

NEWSLINE

Published monthly for members of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MSDC Takes Active Role in Local and National Health Care Debate

On your behalf, the MSDC leadership and staff has been uniquely involved in both the local and national health care debate.

The MSDC AMA delegation team - Drs. Joseph Gutierrez, Carlos Silva, Laura Tosi, and myself - were in Chicago for one of the most important Annual Meetings of the AMA. Our delegation joined a group of reformers to challenge some AMA policies and provide guidance to the AMA Board of Trustees as they work with Congress to draft a proper health care reform bill for 2009. The AMA BOT has been extremely involved as a voice for physicians and patients in this critical debate.

The final vote by the AMA House of Delegates was to prohibit the AMA from using the undefined, political term, "public option," in our official policy. Essentially, this term represents the phrase, "government-run health care." To do so, either for or against, would be taking a stand on a plan we have not seen and could not debate. There is no question, the White House was pressuring the AMA to "support a public plan" and others to "oppose a public plan". Instead, the AMA clearly stated what we would and would not support. See the AMA website for details.

Another critical debate at the AMA meeting was passage of policy to ensure the right of patients and physicians to privately contract with each other without interference or penalties from government or industry; and the ability of physicians to collectively negotiate with health plans.

(See *PRESIDENT*, p. 2)



Courtesy Medical Bisnow

From right, Drs. Joseph E. Gutierrez, Stuart F. Seides and J. Desiree Pineda pose questions from MSDC members to Seven Physician-Congressmen during an MSDC event in July.

Your Voice – Your Membership

"Early Bird" Members strengthen the voice of the MSDC – locally and nationally – and do so at a preferred dues rate!

Your MSDC has been working diligently over the past several months to be your voice at the DC Council and at a national level over health system reform. There is no limit to what we can do as a Society, but there is a requirement – we need your support!

If you actively participate with your Society and join for the 2010 membership year by September 30th, 2009 – you will qualify for a 20% discount on your entire yearly dues - no questions, no hassles. As an example, if you qualify as an active member, and you're in your third

year of membership, your total dues for the MSDC will drop \$130.

But active participation is more than a discount. Your fellow physicians in the District want you to be a voice for yourself and others. If there's an issue you feel strongly about, call someone at the MSDC office. If you have an idea that could improve your Society, or a concern that you feel may hinder your Society, share it.

Do more than lend your voice – raise your voice!

For more information on being an active member and joining for the 2010 membership year, please contact Chris Lee at lee@msdc.org or (202) 355-9414.

Inside

2 Physicians in the News

3 From the Executive Vice President

5 Diamond Named for Leadership Roles

5 Call for Awards Nominations

7 MSDC Marketplace

(PRESIDENT, from p. 1)

There is support in Congress promoted by Representative Tom Price, MD (R-GA).

The buzz of the AMA HOD meeting was President Obama's address. Many good ideas were presented. However, there were several issues about the administration's health care reform proposals that may threaten the viability, security and stability of small and medium-size private practice groups. These include bundled payments, no medical liability reform, mandated health information technology (HIT), onerous reporting requirements, pay-for-performance best-practice reporting, pressure to centralize care with employed salaried-physicians, and the expansion of scope of practice to non-physician providers.

In the area of national health care reform, MSDC has been particularly active. We have responded to several media requests and written several Letters

to the Editor in response to articles that have been published, specifically responding to Steven Pearlstein's Opinion pieces. Others include correspondence with Joanne Silberner of NPR, Sandy Boodman at Washington Post, Amanda Erickson at Washington Post and multiple contacts with Capitol Hill dailies.

Recently, at our invitation, several physician-members of Congress joined us for a round table discussion on health care issues and solutions, which ended with a few open questions for the Congressmen. The meeting was filmed live on C-SPAN and is available on-line. The overwhelming response was extremely positive about this valuable program, which shared the perspective of real doctors who are now Congressmen.

America's health care system has a crisis of access and cost. There are good solutions to these problems – insurance reform, co-ops for individuals, consumer mandates, administrative cost reduction, portability, tax code reform for individuals who purchase insurance, disability insurance for illness, fee/payment transparency, medical liability reform, drug and equipment costs management, along with determining scientific, evidence-based, best medical practices by physicians - not bureaucrats or third-party payers.

