

# MMS News Briefs

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MARIN MEDICAL SOCIETY

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### **Additional session added for disaster preparedness training**

Local physicians will have two opportunities to learn about disaster preparedness during June. The first is a four-hour session on June 5 covering the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The second is a newly added two-hour session on June 9 about alternate care sites. Completion of the first session is a prerequisite for the second.

Both sessions are intended for physicians in the Disaster Preparedness Physician Volunteer Group (DPPVG), but other physicians are invited to attend as well. The June 5 session, scheduled for 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Wilkes Conference Room at Novato Community Hospital, includes two basic courses about NIMS presented by instructors from FEMA.

The June 9 session—scheduled for 6 to 8 p.m. in the County Training Room, 2 Jeannette Prandi Way, San Rafael—is titled “How to set up the Alternate Care Site for disaster preparedness.” Objectives include reviewing the county’s plan to activate health care surge and coordinate response with area hospitals, and to review the role of an Alternative Care Site in health care surge. Instructors include Dr. Anju Goel, deputy health officer for Marin

County; Laurie Friedman, SYA Group; and Brian Waterbury, retired division chief of the San Rafael Fire Department.

To register for one or both sessions, or to volunteer for the DPPVG, contact Dr. Peter Bretan at [bretan.surgery@usa.net](mailto:bretan.surgery@usa.net), 382-0339 (voicemail) or 892-0904 (office). If you are not already a member of the DPPVG, please list your specialty, cell phone number and e-mail address.

### **House passes Medicare fix; all eyes on Senate**

Despite House passage of a bill to stop Medicare SGR cuts and fix the GPCI payment formula, the Senate has left physicians in the lurch once again. This time, senators adjourned for a week-long Memorial Day Recess just as they were poised to take up the bill. As a result, the long-threatened 21% Medicare physician payment cut went into effect June 1, and the earliest senators can consider a solution is June 7.

In anticipation of the cuts, Medicare has instructed its contractors to hold physician claims for 10 business days. The hold, which will only affect claims with dates of service on or after June 1, gives Congress additional time to act before claims are processed at the lower rate.

The House bill would stop the Medicare SGR (sustainable growth rate) cuts for 19 months. In lieu of the scheduled 21% cut, the bill would implement a 2.2% payment increase for the remainder of this year, and a 1% increase for 2011. The bill also includes a California GPCI (geographic practice cost index) fix, which provides \$300 million so that currently underpaid counties, including Marin, can be reimbursed at higher rates.

Because the House bill is just another short-term fix of SGR, rather than a repeal, physicians could end up facing a 33% SGR cut in 2012. "As a physician, I am outraged by Congress's inability to protect health care for senior citizens and provide stable funding for Medicare," said CMA President Dr. Brennan Cassidy. "This is a recurring nightmare for seniors and the doctors who serve this vulnerable population."

CMA continues to advocate for a permanent repeal of the Medicare SGR. Congress has known for years about the inadequacies of the SGR formula, but it has not fixed the problem. CMA is lobbying Congress to replace SGR with a payment system that automatically keeps up with the cost of running a practice and is backed by a stable funding formula.

Physicians are an important part of that lobbying effort. Your senators need to hear from you! Call Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer today at 800-833-6354 to let them know the impact the SGR cuts will have on your practice. You will be connected to their offices via the AMA Grass Roots Hotline.

### **Resolutions for CMA House of Delegates needed by June 26**

Resolutions for the CMA District 10 caucus are due by June 26. The caucus is the first stop on the way to the CMA House of Delegates, which meets this fall to consider resolutions from around the state. Any MMS member can submit a resolution to Cynthia Melody at [cynthia@marinmedicalsociety.org](mailto:cynthia@marinmedicalsociety.org) or 924-3891, or to a member of the CMA delegation (see below). Resolutions can cover almost any aspect of medical care, including health reform, medical practice, health facilities, quality of care, medical ethics, legal issues, and public health.

Members of the CMA delegation are Drs. Helen Biren, Peter Bretan, Larry Bedard, Irina deFischer, Barbara Nylund, and Lori Selleck.

### **Dr. Irina deFischer confirmed as MMS president-elect**

Dr. Irina deFischer, a family physician and geriatrician at Kaiser Petaluma, has been confirmed as MMS president-elect by a vote of MMS members. The current president-elect, Dr. Peter Bretan Jr., a Novato urologist, will become president on July 1.

The election, which concluded May 31, also confirmed Dr. Georgianna Farren as MMS secretary/treasurer and Dr. Anne Cummings as a member of the board of directors. Drs. Helen Biren and Barbara Nylund were confirmed as members of the CMA delegation.

### **Summer issue of Marin Medicine highlights health literacy**

The Summer issue of Marin Medicine, which was mailed to all MMS members in late May, focuses on health literacy, with feature articles by local experts on literacy training, health education and informed consent. Departments include an interview with new MMS president Dr. Peter Bretan, an overview of Alzheimer's Disease research at the Buck Institute, a chronicle of a medical mission to the Philippines, and a gallery of photographs by Dr. Stephen Weiss. A hospital update, a book review, and a humorous sketch are included as well.

Each MMS member receives one free subscription to Marin Medicine, which is also posted online at [marinmedicalsociety.org/magazine](http://marinmedicalsociety.org/magazine). Article proposals should be sent to the editor, Steve Osborn, at [sosborn@marinmedicalsociety.org](mailto:sosborn@marinmedicalsociety.org). The Fall issue will focus on pain.

