

Massachusetts Chapter GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER

ACP
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*

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GOVERNOR'S CORNER



Goodbye & Hello

It has been a true pleasure and privilege to serve as your ACP Governor for these past four years, one of the most promising yet problematic periods for internal medicine in recent memory. The translation of basic science to patient care has been astonishing and empowering; the melt-down of the payment system has threatened the very existence of our primary care and specialty colleagues who subsist on Medicare's E&M codes. We Massachusetts internists are blessed with an extraordinary group of colleagues to join with as we attempt to heal what ails our health care system, both locally and nationally. Rather than complain and bemoan our fate, MA ACP has chosen to plunge head on into the fray. With a mission-focused, collaborative approach, we convened the partnership that has grown into one of the most ambitious electronic health record projects in the nation, the Massachusetts eHealth Collaborative. What started as an ambitious but vague MA ACP goal to improve care and patient safety in Massachusetts, metamorphosed into a formal collaboration of major health care stakeholders, and now stands poised to demonstrate and bring the benefits of community-wide interoperable electronic health records to several pioneering Massachusetts communities.

Our work is hardly done. Having electronic health records only provides the necessary infrastructure to improve practice. We need to attract and train the next generation of bright, committed internists who will serve as the personal physicians to an aging population in an increasingly complex health care system. A dysfunctional mechanism of physician payment and practice financing, one that values procedures over evaluation and management services, threatens the very existence of our primary care base and those medical specialties that depend exclusively on "cognitive" work.

We have developed a new model of payment for comprehensive care that offers comprehensive payment in return for desired outcomes. MA ACP has declared fundamental payment reform a top priority and charged me with putting together a working group that will work towards a collaborative demonstration project in Massachusetts of fundamental payment reform.

So as I leave you as Governor, please accept my deepest thanks for your support, friendship, and devotion to our beloved profession; I also look forward to working with you in the near future as we tackle payment reform. Perhaps we can do a bit more magic together.

Allan

COMMUNITY "DOC" ELECTED TO MA ACP GOVERNORSHIP

Waltham, June 1, 2006.

For the first time in decades, a community-based practicing internist will be assuming the governorship of Massachusetts ACP. **Barry Izenstein**, MD FACP of Springfield, an endocrinologist and 2004 MA ACP Internist of the Year, will assume the governorship this June. He succeeds **Allan Goroll**, MD FACP, who completed his 4-year term in April but stayed on until a new governor could be elected, when Governor-elect **Troy Brennan**, MD FACP, accepted the position of chief medical officer of Aetna Insurance Company in Hartford, Connecticut.

Dr. Izenstein has been a member of the MAACP Council for over 2 decades and served as chair of the chapter's nominating and fellowship committees during this period. His endocrinology practice is community-based and affiliated with Baystate Medical Center in Springfield. We all wish him success.

MASSACHUSETTS ACP COUNCIL VOTES TO PROCEED WITH PILOTING FUNDAMENTAL REFORM OF PAYMENT FOR PRIMARY CARE

Chatham, June 4, 2006. The MA ACP Council voted at its annual retreat to proceed with organizing a collaborative pilot project to demonstrate and evaluate the effects of comprehensive payment for comprehensive care. The vote came after a weekend of discussion and examination of the need for fundamental reform of payment for primary care both locally and nationally. The council was fortunate to have a number of invited experts contributing to the discussion, including **John Fallon**, MD FACP, Chief Medical Officer of Massachusetts Blue Cross/Blue Shield, **Charlotte Yeh**, MD, Regional Head of Medicare/Medicaid Services, **Stacey Sachs**, Senior Fellow, U.S. Senate Health Care Committee, **Robert Berenson**, MD, FACP, Senior Fellow, Urban Institute, and **Laurence Gardner**, MD, FACP, Chief of Medicine, University of Miami.

The Council reviewed the current state of rapid decline in numbers of young physicians choosing primary care and considered measures to reverse the ominous trend. A new model of comprehensive payment for comprehensive care (which could also pertain to specialists delivering comprehensive care) was presented for discussion, critique, and consideration as the basis for a payment reform demonstration project to be sponsored by MA ACP. The council voted to proceed with establishing a working committee that would enlist relevant partners (e.g., payers, purchasers, practicing internists, other primary care physicians, specialists, hospitals, Medicare, Medicaid) in the design and planning of a collaborative pilot project. The strategy to be employed for conducting the pilot initiative would emphasize partnership and collaboration, similar to that which proved successful in launching the landmark Massachusetts eHealth Collaborative (which also started with an ACP council retreat, just 3 years ago). The payment model will be available for review on the MA ACP website. Those interested in participating are welcome to contact MA ACP.

ASSOCIATE ACTIVITIES

BY RORY WEINER, M.D.

The 2005 - 2006 academic year represented another successful year for the Associate members of the Massachusetts Chapter of the ACP. The highlight was the Massachusetts scientific session in November 2005. The abstract competition saw a record number of submissions. Over 70 clinical and research posters were presented by Associate members. The participants were from residency programs throughout the Commonwealth.

The ever-popular Medical Jeopardy competition saw the team from the Massachusetts General Hospital successfully defend the state title. The senior resident team included **Eugene Rhee**, **Bobby Yeh** and **Rushdia Yusuf**, and they earned the right to participate in the national Doctor's Dilemma competition at the ACP Annual Session in Philadelphia in April. The MGH team finished second in the nation, the best ever performance by a Massachusetts team.