In this regard, patients have no better advocate than their physician. Health care reform is urgently needed, but the best, most sustainable solutions place the patient back in control of the system, not the government, employers or any other third-party payers. The sanctity of this physician-patient relationship is the cornerstone of the American system, and must be protected.

MSDC has maintained qualified support for acceptable principles of the different bills, without endorsing any specific bill over another, particularly when they may look very different after mark up.

There are many adverse political forces, most of whom have never treated a patient, trying to influence health care reform. Physicians must speak up for our profession and our patients. I encourage you to exchange thoughts, ideas, and concerns with your patients and colleagues. Now is the time for physician and patient activism to mold the political process. Contact the MSDC staff for discussion material and information; please be part of

the debate over the next several months.

Have a great summer. The fall will highlight a memorable year for medicine, doctors and each of our patients.

All the best,

Peter E. Lavine
President, MSDC

Physicians in the News

Edward J. Burger, M.D. received the Physician's Recognition Award from the American Medical Association for his dedication to patient care and continued professional development efforts. The award goes into effect May 1. The AMA Physician Recognition Award is given to all physicians who average 50 CME credits per year. For more information about how you can receive this award, please contact your MSDC office. Congratulations Dr. Burger!

Eliot Sorel, M.D., D.L.F.A.P.A., Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences in the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Adjunct Professor of Global Health, Health Services Management & Leadership in the School of Public Health and Health Services, has been appointed as Council member of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C., effective immediately.

Drs. Hind Benjelloun and Kayla Pope, currently involved with the MSDC Young Physicians' Section, have been elected president and secretary treasurer, respectively, at the DC Psychiatric Society, a chapter of the Washington Psychiatric Society. The WPS works very closely with the Medical Society of DC on many legislative initiatives. Congratulations Dr. Benjelloun and Dr. Pope!

"Red Flags Rule" Compliance Delayed Again! – Until November 1st

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) extended the deadline for compliance with their "Red Flags" rule to November 1st. This rule has been postponed many times since its inception, in order to reevaluate its effect on physicians.

This rule requires all creditors, which as of now does include physicians, to institute policies to identify, detect and respond to potential risks of identity theft. As the compliance date approaches, be sure you have policies in place to comply with the rule. Resources to assist your practice comply with the "Red Flags" rule can be accessed at the AMA's Practice Management Center web site through a link on the MSDC website, www.msdc.org. Helpful materials include:

- Essential information about what qualifies and how to implement
- A sample policy
- Other related guides and resources

Medical Collections

ATTORNEY SHERRY M. BERSON

Agent of Equifax Credit Reporting Bureau
Credit Listing – Address Tracing
Insurance Appeals – Billing Disputes
Contingency Fee



email: Bersonaty@verizon.net
P.O. Box 341788
Bethesda, MD 20827

Tel: (301) 229-6012
Fax: (301) 229-2017

Call or fax for explanation of services

Regulatory Matters Continue to be the Focus of MSDC Efforts

By Edward Shanbacher, MSDC EVP

There can be little doubt that this has been a summer of health system reform politics at the national level. As you have read elsewhere in Newslines, the Society has been a key participant in the dialogue. Most recently, MSDC has jointly signed a letter with 10 other medical associations and two AMA past presidents articulating the principles we stand for in health system reform. It has been gratifying to see the degree of engagement on the part of MSDC physicians in attempting to shape the outcome of the Congressional debate.

The Society's primary focus continues to be on the practice of medicine at the local level. In most years, the Council is on recess from July 15 until September 15, but this year, the Council remained in session two additional weeks to address severe budget shortfalls in both the current fiscal year and the one that begins

October 1.

Two pieces of legislation that MSDC has testified on remain in Committee. One has to do with therapeutic interchange – a dangerous practice to which we are opposed in an outpatient setting, and a so-called consumer protection bill which would adversely impact an already horrific medical liability environment. The Society is continuing to work with Council staff on both matters, and if we are unable to get satisfactory amended language, we will educate the full Council on the risks inherent in both bills.

