News from your North Carolina-ACP Chapter

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2017 Legislative Blog & the Internal Medicine White Coat Wednesday, May 17

The General Assembly is beginning to hit its stride with more bills being filed that might affect your practice. The North Carolina Medical Society (NCMS) tracks them all and keeps you updated on each bill’s progress – or demise – as well as how to engage with your legislator. You can find it all on the NCMS’ 2017 Legislative Session Blog, which is updated regularly.

To ensure that the interests of physicians and patients guide important policy decisions at the General Assembly, internists from across the state will gather in Raleigh on Wednesday, May 17, for the 2017 Internal Medicine White Coat Wednesday at the Legislature, presented by the NC-ACP and the NC Medical Society. There is no fee to participate in White Coat Wednesday. Lunch is provided and there is no maximum limit
on the number of participants. Residents and students are encouraged to participate as well. Visit our online registration site for complete event details.

**NC Chapter Honored with the ACP Evergreen Award**

The NC Chapter was honored at the recent IM 2017 meeting in San Diego with the ACP’s John Tooker Evergreen Award. The Chapter’s submission, “Education Innovations Grants Program”, was awarded for capturing the spirit of innovation that the John Tooker Evergreen Awards Program seeks to recognize.

In a letter announcing the award, the ACP noted, “The Chapters Subcommittee felt this was an outstanding initiative that demonstrates a powerful way that ACP chapters can be active at the local level. The Subcommittee applauds this outstanding initiative for its innovation, as it provides support for the academic works of early career physicians, residents, and students. The program also increases the chapter’s visibility, and is an excellent use of surplus chapter funds.”

Congratulations to the NC-ACP Governor’s Advisory Council, Education Committee and all Chapter leaders who were involved in developing this award-winning program!

**ACP Leadership Day 2017 on Capitol Hill, May 23-24**

Leadership Day is the College’s annual two-day advocacy event in Washington, DC that enables ACP members from across the country to bring our policy priorities to Congress and try to influence the legislative process on behalf of internal medicine. For registration, hotel and program information, visit the APC website. Registration ends May 1.

The agenda is available here. Key Policy Issues for Leadership Day 2017:

- Make improvements to the Affordable Care Act. Instead of taking coverage away from millions, stabilize the insurance market, cover more people, and protect Medicaid to ensure greater access to care.
- Reduce Administrative Burdens: Reduce the growing number of administrative burdens associated with EHR interoperability and usability, clinical documentation requirements, and prior authorization; adopt the framework proposed in ACP’s new policy paper to evaluate and propose solutions to unnecessary tasks imposed by the federal government and other external entities.
- Advance Chronic Care Management: Improve payment, eliminate cost-sharing, and reduce regulatory barriers to chronic care management.
- Reduce the Price of Prescription Drugs: Address the high cost of prescription drugs through greater pricing transparency and elimination of anti-competitive industry practices that keep lower
cost drugs off the market, and take into account the value of different drugs in achieving better outcomes. Reduce the backlog of generics awaiting FDA approval.

- Reform the Medical Liability System: Implement bipartisan, innovative reforms that will reduce the costs of medical liability insurance and defensive medicine; including safe harbors for following clinical guidelines and the piloting of health courts.
- Address the Opioid Use Epidemic: Reduce barriers to integrating behavioral health into primary care and addressing the related rising death toll from opioid use; fund the opioid prevention and treatment programs created by CARA.
- Support Sufficient Funding for Medical and Health Services Research, Primary Care Training Programs, and Graduate Medical Education (GME). Ensure necessary funding for NIH, AHRQ, and primary care training programs; reform GME to prioritize and ensure sufficient funding toward physician specialties facing shortages, including primary care internal medicine.

Limited funds may be available to provide assistance with Chapter members’ travel-related expenses. Please contact your NC-ACP staff Denna Suko, dsuko@ncmedsoc.org, or Alan Skipper, askipper@ncmedsoc.org, or call us at 919-833-3836 for more information.

ICYMI: This Avoided Administrative Nightmare in Medicaid Brought to You by the NCMS

Source: NC Medical Society

So far, 2017 has been a successful year for our Medicaid advocacy work. Last month, the Division of Medical Assistance (DMA) abandoned its plan to activate “rendering provider service location edits” in NCTracks, another burdensome administrative requirement affecting all physicians, PAs, and individual providers.

Teaming with the NC Medical Group Management Association (NCMGMA), the North Carolina Medical Society (NCMS) argued that complying with the edits would require countless hours of administrative work for medical practices statewide, risked another major disruption to the flow of claims and payments, and most importantly, offered absolutely no benefit to the Medicaid program, providers, or patients.

After several months of persistent work by NCMS and NCMGMA, DMA officials eventually agreed to scrap the edits. “This was an incredibly important win to keep Medicaid practices running smoothly. We are pleased and grateful that DMA listened to reason and agreed to drop this requirement,” said Leah Paraschiv, Chair of NCMGMA’s Medicaid Committee.
This comes quickly on the heels of the victorious effort to block the 1 percent rate cut, and serves as another example of how the NCMS works behind the scenes to protect your practice in Medicaid. We’ve got your back!

2017 Annual NCTracks Regional Seminars
Source: NCTracks

Are you a new provider or an existing provider with new staff who use NCTracks? Have you wanted to attend NCTracks training, but prefer taking it in person and can’t travel much? Would you like to meet our Regional Provider Relations Representatives?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we have good news. NCTracks will conduct four Regional NCTracks Seminars in the coming months. The purpose of these Regional NCTracks Seminars is to help educate new providers, educate new billing staff of existing providers, and serve as a refresher for current and experienced provider staff. Regional seminars allow for participation by more providers, particularly those who cannot travel to attend single Instructor-Led Training classes. They will also allow providers an opportunity to meet and become familiar with their Regional Provider Relations Representatives. It is a learning opportunity and a chance to network.

Each of the seminars runs from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and they are being offered on different dates and locations across the state. Providers can register for the seminar most convenient for them:

- Thursday, March 29 – 2610 Wycliff Rd. Raleigh, NC 27607
- Thursday, April 13 - 65 East Chatham St. Pittsboro, NC 27312
- Thursday, May 18 - 359 Ferrell Lane Halifax, NC
- Tuesday, June 6 - 1450 Fairchild Rd Winston-Salem, NC

For complete program details, visit the NCTracks website.

Save the date! February 23-24
2018 NC Chapter-ACP Annual Scientific Session
Grandover Resort & Conference Center, Greensboro, NC