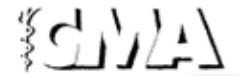




North Coast Physician



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Cover Photo
"BAMBOO FLUTES"
STEPHEN KAMELGARN, M.D.

The Editorial and Publications Committee encourages our member's comments for publication. Please submit electronically prior to the 15th of the month preceding publication.

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FORGING AHEAD – TOGETHER

Richard Thorp, MD, FACP



In the weeks and months leading up to the beginning of my presidency, and in the weeks and months since, California and the nation have experienced some of the most sweeping changes in health care we have ever seen.

As we forge down this path, I have been honored to stand with you – the physician community – advocating for the noble profession we have chosen and for our patients, who count on us to stand up for them.

Hurdle after hurdle faced the California Medical Association (CMA) in 2013, but together we pushed through. The state legislature introduced over 20 bills last year that would expand the scope of practice for allied health professionals – putting patients in harm’s way and breaking down the physician/patient relationship. Advocacy efforts by you and the CMA team ensured that we protected that relationship and were able to stop those efforts from moving forward.

Of course, we cannot ignore the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the challenges that have come with it. The rollout of our state’s health

benefit exchange, Covered California, has been met with some challenges – but the regulatory and advocacy staff at CMA have continued to voice our concerns and opinions, ensuring that the physician voice is heard and that policies are developed to reflect the real practice of medicine throughout California. We know that having health insurance is not the same thing as having access to care – ultimately, patients being able to see a doctor when they need one will be the true measure of success for Covered California.

While these changes and challenges that have routinely tested the House of Medicine were met and overcome, the biggest challenge to face CMA is yet to come. In 2013, the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act, or MICRA, was put to the test by trial attorneys and their public front group, Consumer Watchdog. Demonstrations at the State Capitol were followed by paid advertisements and public displays across the state, including at our own House of Delegates session in October.

Unable to convince the Legislature to make their desired changes to MICRA,

Consumer Watchdog has taken its proposal to the voters and submitted an initiative that, if qualified, will appear on the November 2014 ballot. This misleading measure will have unintended consequences that will be felt by everyone across the state – increased health care costs and decreased access to quality medical treatment is what Californians will be faced with should the initiative pass.

If ever there has been a time for physicians to stand together and be heard, it is now. It is up to us to communicate with and advocate for the patients who will bear the brunt of this costly, dangerous measure. We have risen up and above challenges before, and we must do it again.

A united voice that speaks in unison is the only way we can speak – 40,000 members strong. If you have not engaged in the fight to oppose this ballot measure yet – I urge you to do so today, as this proposal will impact our profession and our families for decades to come. Please visit www.cmanet.org/micra to find out how you, too, can make a difference. §

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: ATTENDANCE ENCOURAGED

- PHYSICIAN COMMUNITY HEALTH WALK: MAY 17, 2014 - 11:00 A.M. - EUREKA BOARDWALK
(MEET @ FOOT OF F STREET)**
- WOMEN IN MEDICINE GATHERING: MAY 18, 2014 11 A.M. HOST: CAROLINE CONNOR, MD**
- FRIDAY FUN ROUNDS, JUNE 6 - 6 P.M. - HOST: ANDREW COCHRANE, MD LOCATION TBA**

Please contact the Medical Society if you’re interested in “Hosting” and event and/or participating in the Physician Community Health Walk, hdncms@sbcglobal.net

PRESERVE POLIO SOCIETY

Emily Dalton, M.D.



Whenever one of my patients refuses vaccines for their child, I cringe. Why turn down one of the best medical protections available? Vaccines have prevented massive numbers of deaths and uncountable lives of anguish. Refusing them makes as much sense as refusing clean water or sanitation systems. For those of us with basic medical and scientific knowledge, this decision is incomprehensible.

However, for the average parent, vaccines may seem incomprehensible. Medical science has advanced to the point where many people can't understand how vaccines work, and don't appreciate the benefits they have brought about. Most parents don't have a scientific education, so in decision-making they rely on the loudest voices that jive with their inner sense of values. The collective memory of children in iron lungs or infants coughing themselves to death from pertussis is gone, so fear of disease has been removed from the equation. In modern times we see the benefits of our new vaccines by looking at statistics from population studies, which most parents don't read or know how to interpret. Newer vaccines prevent diseases that were relatively rare to begin with--meningitis, epiglottitis, diarrheal dehydration, etc. so the beneficial impact is really only appreciated by those of us who work in medicine or read statistical studies. Vaccines have been devalued.