The Society has a long history of working with the District's Board of Medicine to improve both its licensing and disciplinary functions. Staff regularly attends meetings, and speaks with the Board's legal counsel or executive director on a monthly basis. The Society has worked with the

Board in a number of regulatory matters as well, ensuring that Board regulations are designed to enhance safety and improve quality. Currently, the Board is comprised of 8 physicians and 3 lay members which meets on a monthly basis. Soon, the Board will ask that legislation be introduced to increase the Board's size to 15 members so that the workload can be spread over more individuals and more medical specialties will be represented. There are currently several vacancies on the Board, and if you would like to consider public service and service to your profession, please contact me and I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Likewise to the Society's relationship with the Board of Medicine, MSDC interacts with Highmark Medicare Services in order to enhance communications between
(See EVP, p. 4)



Have you examined your car insurance lately?

Get your best GEICO rate as a MSDC member.

You already know GEICO has great rates, but did you know you could save even more as a MSDC member?

Simply go to **geico.com**, your local office, or call **1-800-368-2734** for a free, no-obligation rate quote. Make sure to mention your affiliation with MSDC to receive a special member discount.

As an MSDC member, you could receive an exclusive discount up to 8% on GEICO auto insurance. GEICO can also help you with homeowner's, renter's, motorcycle, ATV, and boat insurance too. Plus, you could save even more with a multi-policy discount.

Don't wait. Visit **geico.com**, contact your local office, or call **1-800-368-2734** today and see how you can benefit as a MSDC member.

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans, and features are not available in all states or in all GEICO companies. Discount amount varies in some states. Discount is not available in all states or in all GEICO companies. One group discount applicable per policy. In New York a premium reduction is available. MSDC is compensated for allowing GEICO to offer this auto insurance program to MSDC members. Homeowner's, renter's, boat and PWC coverages are written through non-affiliated insurance companies and are secured through Insurance Counselors Inc., the GEICO Property Agency, doing business as GEICO Insurance Agency in CA, MA, MI, NJ, NY, OK, SD, UT. Motorcycle and ATV coverages are underwritten by GEICO Indemnity Company. GEICO auto insurance is not available in Mass. Government Employees Insurance Co. • GEICO General Insurance Co. • GEICO Indemnity Co. GEICO Casualty Co. These companies are subsidiaries of Berkshire Hathaway Inc. GEICO: Washington, DC 20076. GEICO Gecko image © 1999 – 2008. © 2008 GEICO

GEICO **MSDC**
geico.com MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

(EVP, from p. 3)

the Medicare contractor and the physician community. One way the Society does that is through participation on the Contractor Advisory Committee. This Committee, representing most medical specialties, meets three times a year with Highmark Medicare Services management and medical leadership to iron out system problems and to make recommendations on local coverage determinations. Currently, there are vacancies on the Contractor Advisory Committee and I encourage you to contact me if you would like additional information.

I'll conclude by encouraging you to watch out for several upcoming events from MSDC. First, the Society's Annual Meeting set for October 21, 2009, will be in a new location and have a new format. With the planned move of Walter Reed Army Medical Center to Bethesda in several years, the Medical Museum will be relocating to places unknown. So, if ever there was a good time to come to the

MSDC Annual Meeting, now is the year as we'll be at the Medical Museum at WRAMC. It's a fascinating place and one of the reasons we're opening the meeting to spouses. If you have already been, you know it's a place worthy of return visits. And in addition, we have invited the Surgeon General-designate, Regina Benjamin, M.D. At that time, we'll have a brief business meeting which will include the installation of officers for 2010. Those officers will be chosen by the active membership and I encourage you to watch your mail during the last week of August for your ballot.

Finally, we've heard you loud and clear about our invoices! This year we'll be simplifying the invoice by billing only for MSDC dues. For those of you who are AMA members, you will receive a separate invoice directly from the AMA. And for those of you who can pay MSDC dues prior to October 1st, the Board has approved a 20% discount!

I want to thank you all for the support you have shown the Society and your

profession in these difficult times, and I encourage you to contact the Society's leadership and let us know how we can best meet your needs. Best wishes for a restful and safe final month of summer.

