

MMS News Briefs

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MARIN MEDICAL SOCIETY

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marinmedicalsociety.org/news

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MMS Fall Membership Dinner set for Oct. 28

Former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona is the featured speaker at the MMS Fall Membership Dinner on Thursday evening, Oct. 28. The event, to be held at the San Francisco Yacht Club in Belvedere, begins with a reception at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7. Dr. Carmona, a highly respected trauma surgeon and public health expert, served as surgeon general from 2002 to 2006. He will speak about the role of state and local medical societies in disaster preparedness.

Dinner choices include pork loin, sea bass or a vegetarian entree. Tickets are \$45 per person. To RSVP and identify your dinner choice, contact Jessica Whittom at jessica@marinmedicalsociety.org or 924-3891.

Wine tasting reception on Sept. 11 to benefit LifePlant International

A wine tasting reception in Novato on Saturday evening, Sept. 11, will benefit LifePlant International, a nonprofit dedicated to saving lives through medical missions. The event,

scheduled for 5 to 10 p.m. at Old City Hall, 901 Sherman Ave., will feature guest appearances by State Assemblymember Jared Huffman, as well as Marin County Supervisors and Novato City Councilmembers.

Tickets are free for MMS members and their spouse or guest. Tickets for nonmembers are \$50 per person. To RSVP, contact Jessica Whittom at jessica@marinmedicalsociety.org or 924-3891. Proceeds will help fund overseas kidney transplant missions and Marin County disaster preparedness efforts. The event is cosponsored by the Rotary Club of Novato, Cal Career Center, the Sutter Health North Bay Regional Surgery Center & Physicians, and the MMS Disaster Preparedness Physician Volunteer Group.

Six resolutions from North Bay physicians advance to CMA House

Six resolutions from North Bay physicians will be submitted to the CMA House of Delegates at its annual meeting this fall. Depending on what action the House takes, the resolutions may become part of CMA's legislative agenda for the coming year. In their current form, the resolutions:

- Request that CMA help local medical societies and physician group practices develop Accountable Care Organizations and/or medical foundations (Dr. Bretan).
- Ask CMA to form a Technical Advisory Committee to investigate strategies for strengthening the alignment between CMA and its component medical societies (Dr. Bretan).
- Recommend that CMA convene a Marijuana Technical Advisory Committee to determine the appropriate DEA Classification Schedule for marijuana (Drs. Bedard and Rogan).
- Urge CMA to endorse Proposition 19, also known as the Regulate, Control and Tax Marijuana Act (Drs. Bedard and Rogan).
- Request that Medi-Cal cover osteopathic manipulative treatment (Drs. McCaffrey and Zaphiris).
- Seek to prevent unlawful disclosure of personal health information to ERISA entities, such as insurance companies and third-party administrators (Dr. Jutila).

Any CMA member is welcome to submit resolutions for consideration by the House of Delegates. Resolutions approved by the House become official CMA policy, and many are subsequently enacted into law by the state legislature.

North Bay medical societies begin administrative regionalization effort

In collaboration with CMA, medical societies in Sonoma, Marin, Mendocino, Lake, Napa and Solano counties have begun an administrative regionalization effort to streamline operational systems and realize greater efficiencies. Most notably CMA is pooling its employees with county medical society staff to optimize payroll services and produce significant savings through an Administrative Services Agreement.

In addition, administrative regionalization will allow the county medical societies to share an online database and computer network to better utilize existing staff and increase administrative capacity. Many outsourced services will be brought in-house, eliminating redundancies and improving collaboration between the various North Bay medical societies.

As part of the regionalization effort, MMS and SCMA have hired **Erika Goodwin** as a part-time advertising representative. Goodwin, who also works for the Napa and Solano medical

societies, will sell display and classified advertising for both [Marin Medicine](#) and [Sonoma Medicine](#) magazines, as well as the News Briefs newsletters and the annual county physician directories. Physicians and others interested in placing display or classified ads in North Bay publications should contact Goodwin at 707-548-6491 or solanomedsoc@sbcglobal.net.

