD
Otolaryngology
Scarsdale, NY

Sara Miriam Zion, MD
Anesthesiology
Bronxville, NY

Will Your Documentation Be Ready for ICD-10-CM?

Effective October 1, 2013, ICD-9-CM was replaced with ICD-10-CM. Many physicians and providers of service are beginning to understand the impact this will have on their practice but many still do not understand the impact it will have on the way they document their patient encounters, services and operative reports. Along with ICD-10-CM comes a level of specificity not seen in ICD-9-CM. Additionally, one of the many of reasons for switching to ICD-10-CM is the provision of better data for designing payment systems.

When documenting your encounters remember to paint a picture of the encounter. Be as specific and as detailed as possible. Where applicable, include the following in your documentation:

- Document laterality
- Document if this is the first encounter, follow up encounter or sequel
- Document the healing stage of an illness or injury
- If an injury or accident document
- Specific information about the injury/accident, type, extent, specific location, etc
- How the accident/injury occurred
- Where the accident/injury occurred

There are many resources available to assist you during the transition. CMS has a wealth of information including the crosswalks from ICD-9-CM to ICD-10-CM and also in reverse from ICD-10-CM to ICD-9-CM. You can visit the website at: <http://www.cms.gov/ICD10/>

To learn more details about the ICD-10-CM Coding system, mappings, and guidelines you can go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd.htm>

*For more information, call one of MSSNY's approved vendors,
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From MSSNY ENews

Workers' Compensation Board Approved New Fee Schedule

Doctors who treat Workers' Compensation patients will see some important, positive changes implemented soon, including increases in reimbursement rates and treatment guidelines that authorize most testing and treatments without an insurer's prior approval. The Workers' Compensation Board's new fee schedule includes an across-the-board **30% increase** to the Evaluation and Management services codes, effective December 1, 2010. Over the next twelve months, the Board will also conduct a comprehensive review and revision of the physician fee schedule, as well as other health care provider fee schedules. The NYS Workers' Compensation Medical Treatment Guidelines will become the mandatory standard of care for the mid and low back, neck, shoulder, and knee, **effective for dates of service on or after December 1, 2010**. These four body parts were chosen because they represent the most frequent claims and the highest medical costs.

The Medical Treatment Guidelines will:

- *Establish a standard of medical care for injured workers,*
- *Expedite quality care for injured workers,*
- *Improve the medical outcomes for injured workers,*
- *Speed return to work by injured workers whenever possible,*
- *Reduce disputes between payers and medical providers over treatment issues,*
- *Increase timely payments to medical providers, and*
- *Reduce overall system costs.*

The Medical Treatment Guidelines are mandatory for all work-related injuries or illnesses to these four body parts experienced by employees in New York State. **With few exceptions, all treatment in accordance with the Guidelines is pre-authorized, so providers will no longer have to obtain prior approval if their treatment conforms to the Guidelines. The regulations require that insurers pay providers for services rendered in accordance with the Guidelines.** Treatment that is outside the Guidelines will not be paid unless a variance is approved by the insurer or the Board. It is essential for medical providers and their staff to become familiar with the Guidelines and the new procedures and forms required to implement the Guidelines. The Board is collaborating with stakeholder groups and provider associations to offer a comprehensive training program. All system participants are encouraged to take the available training to ensure a smooth transition into the new Medical Treatment Guideline process. ***Free Web-based, Legal, CME, and CCE Training.*** A major component of the training program is free web-based training. The courses are available on the Board's website, at <http://www.wcb.state.ny.us/content/main/hcpp/MedicalTreatmentGuidelines/MTGOverview.jsp>. There are several programs available, each designed for different audiences. The medical provider program is accredited for CME credits. There are also courses designed for medical providers' staffs, and other non-medical persons. The topics covered include: Medical Treatment Guidelines General Principles, Mid and Low Back Guidelines, Neck Guidelines, Shoulder Guidelines, Knee Guidelines, and Forms and Processes. ♦

Questions and Additional Information

Please contact the Board's Bureau of Health Management at (800) 781-2362 if you have any questions. Additional information on the Guidelines may also be found on the Board's website under Board Announcements at www.wcb.state.ny.us



September and October WCMS Board Highlights

Brian Foy, WCMS Executive Director



At its meeting on September 16, 2010 at WCMS Headquarters, the Board...

- Heard a presentation from a representative of **NCS Plus, Inc.**, an accounts receivable management firm serving more than 35,000 businesses, health care practices and educational institutions. NCS Plus offers a tiered, fixed fee collection system that increases recovery rate, lowers collection costs and improves cash flow. NCS Plus is seeking a partnership with WCMS. The Board approved, in concept, a partnership with NCS Plus pending legal review of the proposed contract, including clarification of fees and benefits to members.
- Heard from Joseph Tartaglia, MD, President, who updated the Board on various Medical Society/Academy activities held this summer, including a New Member Pool Party, meetings to explore partnerships with a Westchester-based IPA and a company specializing in transitioning physician practices to concierge medical practices. A further report will be given in October. In consideration of other organizations that also offer concierge medical practice services, the Board asked that these companies also be contacted and that consideration be given to holding an informational program open to all members on this topic.