Young Physicians' Section Holds Forum

MSDC Young Physicians' Section will be holding the "Residents' Forum on Health Care Reform" soon.

Currently, there is a tentative date set for September 26, 2009. Speakers will be announced very soon. Stay tuned - understanding health system reform is important to the future practice of medicine for everyone! If you are a medical student, resident or early career physician and want to get involved, please contact Kayla Pope at kpopemd@gmail.com.

Where you practice...

- ✓ says a lot about you to your **patients**.
- ✓ affects your **growth & success**.
- ✓ is one of the **biggest** decisions you will make.

Choosing **Gittleson Zuppas Commercial Realty**, Medical Real Estate Specialists, is the key to making the best decision for your practice. With over 20 years of experience in the metro area, we can help you, whatever your specialty, whatever your situation.

Contact Nick Zuppas & David Gittleson
Medical Office Real Estate Specialists

301-961-1941

Fax: 301-657-9776

Affiliated with all area medical societies



3 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 750 • Bethesda, MD 20814



For years patients have entrusted you with their lives, but when your disability insurance company has let you down, who should you trust to protect you?

LEE NORWIND, ESQ.
MARK E. HARRIS, M.D.
Medical Consultant

Providing legal representation in physicians' disability insurance denial and termination cases.

LAW OFFICES

KARP FROSH
LAPIDUS, WIGDOSKY
& NORWIND, P.A.

2273 Research Blvd. Rockville, MD 20850
301-948-3800

Offices also in the District of Columbia and Virginia
www.karpfrosh.com

Dr. Louis Diamond Named to Leadership Roles at HIMSS and eHealth

Dr. Louis Diamond, former MSDC President and Chairman of the Board, was recently named chair of the HIMSS Patient Safety, Quality and Outcomes Committee and vice-chair of the eHealth Initiatives Public Policy Steering Committee. Both committees will have an important role in determining the direction of healthcare reform in the United States.

The HIMSS Patient Safety, Quality and Outcomes Committee focuses on leveraging healthcare information technology to enhance patient safety and quality outcomes. In the coming months, the 11-member committee will work to influence the development of regulations and legislation as federal stimulus funds are deployed for healthcare information technology. Dr. Diamond will serve a two-year term as chair of the committee.

The eHealth Initiatives Public Policy Steering Committee makes recommendations on healthcare legislation and regulations derived from policy positions that represent a consensus of eHealth Initiatives members from every sector of the healthcare industry. The 14-member committee meets regularly to address healthcare issues as they arise, edit government policy in an advisory role, and make recommendations on upcoming legislation. As vice chair of the committee, Dr. Diamond will preside in the absence of the chair and will assume the chairmanship when the present chair's term ends.

Dr. Diamond currently serves as Chair, Planning Advisory Committee, Physicians Consortium for Performance Improvement and Chair, Quality, Measurement, Research and Improvement Council, National Quality Forum. Along with his leadership service at the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, he has also served at the National Patient Safety Foundation, the American College of Medical Quality, and Renal Physicians Association.

He remains an active member at MSDC – congratulations, Dr. Diamond!

And the Winner Is...

Call for Nominations

The Medical Society of the District of Columbia presents our annual awards to individuals and organizations for outstanding service to the profession and the community. We have been presenting awards since 1941 and are very proud of the continued and distinguished history of these awards. We invite all MSDC members to submit nominations.

• Entry Requirements

Any member of the Medical Society may submit a nomination for one or more categories. Each nomination must have a separate submission. No past winners are eligible for nomination in their previous category. Contact Chris Lee at (202) 355-9414 to receive a Nomination Form and a list of past winners.

• Deadline

All entries must be at the Medical Society by 5:00 PM on **Friday, September 15, 2009**. Mail entries to Special Awards Nominations, c/o Medical Society of DC, 1115 30th Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20007. Or, fax forms to 202-452-1542 (attn: Chris Lee).

• Judges

The Medical Society's Board of

Directors will review all nominations submitted by the deadline. The decisions of the Board will be final.

• Presentation

The awards will be presented at MSDC's Annual Meeting on October 21, 2009.

• Four Awards

Certificate of Meritorious Service. Presented to a physician in recognition of distinguished service to the medical profession.

