CMS Hears Physician Voice and Offers Flexibility on MACRA

CMS Acting Administrator Andy Slavitt announced yesterday that physicians could "pick your pace" on Medicare's new Quality Payment Program. In a CMS blog posting, Mr. Slavitt wrote, "with the Quality Payment Program set to begin on January 1, 2017, we wanted to share our plans for the timing of reporting for the first year of the program. In recognition of the wide diversity of physician practices, we intend for the Quality Payment Program to allow physicians to pick their pace of participation for the first performance period that begins January 1, 2017." During 2017, eligible physicians and other clinicians will have multiple options for participation. The move is intended to help physicians "not receive a negative payment adjustment in 2019." The AMA Wire reports on how MACRA penalties can be avoided. Further details will be described in the upcoming final rule.

The American Medical Association (AMA), along with the Medical Society of DC and numerous state medical and national specialty societies, had called on CMS to recognize the needs of physicians in differing practice settings. AMA President Andrew Gurman, MD, praised the Administration’s move to give physicians flexibility.

TOP STORIES
> Consolidation of Physician Practices Surges
> Maryland's Physician Licensure Deadline is September 31, DC's is December 31. Are You Ready?
> Holding the Insurance Industry Accountable
> DC Calls It Quits Week: September 19-25, 2016
> Opioid Abuse: Appeal from US Surgeon General and Upcoming Events
> Doctors Spend Over Two-Thirds of Their Time on Paperwork

Hospital Ownership of Physician Practices Increases Nearly 90% in 3 Years

Nearly 40% of US physicians now employed by hospitals or health systems

The Physicians Advocacy Institute (PAI) this week released a new study entitled Physician Practice Acquisition Study: National and Regional Employment Changes. The research confirms a significant, nationwide increase in the number of physicians leaving private practice and entering into employment arrangements with hospitals and health systems. The study found that between 2012-2015:

• The number of practices owned by hospitals and health systems rose nearly 90%
• One of out every four practices was owned by a hospital or health system, up from one in seven in 2012.
• 38% of U.S. physicians were employed by hospital or health systems, up from one in four in 2012.
• This rise in physician employment and growth in physician practice acquisitions occurred in every region of the country.

This report, conducted by Avalere Health, is part of an ongoing effort by PAI to examine the impact that various marketplace forces and private and public sector policies have on physicians and patients.

Welcome New Members!
The following recently joined or rejoined the Medical Society:

Donald Harter, MD (Neurology)
DC and Maryland Physician Licensure
闵安德及美国医学执照

Maryland Physician Licensure Deadline is Three Weeks Away: September 30, 2016

Maryland physician licenses will expire on September 30, 2016 for physicians who need to renew their Maryland physician license this year. The current Maryland state license renewal period applies to physicians with a last name ending in A-L, but physicians are encouraged to check their profiles to confirm their expiration date. Read more on the Maryland Board of Physicians website.

Washington, DC Physician Licensure Deadline is December 31, 2016

All DC physician licenses will expire on December 31, 2016 and the licensure renewal period will open on October 1, 2016. Among the requirements for DC physician licensure are 50 hours of CME, including 3.0 hours of HIV/AIDS CME, between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2016. To help its members comply with this requirement, MSDC has worked with other organizations to make available HIV/AIDS CME opportunities at little or no additional cost.

These include 24/7 access to an online library of CME- and MOC-approved courses available through ProAssurance. HIV/AIDS-related courses in the CME course library help physicians satisfy DC licensure requirements. Also available to MSDC members is a live face-to-face 3 hour HIV/AIDS CME program, being offered prior to the MSDC Annual Meeting. For information on how to register for these CME opportunities, please contact Pia Duryea (202-466-1800, duryea@msdc.org).

