



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

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS  
INTERNAL MEDICINE *Doctors for Adults*  
PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF INTERNAL MEDICINE  
1489 Baltimore PIKE, SUITE 230  
SPRINGFIELD, PA 19067  
Phone: 610.543.6880 • 800.846.7746  
Fax: 610.543.6806 • Email: [pcim.hq@verizon.net](mailto:pcim.hq@verizon.net)

January 2005

## UPDATE FROM PCIM

### Welcome to New Council Members

PCIM is pleased to announce new Council members for 2005. Representing the Southeastern Region: **Jerome Santoro, MD**, Chair of Medicine at Main Line Health System, Wynnewood; **David Gary Smith, MD**, Program Director of Internal Medicine Residency and Acting Chair of Medicine at Abington Memorial Hospital. Representing the Eastern Region: **Anthony Yanni, MD**, Chief, General Internal Medicine at Mercy Hospital, Scranton; **Mary O'Keefe, MD**, Program Director of Internal Medicine at Geisinger Medical Center, Danville. From the Western Region: **Alan Gradman, MD**, Chief, Division of Cardiovascular Diseases, Western PA Hospital, Pittsburgh; **Alejandro Gonzalez, MD**, Chief, Division of Nephrology and Endocrinology, Western PA Hospital, Pittsburgh. Council meetings are held quarterly and rotate among Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh.

### Residents' Events Set Records

Each of PCIM's three regions held residents' competitions last fall. Jeopardy tournaments and abstract poster competitions took place at Geisinger Medical Center, chaired by **Mary O'Keefe, MD**; Albert Einstein Medical Center, chaired by **Diane Dietzen, MD**; and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, chaired by **Stasia Miaskiewicz, MD**. A record nineteen different teams competed in Medical Jeopardy, also called Doctors' Dilemma, and more than 100 posters were presented for judging.

**Richard Sacks, MD**, coach of the AEMC team, coordinated Southeastern Regional Tournament. **Martin Evers, MD**, moderated the tournaments in both the Western and Eastern Regions and the state finals.

Editor's Note: This mailing is a periodic communication to PCIM's members. Comments and suggestions are welcome and should be sent to [pcim.hq@verizon.net](mailto:pcim.hq@verizon.net)

### Geisinger Medical Jeopardy Team Wins State Finals

Teams from Geisinger Medical Center, Albert Einstein Medical Center and The Western PA Hospital competed in the state finals at Penn State Hershey Medical Center in December. Geisinger came from behind with surprise victory, and will represent PCIM at the ACP Annual Session in San Francisco this April. Geisinger's team members are **Sanjay Sarin, MD**; **Chandra Pemmasani, MD**; **Abdulrasheed Asharaf, MD**; and **Dipan Desai, DO**.

### Awards Dinner Recognized Our Finest

Six awards were presented at the annual awards dinner held December 4 in Hershey. Two Laureate Awards were presented. The first recipient, **Paul Epstein, MD** is Deputy Editor of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, practices pulmonary medicine at Penn Medicine at Radnor, and is Governor of PCIM's Southeastern Region.

**Larry Merkle, MD**, Medical Director of the Helwig Diabetes Center at Lehigh Valley Hospital, also received the Laureate Award.

Clinical Practice Awards were presented to **Gregory Caputo, MD**, Professor of Medicine and Interim Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine at Penn State Hershey Medical Center; **Stephen Gluckman, MD**, Professor of Medicine and Chief, Infectious Diseases Clinical Services at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania; **Alejandro Gonzalez, MD**, Chief, Division of Endocrinology and Nephrology at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital.

The Herbert S. Waxman Voluntary Teaching Award was presented to **William "Tex" Landis, MD**, volunteer faculty member, Department of Internal Medicine at York Hospital and Internist with the Brockie Internal Medicine Consultants/Brockie Hospitalists.

