Managing Change - Making It Work for Everyone

The past year or two brought significant changes for TRS members, and 2015 promises to continue the trend. Most of us become a bit uncomfortable when faced with the unknown, which is an inevitable part of change. Membership in professional societies such as the TRS can provide benefits that make change less intimidating. The TRS takes seriously its responsibility for helping members understand the changing environment in Radiology, Radiation Oncology, Medical Physics, and medicine as a whole, and strives to offer educational courses and other tools to help practices and physicians manage change. What does the TRS have to offer?

Change in our specialties began a number of years ago with increased scrutiny of healthcare costs by the federal government, leading to legislation that has negatively impacted reimbursement for diagnostic imaging, interventional procedures, and radiation oncology services. Although some changes were unavoidable, the TRS Legislative Committee and TRS members worked with the ACR to minimize the negative impact of legislation and reaffirm the importance of the work that we do in the eyes of the public and our legislators. The TRS actively worked to mitigate adverse outcomes from the recent state legislative session, particularly in the area of balanced billing. TRS Councilors, Alternate Councilors, and members met with our representatives and senators in Washington, DC during the 2015 ACR meeting to educate them about the importance of covering breast imaging for women age 50 and over as well as low dose CT lung cancer screening. We continue to advocate against attempts at expanding the Multiple Procedure Payment Reduction to the professional component of our charges. Despite our many successes, reimbursement for our services continues to decline, adversely affecting most of our practices. A new TRS Economic and Practice Management Committee has been formed to assess members’ needs in this area and to develop new programs to address such needs.

Declining reimbursement has had a chilling effect on the job market in our specialties. Combined with the tendency of senior radiologists to retire later than in the past, our trainees have experienced a stressful period of decreased job availability. The trend has been noticed by medical students, contributing to a noticeable drop in popularity of radiology as a choice of residency for the past 3 years. Fortunately, the pendulum is swinging. Residents are finding a more open job market this year and optimism is returning. The TRS offers a unique opportunity for radiology-related specialists and trainees to get to know practices around the state and increase their chances of finding the position that is right for them. The annual TRS meeting includes valuable sessions on economic and practice management issues that help Texas radiologists to thrive during tough economic times. The TRS Resident and Fellow section is more active than ever, working together to provide mutual support and education for our newest professional colleagues.

Continued on page 11
Camaraderie

- Old friends reconnect and new friends are made
- Attendees enjoyed meeting former classmates and faculty and discussing opportunities with potential future employers

Quality Speakers

- Out of state speakers Jonathan Berlin, David Brizel, Paul Chang, Bill Herrington, Barbara Monsees and Richard Wiggins get their Honorary Texan certificates signed by the Governor, along with their spurs on a plaque
- Great presentations from Texas faculty

Valuable CME

- Attendees had access to up to 20 hours of CME, much of which was made interactive with case presentations and the use of an audience response system
- Residents participated in a fun and competitive game of Medical Jeopardy
- Radiation Oncologists and Medical Physicists enjoyed a special separate program
- Congratulations to Sadia Choudhery from UT Southwestern who won the Audience Favorite Poster Award. All posters were well done and well received by attendees
Awards

The Awards dinner was truly a night to remember. Members gathered to honor and recognize their peers for their outstanding service to radiology.

- John L. Montgomery, MD, FACR received the 39th TRS Gold Medal
- Mary Ann “Happy” Mullican, MD, FACR received a Special Recognition Award for her 12 years as TRS Secretary
- Tilden Childs III, MD, FACR received the Outgoing President Award

In addition, we were honored to have a total of nine Past TRS Presidents in attendance, along with six Gold Medalists, including our most recent honoree. It’s a true testament to the strength of the organization when so many past leaders and honorees continue to actively participate in the TRS.

Congrats to the “Break the Case” Winners

Anna Havey, MD – resident at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at El Paso

Michael D. Orsi, MD – practicing radiologist at South Texas Radiology Imaging Centers

By solving the majority of the unknown cases, they get bragging rights for one year as the “Brainiest Radiologist at the TRS Annual Meeting 2015.”

Special Thanks!