Holding Insurers Accountable: CareFirst in DC, National Mega-Mergers

CareFirst Ordered to Issue $51 Million in Rebates to Offset Excess Surplus

Commissioner Stephen C. Taylor of the District of Columbia Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking (DISB) ordered CareFirst to return excess surplus to subscribers. In the order, Commissioner Taylor determined that approximately $4.9 million in rate reductions qualified as community health reinvestment and ordered Group Hospitalization and Medical Services, Inc. (GHMSI), which operates as CareFirst in the District, to issue the remaining $51.3 million in excess surplus in the form of rebates to their subscribers. Commissioner Taylor determined that rebates would promote and safeguard public health by providing an immediate benefit to subscribers.
Medical Society Coalition Stands United Against Insurance Mega-mergers
MSDC is part of a national coalition of state medical societies working to oppose the proposed mergers between Anthem and Cigna and Aetna and Humana. The Medical Society and advocates argue against the mergers on the grounds that industry consolidation will stifle competition, raise prices and reduce choice for patients. Last month, Bloomberg News reported that Anthem requested a November 1 hearing date, given the merger deadline of April 1 and the need to secure approvals, but the judge overseeing the case said “the company’s proposed schedule was too aggressive.” The Medical Society will continue to work with other medical societies to argue for a competitive insurance industry and patient access to insurance coverage.

Registration Open for MSDC's Annual Meeting and Reception
You may now register for MSDC's Annual Meeting and Reception, which will take place on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 at the Historic SunTrust Building. The Keynote Address, “Navigating Healthcare Reform,” will be given by The Physicians Foundation President Walker Ray, MD. Other meeting highlights include a final address by MSDC President Carla C. Sandy, MD, and the installation of MSDC’s 2016-17 President Julian R. Craig, MD. There will also be a 3.0 hour HIV/AIDS CME program called "HIV & Election 2016: What Physicians Need to Know" prior to the meeting. Registration for the live HIV/AIDS CME program will open shortly.

Save $25 By Renewing Your 2017 Dues by September 15, 2016
Members who pay their 2017 MSDC dues by September 15, 2016 may receive a $25 discount off annual meeting registration. Dues invoices were mailed to MSDC members at the end of August. If you have any questions, or if you have not received your invoice, please contact the Medical Society at 202-466-1800.

National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month Takes on New Meaning
National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, celebrated every September, is intended to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use disorders and celebrate the people who recover. The issue takes on new urgency this year as record numbers of patients struggle with opioid addiction. In a Presidential Proclamation, President Barak Obama said, “During National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, let us thank health care professionals, support groups, and all those dedicated to helping individuals in need find assistance and reclaim their lives.” The Medical Society recognizes the critical role of physicians in curbing this epidemic and applauds them for their dedication to their patients.

Prescription Drug Abuse: Appeal from US Surgeon General, Upcoming Events
US Surgeon General Calls for Action on Nation's Opioid Crisis
Last month, US Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy, MD, took unprecedented action by sending a personal letter to more than 2.3 million health care practitioners and public health leaders across the country. Dr. Murthy called on physicians to help solve the national opioid epidemic through safe prescribing education, access to treatment for opioid use disorder, and compassionate care without stigma. Go to www.TurnTheTideRx.org/join for more information and to sign the physician pledge.

Online Series: The Role of Shame in Opioid Use Disorders
Providers Clinical Support System for Opioid Therapies has an online module titled The Role of Shame in Opioid Use Disorders available 24/7, and will host a Follow up Q and A Webinar with the presenter on September 28, 2016 from 12:00 to 1:00 PM. The objectives of the online module are as follows: define shame and differentiate between shame and guilt; identify the relationship between shame and Opioid Use Disorders (OUD); discuss shame as it relates to particular subsets of people with OUD including: people who inject heroin and opioid-addicted pregnant women and mothers. Completion of the online module is required to participate in the Q&A webinar. The webinar and online modules are each designated for up to 1 AMA PRA Category 1 credit and are available at no charge. Click here for more information or to register.

Heroin and Prescription Opioids Epidemic Dinner Program
The Cosmos Club Health Group will hold a dinner program on September 27, 2016 at 6:30 PM. Experts in the field will present the latest findings of brain and neurosciences research and review their relevance to individuals' and populations' health and to treatment
interventions. Click here for more information or details on how to register.

**Drug Take Back Day Scheduled for October 22, 2016**

National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications. Now in its eleventh year, this year’s Drug Take Back Day is scheduled for October 22, 2016. DEA will list collection sites on its website; a link to the list of sites will also be available on the AWAR Prescription Drug Safety Program website. Properly disposing of medications keeps medicine out of the hands of someone who might abuse them and also protects the environment.