Since my last newsletter, we have had two meetings in the Eastern Region. The first was in Scranton on October 20, organized by **Dr. John McGeehan**. We used a town meeting format with an update on ACP National Activities and also PCIM activities at the state level. I thought we had a very interesting and lively discussion after dinner that night. Our second meeting, held in November, was the Eastern Region Resident Poster Competition and Medical Jeopardy Tournament. This was held at Geisinger and was organized by **Dr. Mary O'Keefe** with **Dr. Martin Evers** running the Medical Jeopardy session. It was a terrific day with a large number of poster presentations and awards for the best studies and a lively jeopardy competition that was won by the team from Geisinger. This really is an excellent way to introduce residents to the College, emphasizing our support for research and academic excellence. Our next planned activity will be in May in the Lehigh Valley area.

The ACP has developed, with the American Board of Internal Medicine, a mechanism that makes it possible that one of the self-evaluation process (SEP) modules required for recertification can be done in one day using an audience response system and a few support faculty. I discussed this format with physicians who have participated in it at the national meeting and it has gotten excellent reviews for learning new developments that can be immediately applied to clinical practice and in a stimulating collegial atmosphere. For those who do not have to participate in the Maintenance of Certification process, these sessions are a valuable way to earn CME credits while being educated in a format that appeals to adult learners.

I want to recognize those individuals from the Eastern Region who received awards at the December Awards Banquet. **Dr. Larry Merkle** from Allentown received the Laureate Award, **Dr. Greg Caputo** from Hershey received the Clinical Practice Award, and **Dr. William Landis** from York received the Waxman Award. It really was a delight to be at that dinner and to recognize these outstanding physicians for their commitment to providing superior clinical expertise, service to their community and participation in medical education.

As you know, PCIM was active in maintaining the Mcare abatement for another year. PCIM has also been prodding the state to look at the Blues' reserves and surpluses to hopefully put some pressure on their requests for future rate hikes and to enforce the charitable missions of the Blues' plans. I am also pleased to report that we were able to get the Governor to veto Senate Bill 492 which was an effort to amend the existing law on advanced directives and durable power of attorney for health care. As proposed, the bill would have prevented families and even spouses from making decisions to provide comfort care only, to withdraw life support or withholding life support such as a respirator unless they had a formal written directive. We have committed to work with other health care organizations to work on drafting a new piece of legislation which will address some of the vagaries that exist in the present advance directive legislation.

The strength of ACP nationally and regionally is very much dependent on its membership and we are trying very hard to encourage all internists in the state of Pennsylvania to be members of the ACP and PCIM. It is the one voice of all of internal medicine and can be a very powerful force to achieve the highest quality health care in the state and represent the interests of general internists and medical subspecialists.

I am pleased to report that in the latest listing from the ACP, Pennsylvania had the largest number of new fellows in the country. To be selected as a fellow in the College is a distinct honor and I encourage you to consider advancement to FACP.

As we enter the dark of winter, I hope that your spirits are lightened by the great service you provide to the people of this region because of your knowledge, skills and continued commitment to excellent patient care.

**John P. Fitzgibbons, MD, FACP**  
Governor, Eastern Pennsylvania

## Our Advocate Reports

*Editor's Note: Beth Zampogna is the Capital Associates Client Manager for PCIM and PCIM Services. She can be reached at [Zampogna@capitlaassoc.com](mailto:Zampogna@capitlaassoc.com). Members may visit CA's website at [www.capitalassoc.com](http://www.capitalassoc.com). Her report follows.*

Capital Associates will continue to monitor the Harrisburg legislative world and work with PCIM's leadership on important matters such as medical malpractice reform, access to health care, patient safety initiatives, disease management programs, scope of practice issues, and reimbursements.

One recent challenge involves the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) after it issued a proposal that would allow chiropractors to perform physical examinations for first-time driver license applicants. CA and PCIM worked together to submit comments opposing such a change. Our arguments noted that chiropractors are not trained or educated to perform this extensive physical examination. By its own scope of service, the Chiropractic Practice Act indicates these examinations are outside the scope of practice. Finally, we noted that lack of trained professionals to provide this essential service fails to protect the public health and safety. CA will continue to monitor this situation.

The General Assembly will have a busy 23-month session, starting with various reorganizing activities. We will track the various leadership elections for the four caucuses, appointment of caucus chairs and committee chairs, and committee appointments for each legislator.