A special thanks to the following for their platinum level ($7,500) participation:

Siemens Medical Solutions
Zotec Partners

Thanks also to the following gold level ($5,000) participants:

Fujifilm Medical Systems
Hologic

We look forward to continued partnerships in the future!
ACR 2015 Meeting Highlights

Mary Ann Mullican, MD, FACR

ACR 2015: The Crossroads of Radiology marked a change in venue and an expanded CME program targeted at the ACR membership at large. The new hotel, The Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, has more space available for the many new CME sessions. The Woodley Park metro stop is conveniently located at the end of the block, and there are many restaurants within walking distance. The adjacent Omni Shoreham Hotel was also used for meetings and housing.

Radiologists began to arrive on Saturday and the Resident and Fellow Section met. There was also an interactive Chapter Leaders’ session for State Chapters to share ideas and best practices.

On Saturday night TRS members and guests met at the well-known Washington restaurant Occidental to honor the new ACR Fellows from Texas and to socialize and meet new people as well as enjoy a delicious dinner. Gorgeous woodwork, stairways and walls hung with myriad photographs of Washington VIPs past and present added to the enjoyment of the evening.

Keynote speaker General Colin L. Powell touched on many pertinent and interesting topics, often interspersing humorous asides.

The Council convened, CME talks began, and caucus meetings were held. There was a “Meet the Candidates” session in preparation for Monday’s ACR Elections. Texans elected to new positions include Drs. Ray Kirk and Darlene Metter. Drs. Richard Strax and Ezequiel Silva will continue their terms on the Council Steering Committee, while Dr. Debra Monticciolo will continue her service on the Board of Chancellors. Congratulations to all our Texas leaders!

Residents Lindstrom, Chen, Yu, and Stewart ready to meet legislators
ACR Meeting Highlights (continued from page 4)

The Sunday evening annual Fellowship Convocation was most impressive and was followed by a Presidential Reception. There were eight new fellows from Texas. Monday’s activities included ACR council reports and reference committee open hearings and an economics forum, as well as Dr. Guibeirune’s ABR report.

Tuesday was an eventful day featuring the Moreton Lecture “Imaging in the Era of Precision Medicine” by Dr. James Thrall, MD. Reference Committee reports, CME, legislative updates and Capitol Hill preparations were other activities of the day. Dr. Susan John was proud to receive the Excellence in Membership Chapter Recognition Award (Division D) on behalf of the TRS.

Wednesday was designated “Capitol Hill Day.” Busloads of radiologists converged on the Capitol to visit their senators and representatives — talking points in hand — and to thank them for helping with previous issues important to Radiology. We had a good showing of TRS delegates at the Capitol.

Interspersed throughout, there was time for fun, viewing exhibits, metro rides, enjoying restaurants, and camaraderie before the conclusion of the ACR2015 meeting on Thursday.

Radiation Safety Officer Training Materials Available Now!

At the 2013 Annual Meeting of the ACR the Council adopted a resolution titled “Radiation Safety Officer Training” which stated that “The American College of Radiology (ACR), in collaboration with the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) and other stakeholders, should provide models and educational materials for medical physicists, radiologists, radiation oncologists, and nuclear medicine physicians who provide radiation safety officer services.” As a result of this resolution, the ACR-AAPM Radiation Safety Officer Resources is now available online. “The new resource explains, organizes and provides links to essential federal and advisory resources that every radiation safety officer needs to have at their fingertips,” said Richard Geise, PhD, Chair of the ACR Commission on Medical Physics.

Access the PDF of the training materials at http://goo.gl/1XGCUg.

Texas Radiology Movers and Shakers

Texas Muscle at the American College of Radiology (ACR)

Debra Monticciolo, MD, FACP (Temple) continues her service on the ACR’s Board of Chancellors as an appointed member and as Chair of the Commission on Breast Imaging.

I. Ray Kirk III, MD, FACP (Houston) was elected to serve a two-year term on the ACR’s Council Steering Committee (CSC).

Darlene Metter, MD, FACP (San Antonio) was elected to serve a two-year term on the CSC.

Ezequiel Silva III, MD, FACP (San Antonio) has been reappointed to serve a 3rd one-year term on the CSC.