Dr. Tartaglia announced and the Board welcomed: Stephen Jesmajian, MD, Co-Chair of the WCMS Ethics Committee; Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, MD, Chair of the Membership Committee; and Peter Acker, MD (not present), Chair of the Communications Committee and current Editor of the Westchester Physician.

Dr. Tartaglia mentioned that a date and location need to be identified asap for the Annual WCMS/Academy Holiday Party. The Board asked that the date be in early December, if possible, and that this event remain free to all WCMS members and guests.

Lastly, Dr. Tartaglia encouraged all Board members to support the upcoming Academy Golf Outing/Fundraiser by either playing golf or coming to dinner. The Outing will be on Wednesday, September 29th at Pelham CC in Pelham Manor, NY.

- **Welcomed Cheryl Archbald, MD, MPH, Acting Commissioner, Westchester County Department of Health**, who reported on activities in the Health Department germane to practicing physicians. In addition to discussing adult vaccinations, influenza shots, a recent hepatitis A incident and bedbugs, Dr. Archbald commented on the recently enacted HIV law, which **requires** all primary care practitioners to offer an HIV test to patients ages 13-64. Copies of the law and regulations, along with guidance for physicians will be sent to the WCMS and are available to all physicians on the Health Department's web site at www.westchestergov.com/health. Click on "professionals" corner." She confirmed that her department must unfortunately cancel its monthly newsletter contribution due to cutbacks in personnel; however, she was receptive to the idea of providing information to the WCMS on a regular basis that can be published in the newsletter. Dr. Robert Lerner, Chair of the WCMS Public Health Committee, offered to serve as a clearinghouse for this information and will oversee the new "public health corner" in the *Westchester Physician*. **Dr. Archbald can be contacted by members at (914) 813-5024 or via email at caa9@westchestergov.com.**
- Heard from Stephen Schwartz, MD, Chair, WCMS Workers' Compensation Committee. Dr. Schwartz was very pleased to report that all physicians caring for patients under the NY State Workers' Compensation Program will see a 30% increase in their reimbursement fees for evaluation and management services effective December 1, 2010. He stated this accomplishment is the result of many years of tireless advocacy by MSSNY and others and is long overdue. He also mentioned that, thanks in large part to MSSNY, NYS Law now requires insurance companies to reimburse physicians for treating patients in the ER subsequently found to be driving under the influence of alcohol.

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September and October Board Highlights *(continued from page 17)*

The Board inquired as to the fees which the WCMS charges non-members for a one-time rating to care for patients in the Workers' Compensation program. The fee has been \$500 for many years and covers the costs and time associated with reviewing the applications. **After some discussion, the Board approved a motion to increase the non-member rating fee (members are not charged) to \$785.00, which is equal to the combined annual amount for WCMS/MSSNY dues, effective October 1, 2010.** The Board directed Mr. Foy to notify all neighboring county medical societies of this decision.

- **Approved the Report of the Committee on Membership/Member Credentials**, as presented by Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, MD, Chair. The report included five (5) new members: Nebil Aydin, MD, general surgery, Tarrytown; Richard Kay, MD, internal medicine, Hawthorne; Orest Kozicky, MD, internal medicine, Yonkers; Jacqueline Mueller, MD, ophthalmology, Harrison; and Mark Sandigursky, MD, internal medicine, Yonkers. Additionally, the Board approved two (2) new resident members, courtesy of MLMIC: Necla Kirtok, MD, Yonkers; and Mircea Mihu, MD, New Rochelle; and one member, Kayvan Keyhani, MD, who transferred in from Putnam County. The Board asked that a list of all new members and their contact information be circulated to Board members to allow for personal contact and welcome. *The Board also paused for a moment of silence to recognize the passing of two members: Albert Andresen, MD, a member since 1955; and Jay Winokur, MD; a member since 1966.*

Lastly, Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo was pleased to report that the recent membership drive at New York Medical College has resulted in 80 new medical student members of WCMS and MSSNY. She mentioned that Dr. Andrew Kleinman and herself had the opportunity to address the medical students on separate occasions about the importance of joining organized medicine and she thanked Marrison Friedman, MS II, NYMC, liaison to the WCMS Board, for all her efforts in increasing awareness of organized medicine on the NYMC campus.

Dr. Tartaglia reported that the new Membership Committee will be meeting on Thursday, October 7th and welcomes the input and participation of interested members. Contact either Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo or Brian Foy at the WCMS Office, (914) 967-9100.