One of the more significant committee chair changes involves the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee. Senator Hal Mowery (Republican from Cumberland County) who served as Chair for a number of years before retiring in 2004 – was replaced by Senator Jake Corman. Many of you are familiar with Senator Corman (Republican from Centre County) because he advocated for caps on non-economic damages. PCIM and CA have already reached out to Senator Corman in his new role as Chairman.

In February, Governor Rendell will unveil his proposed 2005-2006 budget. It will be a very lean year for the Commonwealth. Budget Secretary Masch has signaled that several factors will impact the disbursement of public dollars, including nonrecurring revenue on the state and federal level, a sluggish economy and rising health care costs. The state budget is traditionally debated, negotiated and finally adopted on June 30.

However, this year's fiscal situation forebodes a difficult – and potentially prolonged – budget debate due to an estimated \$1.5 billion gap in the Medicaid budget.

In addition to these legislative activities, there will also be four special elections to replace three state Senators and one House member who resigned. Once these new legislators are elected, it is anticipated that some additional shuffling of committee memberships will occur. CA will keep PCIM apprised if any of those changes occur on strategic House or Senate committees.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **GRASSROOTS NETWORK TO EXPAND**

*Ralph Schmeltz, MD, chair of PCIM's Health and Public Policy Committee, and Capital Associates (CA) soon will announce new plans to expand a strengthened political grassroots network. Members' participation in local grassroots activities is vital to both patients and the profession. These activities do make a difference. If you want to participate, notify PCIM. Call toll-free 800 846-7746, email [pcim.hq@verizon.net](mailto:pcim.hq@verizon.net), or fax inquiries to 610 543-6806.*

### **Single-Day SEP Course on Recent Advances in Internal Medicine Will Be Offered by PCIM Saturday, May 21, 2005 Lehigh Valley Hospital, Allentown, PA**

**What is it:** PCIM is offering a single day SEP Course to help internists complete the self-evaluation process (SEP) medical knowledge module, required by the ABIM's recertification process. Using the automated audience response system, two expert faculty help the group work through 60 questions in the **GIM Module R 20, Recent Advances**.

**Special features:**

- Complete a self-evaluation module in one day.
- Earn CMEs in an innovative and entertaining environment.

**Fees:**

- **Pay only the ABIM fee (\$125.00)**
- **PCIM waives meal and speaker fees for early registrants**

**Watch you mail or call 800 846-7746, email [pcim.hq@verizon.net](mailto:pcim.hq@verizon.net), or fax inquiries to 610-543-6806.**

## **Congratulations!** **Presenting Our New Fellows**

**Anthony J. Bartkowiak, Jr.** - Hollidaysburg  
**James M. Battin** - Mechanicsburg  
**Roberto Bondoni** – New Castle  
**Nicola Bitetto** – Wyomissing  
**John B. Bulger** – Danville  
**Karl E. Bushman** – Pittsburgh  
**Steve T. Chen** – Lancaster  
**Kapil B. Chopra** - Pittsburgh  
**Eric J. Deppert** – Philadelphia  
**Elana R. Eisner** – Blue Bell  
**Lee W. Greenspon** – Wynnewood  
**Imtiaz Khurshid** - Chambersburg  
**Matthew J. Killion** – Philadelphia  
**Andrea L. Neimann** – Penn Valley  
**Minh Q. Nguyen** - Bethlehem  
**Allison Oler** - Wynnewood  
**Olusola A. Osundeko** – Dubois  
**James M. Perry** – Greenville  
**David J. Peters** – Camp Hill  
**Victor J. Powers** – Allentown  
**Mahadevappa M. Prasad** – Butler  
**Manzoor A. Rather** – Villanova  
**S. David Scott** – Erdenheim  
**Dorothy A. Slavin** – Glenside  
**James S. Studdiford III** – Wyndmoor  
**Wamiq S. Sultan** – Boothwyn  
**Julia M. Uffner** – Haverford  
**Ramesh Venkataraman** – Pittsburgh  
**Valerie D. Weber** – Danville  
**Thomas A. Young** – Camp Hill

Fellowship in the College is an honor. It is recognition from your colleagues of your accomplishments and achievements in the house of medicine. The most important considerations for Fellowship are excellence as a physician and contributions to medicine and the community in which the individual lives and practices.