Richard Strax, MD, FACP (Houston) will serve out his elected two-year term on the CSC.

TRS Welcomes New Board of Directors for 2015-2016

(L to R): Montgomery, Silva, Childs, John, Sepulveda, Connor, Brown

Congratulations to the following TRS Board of Directors who took office at the TRS annual meeting:

President:
Susan D. John, MD, FACP

President Elect:
Stephen L. Brown, MD, FACP

First Vice-President:
Ezequiel Silva III, MD, FACP

Second Vice-President:
Mark L. Montgomery, MD, FACP

Immediate Past President:
Tilden Childs III, MD, FACP

Chief Counselor:
Karla Sepulveda, MD

Treasurer:
Gregory F. Connor, MD

Secretary/Executive Director:
Renata Fonseca, CMP

The BOD would love to hear from you. Visit www.brad.org to get in touch with any of our Directors and let them know how the TRS can better serve you.
2015 Texas Legislative Session & Its Impact on You

Bruce Lowry, MD, FACP, TRS PAC Chair

The 2015 Texas Legislature has adjourned, and fortunately Governor Abbott will not be calling them back to Austin any time soon. With successful passage of a budget, tax cuts, and other promises made on the campaign trail, lawmakers continued to take a conservative approach to state government while setting and meeting the priorities of the state.

Of the 6,476 bills and joint resolutions filed this session, only 1,289 - or just under 20% - passed. The Governor vetoed 42 bills and line-item vetoed almost $300 million from the budget.

TRS was prepared to engage in healthcare policy from the outset of the 2015 session, having spent the interim period engaged with policy makers on several topics. Despite this planning, efforts by health plans, the media, and special interest groups (AARP, Texas Association of Business, etc.) put intense pressure on TRS and other providers to work together to keep some very bad bills from passing. Summaries of the key healthcare-related policy discussions are included below, but the best news for you is that no bills which would significantly impact the practice of radiology or negatively impact your practice passed in 2015.

CONsolidation of Texas Health and Human Services Commission Agencies

Prior to the 2015 session, the Sunset Advisory Commission recommended that lawmakers consolidate the state’s five health departments into one agency in an effort to make healthcare regulation more efficient. This effort was derailed somewhat by contracting scandals at the agency and efforts by certain legislators to use these bills as a means to further restrict abortion procedures in Texas. In the end, SB 200 and SB 202 were successfully passed, partially combining some of the HHSC agencies and streamlining the regulation of and licensure for healthcare providers.

Most notably, licensure for Radiologic Technologists and Medical Physicists was preserved (despite the original Sunset Commission recommendation to terminate these licensures) and transferred to the Texas Medical Board for future oversight. During the 2016-17 Sunset Commission review cycle, the Texas Medical Board will be subject to a full review with recommendations made to the 2017 legislature, giving the TRS an opportunity to weigh in on the effectiveness of the new oversight of these imaging professionals. (See page 9 for more details on this issue.)

BALANCE BILLing BiLLS

Out-of-network (OON) payments have been at the forefront of consideration by legislators for years, but 2015 was a particularly treacherous environment for physicians and other healthcare providers. Several high profile and emotional media stories met legislators in Austin, and the health plans and consumer groups attempted to influence legislators with misleading and misguided initiatives. The TRS was able to work with other stakeholder groups to keep bad bills like HB 1632, which would have prohibited balance billing and required arbitration, from passing. The only OON-related bill that did pass was SB 481, which lowers the OON payment threshold for the mediation of claims disputes from the current $1000 to $500. This was a significant victory for the TRS, considering the bill as filed would have eliminated the threshold entirely.

RADIOlogy ASSISTANT LICENSURE

For the second session in a row, the Radiology Assistant bill (SB 848) sought by the radiologic technologist groups passed the Senate with overwhelming support but failed to receive consideration by the full House of Representatives. This bill received the same fate that many “licensure” related bills did in the “limited-government” environment in the House, including bills to regulate other physician extenders.

In Memoriam

The Texas Radiological Society regrets the loss of the following members, and extends condolences to their family, friends and colleagues.