### **Reminder: New physician signage regulations take effect June 27**

California physicians will soon be required to inform patients that they are licensed by the Medical Board of California, and to provide patients with contact information for the MBC. The new regulations, which take effect June 27, require physicians to provide the MBC notice by one of three methods:

- Prominently posting a sign in an area of their offices that is conspicuous to patients, in at least 48-point type in Arial font.
- Including the notice in a written statement, signed and dated by the patient or patient's representative, and kept in that patient's file, stating the patient understands the physician is licensed and regulated by the MBC.
- Including the notice in a statement on letterhead, discharge instructions, or other document given to a patient or the patient's representative; the notice must be placed immediately above the patient's signature line in at least 14-point type.

Regardless of which method you choose, the notice must read as follows: **NOTICE TO CONSUMERS: Medical doctors are licensed and regulated by the Medical Board of California, (800) 633-2322, [www.mbc.ca.gov](http://www.mbc.ca.gov).**

According to the MBC, physicians, not facilities, are responsible for compliance with this regulation. In group settings, only one sign must be posted (should that option be chosen), but it must be posted in a location where it can be seen by all patients.

A sample MBC sign is available at [marinmedicalsociety.org/resources](http://marinmedicalsociety.org/resources). For more information, visit [www.mbc.ca.gov](http://www.mbc.ca.gov).

## FTC delays Red Flag Rule until end of year

The Federal Trade Commission has delayed the compliance deadline for the Red Flag Rule until the end of 2010. In late May, the AMA filed a lawsuit asking a federal court to prevent the FTC from extending the Red Flag Rule to physicians. "The latest extension to the compliance date is a promising sign," said Dr. Cecil Wilson, AMA president-elect. "We call on the FTC to exempt physicians from the rule completely."

## Get to know the new CEO of CMA

Golf, shyness, marriage, Bob Dylan and the future of CMA. What do they all have in common? They define CMA's new CEO, Dustin Corcoran. The full story is contained in a 9-minute video posted on [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#). For more details, contact Ron Lopp at 916-551-2042 or [rlopp@cmanet.org](mailto:rlopp@cmanet.org).

## HOSPITAL UPDATES

**Kaiser San Rafael** has received an award for stroke care from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. The award recognizes the hospital for meeting or exceeding stroke care criteria. "We are very proud to have received this honor and recognition of our success in providing stroke care," said Dr. Jerry Schlegel, medical director of the hospital's Stroke Center. "Our primary message continues to be that with a stroke, time is brain. The faster stroke victims are brought to the Emergency Department, the greater the opportunity there is to offer effective treatment."

## EVENTS

The Northern California Psychiatric Society is sponsoring an all-day **Psychopharmacology Update** on Saturday, June 12, at the San Francisco Zoo. Topics include treatment of mood, sleep, bipolar and impulse control disorders, as well as an overview of repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation. The conference includes 6 hours of Category 1 CME credit. To register, visit [www.ncps.org](http://www.ncps.org).

**Dr. John Rowe**, co-author of *Successful Aging*, will speak on "Myths and realities of an aging society" at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, June 14, at the Buck Institute in Novato. Rowe, a professor at Columbia University, is a nationally recognized expert on aging. To reserve a spot for his free lecture, call 209-2030 or e-mail [events-rsvp@buckinstitute.org](mailto:events-rsvp@buckinstitute.org).

The Marin Community Clinic is hosting a **Summer Solstice Celebration** on Thursday evening, June 17, at The Atrium at Autodesk in San Rafael. The event, which benefits the clinic's pediatric program, features a plentitude of food and drink, along with Champions for Children awards presentations to Drs. Howard Rosenfeld, Michael Grogan and Marisol Muñoz-Kiene. Tickets are \$100 per person. To purchase, visit [www.marinclinic.org](http://www.marinclinic.org).

An all-day conference titled **Connecting California to Improve Patient Care** will be held at the Vineyard Creek Hyatt in Santa Rosa on Friday, July 9. Sponsored by Redwood MedNet, a local nonprofit health information exchange, the conference features presentations by more than a dozen regional and national experts on electronic health records, Recovery Act funding, and related topics. Cost before July 1 is \$150. To register, visit [redwoodmednet.org](http://redwoodmednet.org).

An hour-long CMA webinar on **POLST Essentials** will begin at 12:15 p.m. on Thursday, June 3. The online presentation will review the essential components of an effective

Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment and discuss implementation of POLST in clinical practice. Other upcoming CMA webinars include:

- "The Art of Training, Evaluating and Retaining Qualified Personnel for Today's Medical Practice" (12:15 p.m., June 9)
- "Medical Foundations, Accountable Care Organizations and the Bundling of Services" (6 p.m., June 9, and 12:15 p.m., June 15)
- "Implementation of EHR: Practical Considerations" (12:15 p.m., June 22)

To register for CMA webinars, visit [cmanet.org/calendar](http://cmanet.org/calendar).

## **CLASSIFIEDS**

### **Medical office space to share**

Dermatology practice seeks full- or part-time physician to share medical space in San Rafael. Office is a beautifully remodeled building in great location. Two exam rooms with exam tables are available and use of additional rooms is negotiable. Shared restrooms and staff lounge. Contact Kathleen at 415-259-0131 or [mdermatology@yahoo.com](mailto:mdermatology@yahoo.com).

### **How to submit a classified ad**

To submit a classified ad for MMS News Briefs or Marin Medicine, contact Nan Perrott at [nperrott@rhscommunications.com](mailto:nperrott@rhscommunications.com) or 707-525-4226. The cost is one dollar per word.

## **ABOUT MMS**

The Marin Medical Society, a 501(c)(6) nonprofit association, supports local physicians and their efforts to enhance the health of the community. We are affiliated with the California Medical Association and the American Medical Association.

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