As 2018 comes to a close, ACP would like to wish its members, partners and other industry professionals a safe and happy holiday season. As we reflect on the past year for the industry, we would like to provide the readers of the ACP E-Brief a look at the most accessed articles from the year. Our regular publication will resume Thursday, Jan. 3.

GA ACP Wishes you a wonderful Holiday Season with your Family & Friends!

Happy Holidays

INDUSTRY NEWS

Important year-end CMS deadlines approaching on Dec. 31
ACP
As 2018 comes to an end, physician practices should be aware of important quality reporting deadlines that all fall on Dec. 31. The Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) eligible clinicians and groups have until Dec. 31 to apply for the 2018 Promoting Interoperability (PI) Hardship or an Extreme and Uncontrollable Circumstances Exception. READ MORE
House Bill 44 primary care rate increase and additional provisions  
From May 4: Dear Providers: Beginning July 1, 2015, the Department implemented a series of rate increases for physicians with a primary specialty designation of family medicine, pediatric medicine or internal medicine as if the requirements of 42 C.F.R. § 447.00 remained in effect. Effective March 1, 2018, the Department of Community Health implemented additional provisions for those providers who previously attested, but failed to attest at all locations, moved to a new practice or closed an office. For questions, contact the DCH Provider Call Center at 1-800-766-4456. READ MORE

This hospital in Georgia is among nation's greatest  
From May 10: A new report says one hospital in Georgia is among the greatest in the nation. Becker’s Healthcare, which publishes business and legal information for the healthcare industry, released its annual "100 great hospitals in America" list recently. READ MORE

PRODUCT SHOWCASE
Envision Physician Services is seeking dedicated hospitalists to join our team at Cartersville Medical Center! Contact us today about this exciting opportunity.

Medicare penalties for patient injuries to hit Georgia hospitals hard  
From Jan. 25: About one-third of eligible Georgia hospitals will see a reduction in Medicare payments in 2018 because of a high rate of patient injuries. The 35 percent penalized in Georgia is a higher percentage than all but five other states, a Kaiser Health News report reveals. The Georgia hospitals penalized include some of the state’s biggest and best-known. READ MORE

Hospitals keep up swift pace of mergers, alliances  
March 1: The new year is bringing a rash of big hospital deals in Georgia, as health systems look to bulk up in size and add to their medical territory. The first transaction came a week ago, with the completion of Tennessee-based HCA’s acquisition of Memorial Health in Savannah. Still pending are three other major combinations. READ MORE

'Dashboard' spells out the health of 500 cities — including several in Georgia  
From June 14: How healthy is your city? A newly released “City Health Dashboard” tracks 36 measures affecting health for the 500 largest U.S. cities — those with populations of about 66,000 or more. In Georgia, 11 cities were measured on factors ranging from education and poverty to their rates of chronic diseases and their walkability. READ MORE

Making population health work for small practices
Medical Economics

**From Jan. 11:** The specialized IT applications required for population health management are generally too expensive and complex for small, independent practices. So some physicians may reject this approach, which can improve outcomes and prepare practices for value-based reimbursement. [READ MORE]

**Anthem amends ER policy but stands behind decision not to pay for avoidable emergency care**

Healthcare Finance

**From March 29:** Responding to numerous objections of its emergency room policy, Anthem has tweaked its decision not to cover ER visits if the medical condition is not an emergency. Providers have said it puts patients in harm’s way when they have to decide whether their conditions constitute an emergency. [READ MORE]

**New medical school breaks ground**

Georgia Trend Blog

**From May 31:** More healthcare is coming to South Georgia following the groundbreaking last month in Moultrie of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. When completed next year, PCOM South Georgia will host its first class of 55 students who are seeking a doctor of osteopathic medicine degree. DOs are trained like traditional medical doctors, and they also receive training in manipulating the musculoskeletal system to provide more holistic care to patients. [READ MORE]

**Update on ACP efforts toward a collaborative maintenance pathway with ABIM**

American College of Physicians

**From Aug. 2:** ACP has had intensive discussions with the American Board of Internal Medicine over the past several months about developing a Collaborative Maintenance Pathway. These discussions will continue and we hope to ultimately create a pathway that reflects a more continuous process of learning and evaluation and would be an alternative to what ABIM currently offers for maintenance of certification. The feedback we have received from members and many of you about working toward creating a new Collaborative Maintenance Pathway has been helpful and is appreciated. [READ MORE]