After 2 years of leading the MA ACP Council of Associates, **Rory Weiner** of Massachusetts General Hospital will be transitioning the leadership to **Jeremy Richards** of Boston Medical Center and **Mandy Krauthamer** of Massachusetts General Hospital.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

BY LAEL YONKER

The ACP Massachusetts Chapter student section had a very dynamic student group this year, led by co-leaders, **Lael Yonker**, 3rd year medical student at UMass, and **James Young**, 4th MD/PhD student at UMass. Student leaders from the four medical schools in the bay state met throughout the year to discuss ways to increase interest in internal medicine and provide students opportunities to explore the possibilities within internal medicine.

The ACP group at Tufts, headed by **Christopher Sales** and **Brian Lee**, was very active: they organized a Residency Panel with other subspecialty groups, a "Pharma-Free Day" at which Former Editor in Chief of the NEJM, **Jerome Kassirer**, was the guest speaker, subspecialty talks and a panel discussion on sexual violence in the world and its medical consequences. ACP at Boston University, chaired by **Naveen Reddy**, also organized several subspecialty dinners and offered a "hands-on evening" where students learned basic procedures. Harvard's ACP group, led by **Dan Horton**, recruited many student members at an Activities Fair, held a discussion on internal medicine and sent students to Washington, DC for Leadership Day. ACP at UMass, under the leadership of **Annie Kruger**, **Alexandra Kazanovicz**, **Leah Burnett**, **Trinh Tran**, **Andrea Klayman** and **Michael Sylvia**, was very committed to increasing membership as well: they offered an "Introduction to Internal Medicine" meeting, numerous subspecialty talks, a panel for 2nd years discussing ways to excel during the 3rd year Medicine Clerkship, and were also able to send a representative to Leadership Day in DC.

The upcoming 2006-2007 year will be lead by **Lael Yonker** and **Annie Kruger**, both upcoming 4th years at UMass, who are enthusiastically coordinating events amongst the schools, hopeful for another successful year for the MA ACP student section.

LEADERSHIP DAY 2006

BY CHRISTOPHER SANDERS, MD, FACP

May 16th and 17th saw another committed contingent of the Massachusetts Chapter of the ACP attending Leadership Day on Capitol Hill. Present were **Allan Goroll**, MAACP Governor, **Jeremy Abramson**, **Harriet Bering**, **Robert Jandl**, **Robert Lebow**, **Christopher Sanders**, **Valerie Pronio-Stelluto** and students **Annie Kruger**, **Elizabeth Kwo** and **Maya Babu**, as well as Associate **Lydia Siegel**. Leadership Day is in its 11th year and a number of our Chapter members are now 5+ year veterans.

Tuesday morning workshops on advocacy and media training were held for new participants. The meeting formally began at 12:45pm with opening remarks from ACP president, **Lynne M. Kirk**, and Board of Governors Chair, and former Governor of the Rhode Island Chapter, **Yul Ejnes**. **Bob Doherty**, Senior Vice President, Governmental Affairs and Public Policy, described the current milieu in "*Achieving Reform of a Dysfunctional Health Care System*". **Leslie Norwalk**, Deputy Administrator for CMS, spoke on the recently implemented Medicare Part D drug benefit. This was followed by a Key Health Committee Panel discussion. The Awards Dinner at the Wyndham, Washington D.C. Hotel featured keynote speaker **Stuart Rothenberg**, Editor and Publisher of *The Rothenberg Report* and Columnist for *Roll Call*. His pithy commentary on the looming congressional and presidential races provided a rare insider's view of how things are shaping up on the Hill. Key Contact awards were presented.

The following morning attendees were early up on the Hill for breakfast and to review their scheduled appointments with members of Congress. Before setting out on a full day of lobbying, ACP delegates heard Representative **Nancy Johnson** (R-CT) discuss the role of the Medical Home for the elderly and chronic ill. She is supporting a Medicare demonstration project on the value of such a program. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) talked to attendees about the importance of citizen initiatives in developing recommendations to make "health care work for all Americans." And Representative Kenny Hulshof (R-MO) discussed the challenges facing Congress in fashioning a solution to the sustainable growth rate.

The Massachusetts Chapter's first meeting was with **Stacey Sachs**, Senior Health Policy Fellow to Senator **Edward Kennedy**. Stacey has a longstanding, productive relationship with our chapter. We then met with Senator **John Kerry's** staff, subsequently splitting up to meet with the staff of Representatives **John Olver** and **Richard Neal**. We reconvened for an enthusiastic discussion with Representative **Stephen Lynch**, followed by a brisk walk-and-talk tour of the Capitol with Representative **James McGovern**.

The message conveyed to Congress was primarily that of the impending collapse of primary care internal medicine, fueled by powerful financial disincentives to the goals of general internists - managing complex, chronic medical conditions faced by tens of millions of Americans. Each member of our delegation - students, residents, junior and senior faculty, senior community practitioners - expressed their unique perspectives, weaving these views into a single, powerful argument for total overhaul of the reimbursement system.

Leadership Day attendance has been an annual highlight of ACP Massachusetts Chapter membership. It remains an incredibly rich, rewarding experience that requires vision, commitment and stamina, much like the practice of internal medicine. Beyond cementing friendships and creating fond memories, it will continue to be a forge for very real projects that benefit internists and patients in the Commonwealth and the nation.



MA ACP at Leadership Day 2006

From left to right: **Elizabeth Kwo**; **Jeremy Abramson**, MD; **Valerie Pronio-Stelluto**, MD; **Allan Goroll**, MD, FACP; **Christopher Sanders**, MD, FACP; **Robert Jandl**, MD; **Lydia Siegel**, MD; **Annie Kruger**; **Maya Babu**