

In This Issue

Governor's Corner1
 Chapter Resolution.....2
 2009 Chapter Meeting2
 Combined Chapter
 Regional Meeting2
 On Being a Doctor.....2
 Scholarship Winner2
 Leadership Day.....2
 Welcome New Members
 and Fellows!2
 What is a Medical Home?.....3
 Advocacy Update3



Governor's Corner

Thanks to those who took the time to fill out the chapter survey that was distributed at our annual meeting in Kalispell. It was apparent in this survey that our membership appreciates the CME, advocacy at the national level, and the collegiality that the American College of Physicians provides to them. This survey was also helpful in providing useful suggestions on how our Montana Chapter can better serve its membership. It is my hope that many of these suggestions can be implemented in coming years.

Over the next several years, it is my goal to make the Montana Chapter more dynamic and relevant in the day to day practice of the Montana internist. Our Chapter has a loyal core of excellent internists, a long tradition of fostering collegiality, and presents to its members and outstanding scientific meeting each year. It is my hope that our Chapter will continue to have these favorable attributes, but in the near future, it is my hope that our membership can be served even better. Should our Chapter have more visibility at the State Legislative level, perhaps by working more closely with the AMA? Should our Chapter work at offering more CME at times of the year other than when our annual meeting is offered? How can our organization become more meaningful for Hospitalists, a rapidly growing group of internists? It is my hope that our Council and our general membership will help answer questions like these and thus make our organization more meaningful to the internists of Montana. Please feel free to email any suggestions in these regards to me at Jim.Yturri@GFCLinic.com.

Thanks to **Dr. Ann Bukacek** of Big Fork and **Carrie Reisig**, our Executive Director, for organizing our September meeting in Kalispell. An excellent set of topics and speakers was assembled, and many spouses and attendees got a taste of Latin Dance at the Awards Dinner. **Dr. Jay Larson** was presented the Montana Chapter Laureate Award for his tremendous efforts in advocacy at the national level. As I am sure most of you know, **Jay** has been appointed to **Senator Max Baucus'** Healthcare Advisory Council. The purpose of this council is to help **Senator Baucus** and his staff members understand our current dysfunctional payment system and make recommendations for reform. I am sure that Jay would welcome any suggestions in this regard at: JayLarson@mt.net. **Dr. Ron Loge, MACP** was also recognized for becoming the third Montana Chapter ACP Master, as well as for his stellar contributions to the practice of medicine at many levels.

CHAPTER RESOLUTION

I appreciated how our Chapter displayed increased interest in constructing new Resolutions at our fall meeting in Kalispell. Our Resolution regarding the encouragement of ACP to collaborate with the American Osteopathic Association on methods to improve the primary care work force will be presented to the Board of Governors in April 2009. I'll keep you updated on the progress of this Resolution.

2009 CHAPTER MEETING

Our 2009 Annual Meeting will be held at the **Crowne Plaza Hotel in Billings from September 24-26. Drs. Scott Sears and Deric Weiss** are on the Meeting Planning Committee this year. In an effort to welcome more of our Hospitalist colleagues, we plan to devote a specific block of this meeting to Hospitalist Medicine topics. More details to follow.

COMBINED CHAPTER REGIONAL MEETING

Our Montana Chapter has agreed to participate in the planning of a combined meeting of the Alaska, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota chapters. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for the fall of 2011 at Jackson Hole, Wyoming. This meeting would not be in place of our annual meeting, but an additional meeting option for 2011. It would present a great opportunity to network with a large number of internists from our region at a great location.

ON BEING A DOCTOR

As I am sure that many of you are aware, **Dr. Charles Wittnam** wrote a wonderful essay for the "On Being a Doctor" section of the September 16, 2008 edition of Annals of Internal Medicine. **Dr. Wittnam** eloquently describes a process that we have all regularly struggled with in our practices; learning to come to grips with the death of those patients with whom we have developed particularly close relationships. This is the first entry in "On Being A Doctor" that I recall having authorship by a Montana Chapter member. Kudos Dr. Wittnam!

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Dr. Sarah Faaborg recently received the 2008 Montana Chapter ACP Outstanding Montana WWAMI Medical Student Scholarship for \$1000. Sarah is currently doing her Internal Medicine Residency at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland, Oregon.

LEADERSHIP DAY

Leadership Day on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. will occur this year on May 19-20. Our Montana Chapter will be well represented by **Drs. Ron Loge** and **Eric Hughson**. This important activity enables the College to increase its presence on Capitol Hill and bring our issues of concern to U.S. lawmakers. If you have specific concerns which you feel are worthy of being conveyed to our legislators, please contact me at: Jim.Yturri@GFClinic.com.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND FELLOWS !

New Members:

Dr. Janelle Lynn Donovan, Missoula

Dr. Julian Gnecco, Billings

New Fellow:

Dr. Carl Hallenborg, Helena

WHAT IS A MEDICAL HOME ?

The Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) represents the College's vision of health care as it should be. It is an approach to providing comprehensive primary care to adults, youth, and children. The PCMH will broaden access to primary care, enhance care coordination, and lower health care costs. In the future, primary care physicians practicing in the highest level medical home will be doing the following:

- *Taking personal responsibility and accountability for the ongoing care of patients.
- *Being accessible to their patients on short notice.
- *Being able to conduct consultations through email and telephone.
- *Utilizing the latest health information technology and evidence-based approaches.
- *Conducting regular check-ups with patients to identify looming health crises.
- *Advising patients on preventive care.
- *Helping patients make healthy lifestyle decisions.
- *Coordinating care.

The key to the PCMH model is restructuring primary care REIMBURSEMENT. This would incentivize the development of such a model via the following methods:

- 1) Compensation for face-to-face consultations, as well as for those conducted via email or by telephone.
- 2) Monthly fees for services associated with coordination of care and monitoring of test results and procedures performed by other providers.
- 3) Implementation of a hybrid model of payment to include both: a) Fee for service based on hours of contact with patients; and b) Performance based incentives and compensation for achieving measurable and continuous patient health improvements. For more details on PCMH, visit www.pcpc.net.

ADVOCACY UPDATE

by Dr. Jay Larson, FACP

In November, 2008, the American College of Physicians released the white paper: "*How is a Shortage of Primary Care Physicians Affecting the Quality and Cost of Medical Care?*" The white paper references several studies which document how the quality of health care improves at lower cost when directed by primary care physicians. This paper can be viewed at:

http://www.acponline.org/advocacy/where_we_stand/policy/primary_shortage.pdf.

Also in November 2008, **Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont)** released his white paper "*Call to Action Healthcare Reform 2009*." This paper makes a case for healthcare reform by increasing access to affordable health coverage and reforming the health care delivery system. Even though the paper doesn't address the primary care crisis specifically, **Senator Baucus** and his healthcare staff understand the importance of salvaging primary care in order to keep health care costs down. **Senator Baucus'** paper can be viewed at:

<http://finance.senate.gov/healthreform2009/home.html>.

Bob Doherty, Senior Vice President of Governmental Affairs and Public Policy at the ACP has started a blog about the most provocative and intriguing health policy issues that he comes across in his daily work. You can participate in the blog at: <http://blogs.acponline.org/advocacy/>.

Senator Baucus has set up a Montana Healthcare Advisory Council consisting of 35 Montanans representing all parties concerned about healthcare reform. The Council will make recommendations to Senator Baucus and staff about health care reform. General internists **Jay Larson, MD, Tom Roberts, MD, William Reiter, MD, and Louise Swandberg, MD** will make sure that primary care internists will have a voice in the upcoming health care reform process. It is anticipated that major health care reform legislation will be introduced in early 2009.