Many of my patients refuse the HPV vaccine because they don't want their children having sex. This is illogical, but it's almost as if they believe there is something seedy about the vaccine. As soon as I say the words "genital warts" their eyes glaze over, and I know I have lost them. Vaccines have been made dirty.

One anti vaccine website at www.vaccina-

tiondebate.net claims that vaccines are ineffective, are made of toxic poisons that will reduce your child's vitality, and that childhood infections like measles or whooping cough are beneficial to a child's health. Poor vaccines! They need a reputation watcher. Vaccines have been made dangerous.

One way to understand the phenomenon of not vaccinating is to view it through a lens of power and control. Parents want the right to choose what they feel is best for their children; they don't want to be told what to do. They want a menu with choices at the doctor's, and in this way feel they are participating in the decision making about what happens with their child. Ironically, refusing a vaccine makes them feel like good parents: they have spent time "researching" the issue, they have paid attention and reviewed each side of the argument and they have made the best decision they can out of love and concern for their child. They are doing the most basic thing that all good parents do: protect their child. Unfortunately, they are protecting their children from medical care instead of from disease. Vaccines have been made into a power struggle.

One of the most frustrating aspects in dealing with the anti-vaxxers is that these beliefs do not respond to evidence. You can show parents the studies demonstrating the safety and efficacy of vaccines, and argue yourself blue in the face and they remain absolutely resolute in their convictions. After battling this issue repeatedly, I am discouraged. I have reached the point where I am almost ready to say....If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. In fact, if vaccines are as bad and evil and toxic and damaging as the anti-vaccine camp would have us believe, someone should be organizing to abolish them!

I propose a new advocacy group that I think the anti-vaxxers can get behind: the "Pre-

serve Polio Society" (viruses have rights too). Through this society, the anti-vaccine folks could put their money where their mouth is and advocate for the abolition vaccines and the return of vaccine preventable illnesses. We could set up debates with the Rotarians or the World Health Organization (who are working to eradicate polio worldwide) so the public could hear both sides of the issue.

Here are some of the key points that the Preserve Polio Society could use to promote it's agenda:

1. Polio is a natural infection, and therefore healthier than an artificial vaccine.
2. In any case, death is natural too.
3. Vaccinating is unfair to the medical supply companies whose businesses have been drastically curtailed by fewer people in wheel chairs!
4. How else are we going to curb overpopulation?
5. Viruses have rights too!
6. Walking is overrated.
7. Breathing is overrated.

Join the Preserve Polio Society today. Let's bring back polio NOW!. Like us on Facebook and Twitter. §

Did You Know....

The Medical Society offers NOTARY PUBLIC services for our members at no charge.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

*Also refer to Practice Opportunities on our website
www.hdncms.org*

FAMILY MEDICINE MD/DO:

Fortuna Family Medical Group (Full or Part Time).

Contact: Dr. Jutila: 725-3334, home.md@suddenlink.net

Open Door Clinic, McKinleyville, Crescent City and Eureka sites. Contact: cwebb@opendoorhealth.com

PSYCHIATRY:

Humboldt County Mental Health (707) 476-2349 or
personnel@co.humboldt.ca.us apply on-line @
www.co.humboldt.ca.us/jobs.

NURSE PRACTITIONER/PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Eureka Family Practice (Full Time).

Contact Lorraine (707) 443-8335.

David Gans, M.D. (temp) Contact: Debbie Mitchell 822-7220

Arcata Sports Medicine: Contact: Debbie Mitchell 822-7220

PROPERTY FOR SALE/ RENT/ LEASE

FOR LEASE: Join our new professional medical facilities near Mad River Hospital. Build to suit in new Planned Unit Development. 1200 - 4000 sq. ft. spaces. Contact Mark , 707-616-4416 or e-mail: Jones202@suddenlink.net.

MISCELLANEOUS

FIREWOOD FOR SALE. Call (707) 499-2805

SAVE THE DATE

PSYCHIATRY CONFERENCE

June 7, 2014

Red Lion Hotel

8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

5.0 Hour's AMA PRA Category 1



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CMA REIMBURSEMENT
HOTLINE: (888) 401-5911**

Did You Know.....

Legal Help Available

CMA's online health law library contains over 4,500 pages of On-Call documents and valuable information for member physicians and their staff. Access to the library is free to members. See index on Page 93 in your 2014 Physician Membership Resource Directory.

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