John D. Fisk, MD
Dallas
12/6/2014

Robert Jacobs, MD
Beaumont
3/28/15

H. Rodney Withers, MD, FACP
Houston
2/25/15

continued on page 7
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION AND OTHER HEALTHCARE BUDGET RELATED ITEMS

The 2015 legislature made strides in overcoming physician shortages in Texas by dedicating additional resources to incentivize more residency slots and finding ways to get more physicians practicing in rural and underserved areas. Budgeteers approved $53 million for graduate medical education (GME) expansion grants over the upcoming biennium budget cycle.

The TRS was fortunate to have the assistance of two residents, Kent Fite from A&M/Scott & White and Kevin Kadakia from UT Southwestern, participating in the first Texas Radiological Society Legislative Fellowship. These two very bright young physicians were able to participate in meetings related to GME and give legislators and staff very valuable real-world input on the impact these decisions would have on keeping more doctors working in Texas.

Overall, the 2015 legislative session was a success for the TRS.

Even though the Texas Legislature has adjourned, the regulatory and legislative process never really ends. It will be important for the TRS to remain engaged during the interim and leading up to the next session in 2017, particularly because these issues will continue to develop and be considered by policy makers. By developing alliances with other interested parties and maintaining relationships with key decision makers, the TRS will be better prepared and better positioned to combat those groups wishing to negatively impact the practice of radiology and the delivery of medicine to the patients we serve.
TRF Foundation Reaches $600,000 Mark!
I. Ray Kirk III, MD, FACC, President

2015 has already been an exciting year for the TRF Foundation. At the TRS Annual Meeting in April, we inducted our first three donors into the Moreton Lifetime Giving Society, a giving society that recognizes and celebrates those donors who have donated $10,000 cumulatively over their lifetime. We are grateful for the generosity of Drs. Tilden Childs III, Karla Sepulveda, and Sidney Roberts for their cumulative donations to the TRF Foundation.

The TRF Foundation also received a generous $50,000 Legacy Society donation from Sid and Catherine Roberts to support the Ethics Lecture at future TRS annual meetings. It is the desire of Dr. Roberts that ethics CME remain an integral part of the ongoing education of radiologists in Texas. Dr. Roberts’ Legacy donation to the TRF Foundation was given both to ensure the education of the entire physician and to inspire Texas radiologists always to practice with the highest ethical standards. We are grateful to Dr. and Mrs. Roberts for entrusting the TRF Foundation with this donation.

All of these donations, as well as donations from TRS members across the state, have helped us reach, and exceed, our original $500,000 fundraising goal. With just over $600,000 raised to date, we look forward towards our next ambitious goal of raising $1,000,000! Each and every donation that is gifted to the TRF Foundation is appreciated and used thoughtfully to further the educational and charitable interests of the TRS and the members that we serve. The TRF Foundation Board of Directors values your donations and is committed to ensuring that our profession remains strong and vibrant for years to come.

Because of your donations, we have been able to send residents to participate in various fellowships at the ACR headquarters in Washington, D.C., provide scholarships for practicing radiologists to attend Radiology Leadership Institute (RLI) courses, support various lecturers at the TRS Annual Meetings, and launch the Guiberteau Award for Resident Excellence, established to motivate and recognize outstanding resident achievement. (See page 9 for a list of all winners and scholarship recipients.)

We want to do so much more for you and for the next generation of radiologists in our state. Would you please consider donating today via the donation form on this page, or by visiting us at www.tradfoundation.org? Your donations are vital to the continued growth and success of the TRS!

2015 TRF Foundation Contribution Form

Please return this contribution form along with payment to:
TRS Foundation • 6705 Hwy. 290 W. • Suite 502-243 • Austin, TX 78735 • or fax to (512) 276-6691

Name (please print): ________________________________

Phone: ________________________________

Email: ________________________________

I would like to make a contribution to the TRS Foundation in the following amount:

☐ $100  ☐ $250  ☐ $500  ☐ $750  ☐ $1,000  ☐ Other: ________________________________

☐ Check (made payable to “TRS Foundation”)

☐ Credit Card: ☐ Visa  ☐ MasterCard  ☐ American Express

Card Number: ________________________________  Expiration Date: ________________________________