**Physicians Urged to Collect Travel Histories as DC Zika Cases Climb; No Zika Funding Yet**

The DC Department of Health (DOH) has posted several important health notices, related to Zika virus disease (ZVD). The notice provides important updates on ZVD testing in DC and testing recommendation updates from the CDC. Providers are asked to continue to collect travel history information when evaluating patients and to report suspected cases of ZVD and other travel-associated illnesses to DOH so that they can help facilitate diagnosis and mitigate the risk of local transmission. The DC Department of Health reports 24 cases of laboratory confirmed Zika virus infection in DC, all of which have been travel-related.

Zika funding remains uncertain, as this week a divided Senate again rejected a funding bill to fight the Zika virus. The Hill reports that lawmakers from both parties hope that the vote will be the "final showdown before a deal is unveiled later this month as part of a bipartisan government spending package."

**MSDC Partners with Health Advocates to Help DC "Call it Quits"**

Smoking Cessation Campaign Scheduled for September 19-25, 2016

DC Calls It Quits! is a week-long campaign to educate Washingtonians about the risks of smoking and provide information on how to quit. The weeklong campaign will feature a range of events and resources for smokers. Among the many events planned as part of the campaign are:

- **Press Conference**, Monday, September 19, 11:00 AM
- **DC Calls It Quits Twitter Chat**, September 21, 2:00 - 3:00 PM
- **DC Calls It Quits Summit**, September 22, 9:00 AM -2:00 PM
- **Fight For Air Climb**, September 24

Please share information with your patients about the risks of smoking and smoking cessation resources, which are available on the DC Calls It Quits! website. Also, feel free to contact the Medical Society if you would like to participate or have a patient story to share.

**MedStar Health Debuts Downtown DC Healthcare Hub**

MedStar Health will be opening a 110,000-square feet multi-specialty care center in DC's downtown business district later this month. According to Tina Reed of Washington Business Journal, "the athletic performance center is sure to be the most attention-grabbing element when MedStar Health opens its Lafayette Centre location later this month." The cutting-edge Sports Performance Center has dozens of motion capture cameras trained on capturing an athlete’s moves on a basketball court or as they throw a baseball.

**Call for Technical Expert Panel Related to MACRA CMS Quality Measure Development Plan**

CMS is currently soliciting nominations for technical expert panel members to support the CMS Quality Measure Development Plan (MDP) project. The MDP is mandated by the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA), which also requires the preparation of an annual report on the development of measures for the CMS Quality Payment Program. The panel will consist of representatives of stakeholder organizations, including physician and non-physician practitioners, especially those with clinical expertise in any of the following specialties: Mental health and substance use conditions, oncology, orthopedic surgery, palliative care, pathology, and radiology.
The call for MACRA MDP Technical Expert Panel members is open from August 26 through September 15, 2016. For more information, visit the CMS Technical Expert Panels webpage.

**Medicare Parts A and B Revalidation Cycle 2 Underway**

All Medicare Part A and B providers are required to recertify the accuracy of their enrollment information every five years through a process known as revalidation. The initial five-year revalidation cycle was completed in 2015 and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) began Cycle 2 in March 2016.

CMS has implemented improvements to streamline the revalidation process during Cycle 2. One enhancement is that CMS is establishing due dates with six months’ advance notice of when the revalidation application must be received by to remain compliant with Medicare’s revalidation requirements. CMS posts the due dates for all currently enrolled providers in the Medicare Revalidation Lookup Tool at [Data.CMS.gov/revalidation](http://Data.CMS.gov/revalidation). The Revalidation Lookup Tool is updated every 60 days, so providers are encouraged to check the tool periodically and respond timely once the due date is established. Novitas is also issuing notices by mail to providers two to three months in advance of the due date. Read the notice from Novitas.

**Doctors Waste Over Two-Thirds Of Their Time Doing Paperwork**

A recently published study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* found that for every hour physicians were seeing patients, they were spending nearly two additional hours on paperwork. A *Forbes* article on this growing burden asks, “Is this really the best use of doctors’ training and ability?” The article and study confirm what many physicians and the Medical Society already know: the amount of paperwork that doctors have to do is out of control.