A candidate for advancement must:

- Be certified in Internal Medicine.
- Have been a member of the ACP in good standing for the past two years.
- Have an active medical license in good standing.
- Have confined their professional activity to Internal Medicine, a subspecialty of Internal Medicine or Medicine-Pediatrics.
- Be proposed and seconded by two current Masters or Fellows.
- Be endorsed by the Chapter Governor.
- Have shown continuing scholarship and professional accomplishment.
- Document continuing professional activities including teaching, hospital committee work, community service, and participation in CME.

While Fellowship is an honor which is not granted lightly, we believe there are many excellent internists who do not realize that they qualify. Publications are a valuable indicator of excellence, but are not required for advancement to Fellowship. The process has been simplified and we are willing to work with you to facilitate advancement, through one of four **Pathways**, each emphasizing different professional activities.

The three Governors for PCIM want to make sure as many members who are eligible are advanced to the status of Fellow in the American College of Physicians (FACP). If you would like to be considered as a candidate for Fellowship, please contact your Governor or PCIM.

### **Regional Meetings Gain Popularity**

Informal dinner meetings took place last fall in PCIM's Eastern and Southeastern Region. These meetings were offered as a convenient and low-cost way for members to gain information and exchange ideas and concerns. The dinners also give members the opportunity to meet with PCIM Leadership. The Eastern Regional meeting was hosted by **John McGeehan, MD**, in Scranton. Governor **John Fitzgibbons, MD** provided an update on the ACP, followed by a State Legislative Update from **John Nikoloff**, PCIM's Government Affairs Advisor. The evening concluded with an open forum of comments, questions, and answers, moderated by Dr. McGeehan.

A regional dinner was held in King of Prussia for the Southeastern Region in September, hosted by **Chuck Cutler, MD**, and Governor **Paul Epstein, MD**, who offered an Update on the ACP's activities. This was followed by John Nikoloff's Advocacy Report and a lively exchange of ideas from the members.

The Western Region held its first Annual Educational Meeting in November. The meeting was held in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's 2004 Update in Internal Medicine. In addition to the associate events (described in another article), the meeting featured an ACP Update by Governor **Herb Diamond, MD**, and a dinner presentation by **Robert Doherty** of the ACP's Washington office entitled, "Understanding National Public Policy Issues in Health Care and the ACP's role." PCIM Government Affairs Advisor John Nikoloff spoke about State Public Policy Issues in Health Care.

Meetings are planned for spring of 2005 in Erie, Allentown and Philadelphia.

## **John Nikoloff Bids Farewell**

*Editor's Note: These remarks were offered by John Nikoloff following his announcement he has resigned from Capital Associates, Inc. the lobbying firm he started ten years ago.*

Only in growth, reform, and change, paradoxically enough, is true security to be found.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

For fifteen years, I've been privileged to work with the internists of Pennsylvania. That relationship began in 1989, when I was selected to serve as the executive director and lobbyist for the Pennsylvania Society of Internal Medicine, a 645-member organization which grew to more than 2,000 members by 1997. We worked with other internal medicine groups to form the Pennsylvania Coalition for Internal Medicine in 1995, two years before the national vote on the merger between the ASIM and the ACP in 1997. I was fortunate enough to work with both PSIM and the ACP governors in putting together the organization that is now PCIM, and I served as the executive director of that organization during its infancy. You now have 5,900 plus members, making PCIM the state's largest specialty medical organization, and second only to PMS in membership among physicians organizations.

Change is inevitable. Ten years ago, many internists were shaking their heads and trying to understand how an office computer could possibly be helpful. Today, many of you are wondering how Pay for Performance models and the Electronic Medical Record will help you and your patients.

I've accepted an offer to oversee national public relations and lobbying for a cutting edge biofuel corporation, and will have a key role in that company's strategic planning, marketing and investor relations. I have resigned from Capital Associates, but will continue to do everything I can to ensure that PCIM is poised to continue building on the foundation laid in the past several years. In this case, growth, change and reform are the keys to PCIM's security. You are positioned well to accomplish that task, with strong leadership, a solid strategic plan, and credibility in the public eye.