Dr. Charles H. Epps, III Community Service Award. Presented to a physician for outstanding public service to the community.

Distinguished Service Award. Presented to a physician member for outstanding service to the Medical Society of the District of Columbia.

John Benjamin Nichols Award. Presented to a lay person, organization, or both, in recognition of outstanding contributions toward improving the health of the community.

• Questions?

Contact Chris Lee at MSDC, 202-355-9414, lee@msdc.org

Join us at your Society's Annual Meeting at the National Museum of Health and Medicine

What will you be doing on October 21st?

I know what your friends and colleagues will be doing – they'll be enjoying a nice cocktail and conversation at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, currently located at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Bring your spouse and join you fellow physicians this year. Wander the exhibits and watch the practice of medicine evolve and change right before your eyes! No other collection of medical material and information can match the history preserved at Washington, DC's own National Museum of Health and Medicine.

View the changes that have occurred

within American medicine from the American Revolution, through the Civil War and on to Operation: Iraqi Freedom.

Save the date, and remember the following vitals:

- *Guests:* MSDC Members and their families
- *Occasion:* Annual Meeting
- *Time:* 5:00pm; October 21, 2009
- *Location:* National Museum of Health and Medicine; 6900 Georgia Avenue, NW

Watch your mail for your invitation, or contact Barbara Allen at allen@msdc.org for more information.

Cash flow is key to
Dr. Thompson's practice.

But her patients are its lifeblood.
Her CFO understands.



{ *CFO: Cash Flow Options from PNC.* **PNC | CFO** }
Designed to effectively improve your practice's cash flow. cash flow options }

Cash flow is critical to the health of your practice. And therefore, the health of your patients. That's why the PNC Advantage for Healthcare Professionals offers Cash Flow Options to effectively enhance your revenue cycle management. We can help you improve the way you make payments, accelerate the collection of receivables and ensure access to credit when you need it. So everyone feels better.

Call 1-800-PNC-7908, stop by any branch or visit pnc.com/hcprofessionals.



All loans subject to credit approval and require automatic deduction of payments from a PNC Bank Business Checking Account. Bank deposit products are provided by PNC Bank, National Association, Member FDIC. ©2009 The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

History's Memories: Looking Back on People Who Made an Impression

This column provides an insight into the past members of the MSDC, a connection they share with you. We've had some very important people share their lives and stories with the Society. They knew presidents, generals, robber barons and congressmen. They left an impression on their world that we still see in everyday life – and it's our turn to make the same impression on our world now...

“He would save a nation. But I couldn't save his life.

“There wasn't much I could do for a gunshot victim in 1865 – especially not for a head wound. The trauma sustained by President Lincoln there in Ford's Theater was too complete for even the most sophisticated of treatments. Dr. Leale had done all he could do to relieve the pressure on the President's brain, but what was done, was done. The wound was mortal.

“It is never easy being the personal physician to a President. Especially not during such a time as I acted in such a capacity. This American civil war has placed a great strain on our President's family, and it shows in the frequency of Mrs. Lincoln's recurring migraines.

“Working so closely for so many years with one family creates a certain bond that overcomes many stresses and burdens. This relationship's tragic end does nothing to mitigate the feeling of loss I have for not only the President's wife and sons, but for the Union, and all he stood for to preserve it.

“Great enterprise requires great exertion, and great men to ensure the success of their endeavor. Mr. Lincoln was one of those great men. Sadly, despite the efforts of Drs. Leale, Barnes and I, our totality was not enough to preserve the life of the man responsible for preserving our United States. What has held together these past five years for his efforts, we offered nine more hours of life for ours.

“No one in the Petersen House on that night left as the same person who entered. Not even Dr. Leale would discuss the night.

“Largely avoiding the questions about my experiences that April night, I would continue to teach and develop young physicians in Washington, DC. Eventually, my colleagues would recognize me as ‘the dean of the Washington medical community.’

“There are very few men who share experiences such as mine. Yet, I believe there are many who share my commitment to medicine practice faithfully and dutifully in Washington.”