**MSDC News: Leadership Elections Underway**

**Voting Members Are Encouraged to Vote in MSDC Election**

On August 29, 2016, in accordance with its Bylaws, the Medical Society of the District of Columbia distributed to its voting members electronic ballots for officer and director positions of the Medical Society. Voting members are encouraged to cast their ballots, if they have not already done so. If you have a question about the elections or the electronic ballot, call the Medical Society at 202-466-1800 or email Pia Duryea at duryea@msdc.org.

**Last Call for MSDC Special Award Nominations**

There is not much time left to recognize one of your colleagues for outstanding contributions to medicine. Additional information and the nomination form are available online. The deadline to submit nominations for MSDC Special Awards is September 15. Awards include:

- **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 your 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).

**Upcoming Deadlines for DC EHR Incentive Program and Loan Repayment Program**

**Attest for EHR Incentives for Medicaid Providers by September 30**

This is a reminder that you may receive $21,250 of incentive payments if you are a Medicaid Eligible Professional and this is your first time attesting (regardless of whether your organization has previously attested) or to receive $8,500 if you have previously attested. Providers seeking to participate in the Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs (MEIP) must Adopt, Implement, or Upgrade (AIU) federally Certified EHR Technology (CEHRT). Attest here.

- Attestations for program year 2015 are begin accepted now through September 30, 2016.
- Attestations for program year 2016 will be accepted October 1, 2016 through March 30, 2017. No further AIU attestations will be possible after March 30, 2017.

Up to $63,750 is available to all Eligible Professionals who maintain at least 30% DC Medicaid patient volume and meaningfully use Electronic Health Records (EHRs). Please visit the DC State Level Registry (SLR) for more information and to begin your Program Year 2015 attestation.
Applications for DC's Loan Repayment Program Are Due October 30
On September 1, 2016, the DC Department of Health (DOH) began accepting applications for the Health Professional Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP), which provides loan repayment services to eligible providers practicing in HPLRP-certified Service Obligation Sites (SOS) in the District. DOH will be accepting new provider applications September 1 through October 30, 2016. The program will issue up to four award contracts to primary care and/or dental health providers, including: physicians, registered nurses, advanced practice nurses, physician assistants, dentists, and dental hygienists. The contracts will cover two years of participation and contract amounts will be equivalent to 44 percent of a provider’s total eligible debt - up to a maximum of $62,980 for physicians and dentists. View complete information online including applicant materials or contact the loan repayment program directly at HPLRP@dc.gov or 202-442-5892.

John P. McGovern Compleat Physician Award
Call for 2017 Nominations
The John P. McGovern Compleat Physician Award, established in 1993, is presented annually by the Houston Academy of Medicine in collaboration with the Harris County Medical Society, to recognize a physician whose career has been founded on the Oslerian ideals of medical excellence, humane and ethical care, commitment to medical humanities and writing, research, and harmony between the academician and medical practitioner. These characteristics were exemplified by the life of Sir William Osler, who is revered worldwide as the "Father of Modern American Medicine."

The award seeks to identify and recognize multi-accomplished physicians who have enriched the field of medicine with excellence and humaneness. Deadline for submissions is November 2, 2016.
Call for Nominations/ Letter from President, Houston Academy of Medicine
Award Guidelines
Award Criteria

CLASSIFIEDS
Brought to you by MSDC's 1817 Society Member and Personnel Provider
Favorite Healthcare. Contact Favorite Healthcare for your staffing needs.

Medical Practice Manager Opportunity
The Medical Practice Manager (MPM) will be responsible for overseeing the operational effectiveness of the practice, the Barnard Medical Center. This will include collaborating with the operations and clinical teams to create and maintain patient care schedules that prioritizes patient access and maximizes the patient experience. In addition, the MPM is responsible for meeting all governmental regulations and industry requirements, meeting and maintaining the elements of a team-based, patient centered medical practice, and for maintaining a culture of patient centeredness. In your cover letter please describe your prior work experience in a medical setting, your strengths, and your interest in the Barnard Medical Center’s mission to integrate nutrition education into medical care. Click here to apply online. We look forward to hearing from you!