PCIM has come a long way in these six years – particularly in the arena of advocacy for its members. PCIM has had a seat “at the table” in legislative deliberations over important issues such as insurer dominance and contracting, medical malpractice, reimbursement issues, and various scope of practice issues relating to mid-level providers. And PCIM has successfully worked with the state to prevent problems for internists such as patient safety issues and our battles in the past two years to prevent collapsing the JUA rates which would have cost internists millions.

PCIM has had a direct impact on more than 40 separate bills before the General Assembly in just the past three years. On many issues important to primary care, an alliance formed by PCIM with the state's pediatricians and family physicians has successfully protected general internists this past year. It is now focused on improving reimbursements, with current attention on the state Medicaid program.

Today, PCIM has a position of leadership in Harrisburg on critical issues such as quality of care, access to care, patient safety, coverage for the uninsured, the Blues' reserves, and quality of care.

The keys to these successes and PCIM's position of leadership are a combination of lobbying, education of policy makers, grass roots involvement of PCIM members, and a continuing involvement in the political process. As your lobbyists, Capital Associates has been involved in monitoring legislation and regulations, getting sponsors, votes, and support for your public policy positions on the hill and in the administration.

PCIM has endorsed candidates for statewide offices in recent elections. Last year, for the first time, PCIM endorsed 20 different candidates in state House and Senate races. This process has resulted in increased visibility for PCIM as a participant in the legislative process. Several candidates have told us that they know PCIM's support was critical to their success.

Most importantly, grass roots involvement can be a new strength for PCIM. “Grass roots” refers to local, regular communications with elected officials. With 5,900 members, PCIM can be a major factor in state policy making. All it takes is members being willing to contact their elected officials and explain to them how issues affect patient care. We've already seen examples of this effectiveness through the VoterVOICE software. It has supplemented relationships some members have established with their elected officials. This year, to further PCIM advocacy goals, PCIM will to expand the database and recruit members to have at least one such key contact for each Congressman and Legislator who holds positions of importance. I would strongly urge you to personally volunteer, get involved and stay involved in this process.

Personal and organizational commitment will pay great dividends for your profession and ensure the quality care that your patients deserve. I am proud of what PCIM has accomplished during my association with the organization, and wish you all continuing growth as an organization, to ensure security of your profession and your patients' health for the future.

## **What PCIM does for its members 2003-2004 Activities**

### **Programs and services to inform and educate members:**

- Held regional grassroots meetings (Reading, suburban Philadelphia, Scranton, Pittsburgh) to air internists concerns, provide information on issues ranging from access to healthcare, reimbursement, med mal, Mcare abatement, and legislative priorities.
- Held statewide and regional Annual Meetings offering CME credits, Associates' Jeopardy and Poster Competitions, and Legislative Updates
- Launched the VoterVOICE Program, helping members make electronic contact with state and federal legislators on key issues. PCIM members sent 7,100 emails, faxes and letters in our initial year.

### **Advocacy on behalf of patients and members:**

- Took Internists' message to Harrisburg
  - Testified to General Assembly on the impact of declining access to care in Pennsylvania
  - Testified against expansion of pharmacists scope of practice
  - Aggressively documented the impact of Caps on medical liability premiums
  - Testified on Blues' surpluses, called for enforcement of social mission, higher reimbursements
  - Testified on the impact of proposed regulation of residency programs
- Took Internists' concerns to Insurers
  - Initiated meetings with Highmark to improve communications, discuss quality, reimbursement issues
  - Established meetings with Independence Blue Cross to consider quality and care issues
- Took Internists' concerns to the General Assembly, Governor's Office
  - Prevented collapsing of JUA rates, saving internists millions of dollars.
  - Prevented legislation to allow Advanced Practice Nurses and Physical Therapists independent practice and insurance payments
  - Obtained legislative support for constitutional amendment that allows caps on pain and suffering
  - Successfully included internists in Mcare abatement program and extension through 2005
  - Worked with Welfare Department to improve reimbursements under Medicaid fee for service programs
  - Crafted new Federal Medicare Act with adjustments to the reimbursement formula benefiting internists
  - Educated state and federal legislators and regulators on the impact of the IBC, BC-NEPA and Highmark market dominance
  - Continue to work with Congress for renewed antitrust legislation
  - Successfully urged reinstatement of funding in 2004-5 state budget for graduate medical education
- Studied 32 races and endorsed 20 candidates for state elective offices (16 were elected)