- Heard from Thomas T. Lee, MD, Chair of the Legislative Committee, who reported on the WCMS Legislative Brunch scheduled to be held on Sunday, September 26th at Knollwood CC. **All Board members and spouses were strongly encouraged to attend at no charge and hear from legislators and candidates on issues important to physicians.**
- Heard from Ms. Friedman, who updated the Board on medical student activities ongoing at NYMC. She thanked the Board and WCMS for its continued support of medical students. After some discussion, the Board approved a motion to authorize the expenditure of monies, as approved by the President on a case by case basis, to support monthly educational and/or social events involving WCMS members and medical students, as requested by the medical students. The purpose of these events will be to increase collegiality among WCMS members and medical students to enhance the student experience as well as increase student participation in and awareness of organized medicine's activities.

*At its meeting on **October 5, 2010** at WCMS Headquarters, the Board...*

- Heard a presentation from representatives of HealthPro Staffing Resources. *Since 1986, HealthPro Staffing Resources has provided a full spectrum of recruiting and human resources support to medical and dental practices throughout the tri-state area. HealthPro prides itself on helping practices build and maintain happy, dedicated teams through temporary and permanent professional placement.* HealthPro and the WCMS have enjoyed a partnership for many years. **The Board thanked HealthPro for their continued support of the WCMS through advertising and event sponsorship. HealthPro can be reached at (914) 245-3200 or via their web site at www.healthprosearch.com. WCMS members will receive a 20% discount on services.**

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September and October Board Highlights *(continued from page 18)*

- Heard from Joseph Tartaglia, MD, President, who updated the Board on plans to meet with a Westchester IPA to discuss a possible collaborative relationship. He also updated the Board on further conversations with SpecialDocs, a company specializing in transitioning physician practices to concierge medical practices. **The Board approved a motion requesting that an informational presentation be arranged for the Board as soon as feasible, to be given by SpecialDocs, so the Board can learn more about their services.**
- On behalf of the Academy of Medicine, Dr. Tartaglia reported on the Golf Outing/Fundraiser which was held on September 29th at Pelham CC. By all measures, the Outing was a success. While bills still need to be paid and monies collected, the Academy hopes to net in excess of \$6,000 to support the CME program and scholarship activities. **The Board acknowledged and thanked Dr. Tartaglia for his tireless efforts and expressed appreciation to all the partners and other sponsors who contributed to the Outing.** The Board will ask the Academy to consider doing this again in 2011 and setting a date well in advance that, if possible, does not conflict with other medical or hospital events in the area.
- **Approved the Report of the Committee on Membership/Member Credentials**, as presented by Dr. Tartaglia (on behalf of Dr. Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, Chair). The report included six (6) new members: Keith Edwards, MD, Internal Medicine, Mount Vernon; Laure Lauriston, MD, OBGYN, Scarsdale; Lawrence Minowitz, MD, Anesthesiology, New Rochelle; Mangala Narisimham, MD, Internal Medicine, Sleepy Hollow; Zhenqing Wu, MD, Otolaryngology, Scarsdale; and Sara Miriam Zion, MD, Anesthesiology, Bronxville. Additionally, one member, Laura Greene Weigand, MD, transferred to another County (Dutchess). The Board asked that a list of all new members and their contact information be circulated to Board members to allow for personal contact and welcome. Dr. Tartaglia also reported that the Membership Committee will be meeting on Thursday, October 7th and welcomes the input and participation of interested members. Contact either Dr. Geraci-Ciardullo or Brian Foy at the WCMS Office, 914-967-9100.
- Heard from Thomas T. Lee, MD, Chair of the Legislative Committee, who reported on WCMS Legislative Brunch held on September 26th at Knollwood CC. Approximately 50 physicians and guests enjoyed a great brunch and were able to hear from 15 current state and federal legislators representing portions of Westchester County, along with their primary challengers. **A detailed report on the brunch is presented on the front page of this issue.** The Board asked that a link to a MSSNY-developed Legislator "scorecard" listing votes on issues important to medicine be included in the newsletter to further assist WCMS members as they prepare for the upcoming elections. **The Board thanked Dr. Lee and Dr. Andrew Kleinman, Co-Chair, for their outstanding work in organizing and moderating the brunch.**
- Heard from the WCMS Executive Director, Brian Foy, who reported that all county medical societies in New York City and the lower Hudson Valley were notified regarding the WCMS' decision to raise the fees associated with rating non-members for Workers' Compensation participation. The fees were increased to an amount equivalent to WCMS/MSSNY dues combined. Mr. Foy also discussed proposed dates for the Holiday Party. If Friday, December 10th is not feasible, the Board asked that proposals be gathered for Thursday, December 9th and that the membership be notified as soon as a date is confirmed.

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