EVENTS

*You May Receive a Premium Credit*
2016 Loss Prevention Seminars
September 20, 2016 (Washington, DC)
September 21, 2016 (Bethesda, MD)
October 18, 2016 (Washington, DC)
6:00 - 8:00 PM, Sign-in and refreshments begin at 5:30 PM
Washington, DC: American College of Cardiology (2400 N Street, NW, Washington, DC)
Bethesda, MD: Bethesda Marriott (5151 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD)
Understanding a patient’s health and disease process requires detailed knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of tissues, organs, and systems that compose the human body. Likewise, analyzing and understanding the inner workings of a claim can help win a medical malpractice lawsuit. In this seminar we will dissect a variety of closed malpractice claims to determine how medical record documentation, communication, systems, and testimony contribute positively or negatively to outcomes.

Read the program brochure and register today for "Anatomy of a Claim", ProAssurance's 2016 loss prevention seminar series. These 2.0 hour CME seminars help physicians keep up-to-date with the latest
risk concerns. MSDC members receive a 50% discount on registration and participation may qualify physicians for a 5% premium credit.

**Medicare Contractor Advisory Committee Meeting**
October 18, 2016
6:00 - 8:30 PM
Delaware Medical Society (900 Prides Crossing, Newark, DE)
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Vicki Kurland of Novitas Solutions at 717-526-6393.

**2016 Medicare Symposiums**
October 19, 2016
DoubleTree Annapolis (210 Holiday Ct, Annapolis, MD)
Novitas Solutions will be hosting Medicare Symposiums for Jurisdictions J and L throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. These events are for Part A and B Medicare providers and their billing and compliance representatives. Attendees will benefit from a wide variety of education based on data driven content and the latest Medicare changes that you need to know to bill Medicare the right way, the first time. Read more in the [online brochure](http://www.novitas-solutionslearning.com) or register for free at: [http://www.novitas-solutionslearning.com](http://www.novitas-solutionslearning.com).

**Physicians for a National Health Program Annual Meeting**
November 19, 2016
9:00 am-5:00 pm (meeting)
7:00-9:00 pm (dinner)
Westin City Center (1400 M Street NW, Washington, DC)
Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP)'s 2016 annual meeting comes at an exciting time for single payer. What will the 2016 election mean for advocates on the national and state levels? November 2016 will be an ideal time to meet with colleagues, plan strategies, and build skills to push for meaningful health care reform. Learn more or register to attend.

**MEDICAL REAL ESTATE LISTINGS**
_Brought to you by MSDC Corporate Partner GZ Medical Realty. Contact [Pete Papantoniou](mailto:papantoniou@msdc.org) for your real estate needs._

**Part Time/Full Time Office Space Available**
3 Washington Circle
Washington, DC
Part time/full time office space available November 1st at 3 Washington Circle. This includes a large consultation room, fully equipped examination room, lab drawing facility onsite, EKG machine, space for receptionist, space for medical records, shared use of copier, telephone system, wireless internet and waiting room. Ideal for general internist, medical subspecialist or surgeon. If interested, please call Mark Sklar, MD. 202-887-4769 or email mmsklar@gmail.com

**Boutique Townhouse Medical Office for Rent Across From GWU Hospital/ Medical School**
900 New Hampshire Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20037
Boutique townhouse medical office for rent across from G.W.U. Hospital & School of Medicine. Very close to Foggy Bottom Metro. Three rooms, one on entry level with powered table/chair & overhead surgical light. Consultation room, reception/waiting room, & possibility of 2 additional rooms. Two-car driveway. Call/text Sheldon K. Gottlieb, MD, 301-509-3319, or email skgottliebmd@comcast.net.

**2440 M Street NW**
2440 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037
2440 M Street is a Class A 110,000 SF medical office building with a three-level parking garage in northwest Washington, DC. The building has abundant patient and physician parking. Please contact [Peter Papantoniou](mailto:papantoniou@msdc.org) at 301-961-1941 or see the [online listing](http://www.novitas-solutionslearning.com) for more information.

**Woodburn Medical Park**
3229 Woodburn Road
Alexandria, VA 22003
Woodburn Medical Park is located within walking distance of INOVA hospital directly off Capital Beltway. Contact Peter Papantoniou at 301-961-1941 or see the online listing for more information.