### **Supporting Your Chapter Through Chapter Dues**

Chapter dues are the backbone of PCIM's local activities and are vital to the success of our chapter. Chapter dues collected provide the majority of financial support for our activities here in Pennsylvania. Advocacy with state legislators and regulators through PCIM Services, educational meetings, mentoring programs for medical students, local Associates' research and Medical Jeopardy competitions, regional dinner meetings, and participation by chapter leaders in Leadership Day on Capitol Hill are just some of the activities supported by your chapter dues. Many of these activities are orchestrated by unpaid volunteer leaders from our chapter. Your chapter dues provide funding for new and existing chapter initiatives. When you receive your dues notice, please remember to include the chapter dues in your payment. You will be contributing to the success of many grass roots activities happening right here in Pennsylvania.

## How can we serve you better?"

### Tell us what is important to you.

Please complete this survey and FAX it back to PCIM at **610-543-6806**.

PCIM's Medical Services and Clinical Practices Committee asks for information. Our agenda for the next year depends on your answers.

The physicians on our committee have represented your needs in dealing with the large insurers. Now it is time to get your latest insight.

Question #1 -  
There are many **obstacles** preventing physicians from delivering the best care to patients. What is the biggest single obstacle for you?

---

---

Question #2 -  
Anti-trust regulations prevent us from discussing **professional fees**. But there are still ways to lobby for better reimbursement. In light of this, how important in your practice is the reimbursement issue from third party payers? (Please put an X by your choice.)

not important     moderately important  
 very important

Question #3:  
Would you like PCIM to make **reimbursement** from third party payers a high priority for the upcoming year?

YES     NO     UNCERTAIN  
If not, what then? \_\_\_\_\_

Question #4 -  
The PCIM sends a representative to meet with **Medicare** three times a year, mainly to lobby for approval/reimbursement for new procedures and treatments. To your practice, how important is Medicare reimbursement for new diagnostic or therapeutic procedures?

not important     moderately important  
 very important

Question #5 -  
The **Hospital Association of PA (HAP)** represents many hospital and healthcare systems across PA. Do you believe that a series of meetings with HAP could have significant impact on your practice?

YES     NO     UNCERTAIN

If YES to #5, please briefly explain:

---

---

Question #5 -  
Are you interested in serving on a **PCIM work group**? These commitments involve less than 10 hours of time a year. Most meetings are evening telephone conferences.

YES     NO     UNCERTAIN

If yes, what issue/area? \_\_\_\_\_

Please give us **some demographic information** about yourself:

1. **Age:**  20's     30's     40's     50's     60+

2. Practice type:  Self employed;  
 University employed;     Network employed;  
 Part-time;  Retired; Other \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. **Type of practice**

General Internal Medicine;  
 Sub-Specialty with some GIM;  
 Entirely Sub-Specialty;  
 Other (please explain \_\_\_\_\_)

**Please FAX the completed form to 610-543-6806**, or mail to PCIM, 1489 Baltimore Pike, Springfield, PA 19064

Thanks!

## **PCIM Membership is Growing!**

<u>Jan, 2005</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Fellows</u>	<u>Masters</u>	<u>Assoes.</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>All Members</u>
PA. Eastern	902	468	4	394	85	1,853
PA Southeast	924	608	19	441	414	2,406
PA Western	835	340	2	263	233	1,673
TOTALS	2,661	1,416	25	1,098	732	5,932

Remember to register for the ACP Annual Session at the San Francisco Marriott, April 14 - 16, 2004 ... and come to the PCIM reception, April 15 at 6 pm. at the host hotel.