Billing Address: ________________________________  Billing Zip Code: ________________________________

CVS Code: ________________________________  Name on Card: ________________________________

Signature: ________________________________

The TRS Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization with a public charity status under 509(a)(3). Donations are tax-deductible to the extent provided by the law. Federal EIN 76-035382.
Medical Physics Licensure Transferred to Texas Medical Board: What This Means for You
Niko Papanikolaou, PhD, FAAPM, FACMP Secretary, TRS Physics Section

On May 31, both the House and the Senate passed bill SB 202, which included the transfer of medical physics licensure in Texas from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) to the Texas Medical Board (TMB). Governor Abbott signed the bill, and the effective date for TMB to absorb the medical physics licensees is September 1, 2015.

TMB is already working with DSHS to ensure a smooth transition of the records of all licensees from DSHS to TMB. Since TMB uses a different database and software tools than DSHS, the data migration will be somewhat resource intensive but should be completed this fall.

TMB officials have stated that all existing licensees will be transferred under TMB, but the details of the license transfer and any documentation requirements that the licensees may have to submit have not yet been released by TMB. One of the significant changes in this migration of the medical physics licensure is the fact that the existing Medical Physics Board, currently operating under the DSHS, will be dissolved and will be replaced by an advisory committee under the TMB. Although the implications of this change are not yet clear, it is something that we need to be aware of and continue to monitor.

The bill makes reference to a licensing exam that will be offered at least twice a year. Currently, proof of ABR certification and appropriate credentials serve as adequate documentation for the issuance of a license. The proposed licensing exam is a departure from the current practice, but this issue will be a topic of discussion with the newly established advisory committee. TMB officials stated that a decision will have to be made in the near future on the exact requirements for a medical physics license.

TMB leadership recognizes that medical physics is a new challenge for them since they have never worked with us and are only now becoming aware of our profession and clinical practice. However, they are very aware that they need our input and are prepared to work with us to do what is best for the current and future medical physics licensees in Texas.

Although not officially reported yet, we expect, given the language in the supporting documents that accompanied the legislation, that the fees for initial licensing and renewal likely will increase.

We should know more about the transition progress from DSHS to TMB in late summer, and we anticipate a public discussion on the topic will be organized by TMB in early fall.

It is prudent for Medical Physicists to recognize the efforts of the team at Imperium Public Affairs (TRS lobbyists) and the TRS leadership for their unwavering support in the preservation of licensure for medical physicists in Texas. We must continue our efforts throughout the licensure implementation process and into the 2017 legislative session since the TMB will be going through the same Sunset Commission review process that prompted the legislature to move physics licensure from Texas Department of State Health Services in the first place. I therefore encourage all medical physics members of the TRS to maintain their membership and to reach out to their colleagues and encourage them to join TRS. It is critical to the safety of our patients and to ensure our future.
In April, we had the opportunity to spend a few days in Austin with our TRS lobbyists as part of the first TRS Legislative Fellowship, sponsored by the TRS PAC. We were fortunate that during our visit the 84th legislature was in session. As a result, we were able to meet many like-minded radiologists, radiology stakeholders, and key politicians who are championing many of the hot topics in radiology. Several radiology-related bills were actively being discussed on the House and Senate floors and behind the scenes in many of the legislators’ offices.

First, we sat in on the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services (HHSC) hearing on the Radiology Assistant (RA) Bill, Senate Bill (SB) 848, regarding licensure for individuals who have completed a master’s level RA program. Currently, the only radiology assistant training program in Texas is at Midwestern State University. The graduates from this program have no other option but to leave the state after graduation because they cannot be licensed to practice in Texas. Besides creating a licensure track for these graduates, the proposed legislation stipulated that radiology assistants must practice under the exclusive oversight of a radiologist, and no other specialty. Though this bill passed the Senate, it ultimately failed to receive consideration by the full House.