CMA offers updates on Accountable Care Organizations

CMA has begun distributing information on Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), a component of the new health reform legislation that is intended to encourage greater coordination of care under Medicare. An ACO is a collection of physicians who join together to coordinate care, share clinical information and report on quality measures.

An initial CMA document, "The Basics About ACOs," has been posted at marinmedicalsociety.org/resources. Sample questions and answers appear below.

Why create an ACO?

ACOs that meet spending benchmarks will receive bonus payments. These payments will be based on the percent of Medicare Part A hospital savings and Part B physician savings in the community served by the ACO. The idea behind the policy is that greater coordination will improve quality of care, prevent costly hospital visits and ultimately produce a more cost-effective health care system.

What is allowed to be an ACO?

ACOs can be networks of individual physician practices, such as solo and small group physicians; an Independent Provider Association (IPA) or a large medical group; or a fully integrated physician-hospital system, but an ACO does not have to involve a hospital. Most IPAs, medical groups and physician organizations would qualify as ACOs as they currently exist.

How do you set up an ACO?

That is still to be determined. The health care reform bill only provides general terms for the creation of ACOs. Before ACOs are actually implemented, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will issue detailed regulatory guidelines.

Where can I get more information about ACOs?

CMA will be providing regular updates, as regulations take shape, and offer members legal and administrative guidance on how to set up and qualify as an ACO. Sign up at legalinfo@cmanet.org.

Medicare simplifies Meaningful Use requirements for EHRs

In response to comments from CMA and others, Medicare has greatly simplified the Meaningful Use criteria for electronic health record systems. The final EHR rule, released by Medicare in July, also gives physicians more flexibility to choose measures that apply to their specialty. In addition, there are protections for physicians practicing in areas lacking health information technology (HIT) infrastructure, such as health information exchanges and immunization registries.

A summary of the final Meaningful Use rule is available in the HIT resource center at cmanet.org/hit.

POLST kit now available in Spanish

Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) last year became a legally recognized document, similar to the widely used "do not resuscitate" (DNR) orders. The POLST form, used for patients with a serious illness or whose life expectancy is a year or less, outlines a plan of care reflecting the patient's wishes concerning medical treatment and interventions at life's end. The POLST form complements an advance directive by turning a patient's treatment preferences into actionable medical orders.

CMA's POLST kit includes legal forms and wallet identification cards, and answers frequently asked questions about end-of-life issues. The kits are available in both English and Spanish and can be purchased from CMA's online bookstore at cmanet.org/bookstore. Single copies are \$5 for members or \$6 for nonmembers. Significant discounts are available on bulk purchases. Order 10 kits and members pay \$2.13 each. Order 100 and pay just \$1.53 per kit. (To receive your member discount, be sure to log in before you place the items in your shopping cart.) For more details, contact Samantha Pellon at 916-551-2872 or spellon@cmanet.org.

Save the date: Medical volunteers honored on Nov. 18

A celebration of medical volunteers for Operation Access and the Specialty Access Coalition will be held in Novato on Thursday evening, Nov. 18. The event—which includes wine, hors d'oeuvres, music and mingling—will recognize medical volunteers in Sonoma and Marin counties. Invitations are forthcoming.

PEOPLE

Three board-certified physicians have joined the Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation Care Center in Greenbrae. **Gyorgy Pataki, MD**, is an internist with special interests in cardiology, sports medicine and musculoskeletal disorders. **Mary Burke, MD**, is a psychiatrist who specializes in child/adolescent psychiatry. **Christine Jacobsen, MD**, is a dermatologist with expertise in general, surgical and pediatric dermatology. Sutter Pacific now includes more than 20 physicians in Marin County, and more than 240 in San Francisco and the North Bay.

HOSPITAL/CLINIC UPDATES

Marin General Hospital, in cooperation with Marin IPA and the Prima Medical Group, has established the Prima Medical Foundation. The new organization, which is expected to include 60 to 80 physicians in all specialties, is intended to help the hospital remain competitive after its transition to district control.

APPLICANTS

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* board certified

CLASSIFIEDS

How to submit a classified ad

To submit a classified ad for MMS News Briefs or Marin Medicine, contact Erika Goodwin at solanomedsoc@sbcglobal.net or 707-548-6491. 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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