If you are the first member to name the person who is telling his story in the above section, you will receive a \$50 gift card to McCormick and Schmicks Seafood. The two runners' up will receive \$25 to Barnes and Noble. To submit, please CALL Chris Lee at (202) 355-9414. No e-mails will be accepted – timing can be inaccurate with email.

MSDC MARKETPLACE

Busy Family Practice on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC for sale. 2,200 active patients with excellent payor mix. Includes medical equipment, office furniture and patient charts. Great opportunity for PCPs new to the DC area or local physician looking to expand. For additional information, please call (703) 350-5756

SPACE TO SHARE: Sublet available 5 days a week with a congenial medical group in a premier medical space at 1120 19th Street, NW. Furnished consultation room and exam room with shared waiting room, bathroom, and business office; lab and x-ray available. Call (202) 296-2817.

BUSINESS FOR SALE. Pre-employment physical and screening bureau, downtown Bethesda. Established 35+ years, solid reputation/client base. 2007 revenue \$530K; 2008 \$404K. Physician/Owner can net 40 pct. Excellent for retiring MD. Contact Frank Ruffing (703) 283-5220 or frank@farragut.us.com.

Your Society Partners with Operation Medical Libraries to Support Physicians-in-Training in Iraq and Afghanistan

In partnership with Operation Medical Libraries (OML), a non-profit program started by the UCLA School of Medicine Alumni Association that helps organize grassroots book drives for doctors in Iraq and Afghanistan, we will be conducting a book drive in the Washington DC/Baltimore area throughout the summer.

While here in the US we face the challenge of reforming our health care systems, physicians and medical students in Iraq and Afghanistan struggle to get the information resources needed to even practice. For many physicians and students in those

countries, medical texts with depictions of the human form were destroyed as vulgar, leaving a severe shortage of books for research and study. Donated books will be shipped to Iraq and given free of charge to medical students and physicians in need. If you would like to donate your used medical textbooks or reference materials that are in good condition and published after 2006, you may do so by dropping your books off at the MSDC office at 1115 30th Street, NW. For more information, contact Drea Garrison at (952) 346-6152.

Check out all classified ads at: <http://www.msdc.org>. Click on Classified Ads.

Would you like to place an ad? Contact Barbara Allen for details, e-mail allen@msdc.org, phone 202-466-1800, ext. 103. MSDC members may post ads at no charge!

MSDC NEWSLINE

Published monthly for members of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia

MSDC Newsline is published by the Medical Society of the District of Columbia.

202-466-1800 (phone)
202-452-1542 (fax)

Editor:
Christopher W. Lee

MSDC is the sole determinant of this publication's contents. Advertising in MSDC publications does not constitute or imply endorsement of the advertiser, its products, or its services, without a specific endorsement contract. For information on advertising rates, contact Barbara Allen, 202-466-1800, ext. 103.

Medical Society of the District of Columbia
1115 30th Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20007-3707
www.msdc.org

Address service requested.

First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Rockville, MD
Permit No. 5832

Meet the MSDC Staff



Chris Lee, Rose Smith, Barbara Allen and Ed Shanbacker

The wonderful staff at our Medical Society of DC have a combined 101 years working in organized medicine. 63 of those years have been at MSDC, serving you – our member physicians – and your patients.

Our staff is fully dedicated to our mission, originally developed in 1817:

“Ensure the well being of physicians in metropolitan Washington and their patients. We advocate on behalf of our member

physicians of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds; we promote high standards of character and professionalism; and we make certain that physicians are and are recognized as the primary professionals who define and guarantee high quality, appropriate, and cost effective medical care. Above all, we aggressively defend the highest principle of all: the integrity of the physician-patient relationship.”

SAVE THE DATE

American College of Physicians – DC Chapter

DC Chapter of the ACP – Annual Scientific Meeting

Saturday, November 7, 2009 –
Breakfast at 7:30am – Adjourn at 4:30pm
At USUHS - Bethesda, MD

Register on-line through ACP website.

- Confronting the challenges of HIV/AIDS in the National Capital region
- Healthcare reform
- The role of race and ethnicity in colon cancer
- Community health: Heart, Hair and Health Project
- Governor's Awards Banquet (Friday night Nov 6 at Chevy Chase Club)