We also met Senate HHSC Chair, Dr. Charles Schwertner, an orthopedic surgeon from Georgetown, Texas, and current Senator from District 5. In addition, we were fortunate enough to meet with Sen. Jane Nelson. Sen. Nelson serves District 12, which includes portions of Denton and Tarrant counties. She is very supportive of radiology and healthcare as a whole. This session, Sen. Nelson introduced SB 18, which provides funding to increase the number of residency training opportunities in Texas in the hopes of keeping doctors in our state. We were honored to present her with the TRS Legislative Champion award on behalf of the TRS!
CMS Announces Plans to Help Doctors Transition to ICD-10

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has answered medicine’s call to help doctors dodge disaster by providing some flexibility with a one-year grace period as physicians shift to the new ICD-10 medical billing and coding system on Oct. 1, 2015. To be clear, the grace period is not a delay. To get paid by Medicare — and other payers — physicians still must begin using ICD-10 on October 1.

A FREQUENTLY-ASKED-QUESTIONS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FROM CMS STATES THAT:
- For a one-year period starting Oct. 1, Medicare claims will not be denied solely on the specificity of the ICD-10 diagnosis codes provided, as long as the physician submitted an ICD-10 code from an appropriate family of codes. And Medicare claims will not be audited based on the specificity of the diagnosis codes as long as they are from the appropriate family of codes. This policy will be followed by Medicare administrative contractors and recovery audit contractors.

- To avoid potential problems with mid-year coding changes in CMS quality programs for the 2015 reporting year, physicians using the appropriate family of diagnosis codes will not be penalized if CMS experiences difficulties in accurately calculating quality scores. CMS will continue to monitor implementation and adjust the duration if needed.

- CMS will establish an ICD-10 ombudsman to help receive and triage physician and health professional problems that need to be resolved during the transition.

- CMS will authorize advance payments if Medicare contractors are unable to process claims within established time limits due to problems with ICD-10 implementation.

The American Medical Association (AMA) says it will monitor and keep CMS apprised of any implementation problems that arise in 2016. AMA will also urge the agency to make any needed adjustments to the grace period policy and timeline based on new information that surfaces during the implementation process.

The Oct. 1 deadline for implementation of the ICD-10 code set is fast approaching, and time is running out for physician practices to complete their preparation. If you aren’t already ready for ICD-10, check out the ACR’s ICD-10 Physician Documentation Improvement Training podcasts designed specifically for radiology physicians. ACR members get a 50% discount. The Texas Medical Association also has several resources and trainings, which can be accessed by visiting www.texmed.org/ICD-10/.

Managing Change (continued from page 1)

The ever-changing healthcare landscape demands strong leadership within our specialties. The TRS is focusing on leadership training, working with the ACR Radiology Leadership Institute (RLI) to offer dedicated lectures on leadership topics at the annual meeting. Also, the TRS Foundation provides support for leadership development through several fellowships, awards, and scholarships (see pages 8 & 9 for more details).

The TRS recognizes the many professional challenges that our members face, and only through active engagement and communication among our members can we continue to navigate the changes that are to come. The governance structure of the TRS has been reorganized and expanded recently to encourage more involvement of TRS members and increased accountability of your TRS leadership. A TRS Strategic Planning Retreat will occur in August to brainstorm about member needs and to establish Society priorities. This is YOUR society, and we truly hope that all members will benefit from TRS initiatives and find a personal way to contribute to our efforts. If we work together, the future is indeed bright.
Upcoming Radiology Meetings of Interest

2015 Radiology Leadership Institute (RLI) Leadership Summit
- August 6-9, 2015, Wellesley, MA

Society of Breast Imaging: Case-Based Review & Advanced Breast Imaging Course
- September 26-27, 2015, San Diego, CA

North American Society for Cardiovascular Imaging
- September 26-29, 2015, San Diego, CA

Society of Computed Body Tomography & Magnetic Resonance: 38th Annual Course
- October 7-11, 2015, Toronto, Canada

Society of Radiologists in Ultrasound: Annual Meeting
- October 23-25, 2015, Chicago, IL

ACR/RBMA Practice Leaders Forum
- January 15-17, 2016, Phoenix, AZ

Texas Radiological Society 103rd Annual Meeting
- April 22-24, 2016, Westin Riverwalk, San Antonio, TX

ACR2016 Crossroads of Radiology
- May 14-19, 2016, Washington, D.C.