

The Advocate

Newsletter

July 2005

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The President's message

As the new president of ADEMS I want to thank all those who have helped my transition and that of our new Executive Director, Andrea Chase. We began the new year for the Society with the annual meeting and two strategic planning sessions. I would like to share with you some of the great ideas for the Society that have come from these meetings.

Our first and most pressing need identified is improved communication. We are focusing on our Website and email communication with our physicians as big issues for the next year. We have begun the process with a change over of systems at the Society to a Windows system and new computers. We will be building a master calendar for the South Metro physicians with meeting schedules and hospital events listed in one place. This calendar will also link to the Colorado Medical Society website for more widespread information dissemination. Second, practice viability is a focus for all of our physicians. We will be hosting a technology vendor fair October 14-15th for physicians and staff, we will continue to provide both clinical and business educational meetings for our members, and we are working to set up both a job service program (for help with staffing) and a nurse program (to help our nurses with education and collegial exchange).

To a broader outlook for our Society, we are addressing our affiliations in our community, with legislation and with physicians who are not yet members. The participants in the strategic planning meeting felt that we need a greater presence in our community in leadership and promoting health. The Society and the CMS are taking an active role in Colorado legislative process. Please read the first of our legislative columns which will appear monthly and will address the upcoming issues in Colorado and nationally written by Dr. Bob Brockmann our current Secretary.

We also hope to reach out not only to new physicians in our community, but to physicians who have been here for many years but have not joined the society... The AMA slogan is an apt one "Together we are stronger". The Arapahoe-Douglas-Elbert Medical Society is currently about 900 members strong, the second largest in Colorado. We encompass five hospitals and three of the fastest growing communities in the state. We need to continue to work together on issues which affect not only our ability to be financially solvent as we practice medicine but also the actual environment in which we practice.

From the time I started practice in 1991, the "landscape" of medicine has changed greatly. In 1991, managed care was just beginning; now it controls everything we do as physicians. Reduced reimbursement and rising costs have placed many of us, myself included, in a situation where we try to work harder, do more and feel frustrated that our time with patients and our control over our practices is continuing to erode. These changes have come, some gradually and some rapidly, for the most part without our input. Nationally, health care is under scrutiny because of the documented quality shifts and the rising costs. *Physicians must be a part of the solution* or we will be even more dissatisfied than we are now. I'm a very busy internist with a full practice and certainly need no further "work"- but work is what we need to do to make the situation better. Who better than ourselves to address the issues for our patients, their families and our practices- certainly not a health plan or a governmental agency. I implore you to join the society if you are not a member and if you are a member -- get involved! Participate, with ADEMS as it moves forward and speaks with one voice for nearly a thousand physicians.

Over my desk at work I keep this quote from one of my mentors from medical school, Dr Daniel Foster. It helps keep me focused on what I am doing and why.

"There are not many things in this world of today that are consistently good. But one thing is: the competent and compassionate physicians that day-to-day prevent premature death and cure when possible, who relieve symptoms when cure is not possible, and who comfort always. These are the classic duties of physicians, and the world would be much worse off without us. I think we should be proud of this way of life. It is to be undivided in the fight against illness and premature death. It is to study until we retire or die, so that we are ever competent, trustworthy in our knowledge for every patient that comes to us. And it is to be kind. Tired or rested, kind."

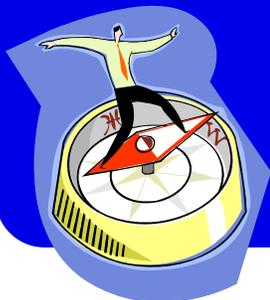


Ellen Burkett, MD



Dr. Robert Brockmann, ADEMS Secretary, will have a new legislative column each month

“There now exists a huge opportunity for meaningful changes”



Physicians at the helm of change

As I sit inside watching another Colorado spring storm, I am reminded of the storm brewing in Colorado health-care politics. Opportunities for improving our State’s healthcare system will emerge during this next year amidst what will likely be much political wrangling and upheaval. It wasn’t too long ago that any discussion of changing the healthcare system was met with stiff opposition. It was political dynamite, not to be played with. The vested interests were just too entrenched, powerful and influential. Much has changed in the last decade. Here are a few facts:

The public has become increasingly aware that we are not “the best healthcare system in the world”, as some politicians were once fond of saying. There is no dispute that we are capable of providing the best care to an individual patient money can buy, but that’s not the same as having a great healthcare system. A JAMA report ranked our system eleventh among twelve peer nations, and the World Health Organization places us at an embarrassing 37th out of 191 industrialized nations (just behind Costa Rica). We do poorly in these rankings because, while we excel in high end, high tech care for a few patients, we fail miserably in providing basic care for many more. Colorado ranks 50th (that’s 50th out of 50 states) in on-time immunizations, and 48th in providing first trimester care. Only 2/3rds of pregnant women receive any adequate care at all. There are now close to ¾ million uninsured people right here in Colorado, and an equal number of underinsured. The number of Coloradans with little or no health care is growing rapidly. At the same time, even among the insured, studies continue to show that while many patients do not get the basic, simple, inexpensive, and proven interventions and medicines that comprise currently accepted standards of care, other patients receive extraordinary, costly, exorbitant care. There are great disparities in the quality and distribution of the care that is delivered, and these gaps are growing.

As a society, we spend 1.8 trillion dollars every year on healthcare for our people, although about one in six do not get regular basic care. This cost is growing at about 9% each year. We, the People, through our tax dollars, pay about one half that bill, and we, the same people, pay the other half through policy premiums, including insurance premiums businesses pay as part of employee compensation. The costs are growing, and it will soon become difficult, if not impossible, for individuals or businesses to continue to afford healthcare. For those households buying their own insurance, health care premiums rival mortgage payments as the largest household expense. For business, it has become a huge financial obligation. General Motors spends more on healthcare premiums for its employees than it does on steel to make its cars! Healthcare expenditures now account for 15% of our GNP, and is the largest single expense in the government budget. As a society, we spend more per capita on health care than any other nation on earth, and yet are evidently not getting what we’re paying for. These costs are growing unchecked.

These two factors, the growing delivery disparities coupled with out of control costs, are combining to get the attention of the public and politicians alike, and cannot be ignored.

Ready for some good news? All the interested players, from patients to politicians to business leaders to, yes, even us physicians, now realize the system must change. It is now obvious to all that the current system does not meet the needs of society, is unsatisfactory to many, and is fiscally unsustainable. Some want big changes and some want small changes. The only certainty is that there is little agreement on what those changes should be. But the first big hurdle, the recognition that things must change, has been crossed. Regardless of their motivations, there is a growing willingness among our political leaders to address many of the health care system problems facing Colorado. Several bipartisan legislative efforts are already underway. Referendums C and D, which enjoy broad bipartisan support and sponsorship, will increase funding for health, education, and transportation projects using existing tax revenues (more on this in upcoming issues). The Colorado Legislature has already formed several study groups to look at nearly all facets of health care and it’s financing in Colorado, with reports and recommendations due by the next legislative session next fall. Hang on to your hats, it’s going to be a stormy summer!

There now exists a huge opportunity for meaningful changes. This summer, your state and county medical societies will be jumping into the political fray in an unprecedented effort to become involved in Colorado’s health policy development from the ground up. Rather than just reacting to the latest legislative threat, your medical societies are becoming proactively involved in shaping the future of Colorado medicine. Future newsletters will keep you informed, discuss specific issues, and offer suggestions on what you can do to help. What can you do today? Join your state and local medical society. We are stronger when we stand united!

Welcome New Society Members!

Radhika Acharya-Leon, D.O.

Oncology

Rocky Mountain Cancer Center
22 W. Dry Creek Cr.
Littleton 80120

303-730-4700 fax 303-730-4790

M.D.: Midwestern University

Arthur F. Ferrer, M.D.

Family Practice

Highlands Ranch Family Medicine, PC
9088 S. Ridgeline Blvd. #106
Highlands Ranch 80129

720-344-0139 fax 720-344-0172

M.D.: Lyceum Northwestern University, Philippines

Kenneth K. Lee, M.D.

Pediatric Gastroenterology

Rocky Mtn. Pediatric Gastroenterology
9224 Teddy Lane #200
Lone Tree 80124

303-869-2121 fax 303-869-2266

M.D.: James Quillen College

Richard J. Bellon, M.D.

Radiology

Radiology Imaging Associates
10700 E. Geddes Ave. #200
Englewood 80112

303-761-9190 fax 303-761-6278

M.D.: Case Western University

Patricia A. Howell, M.D.

Family Practice

Family Practice Inpatient
3535 S. Logan St. #D347
Englewood 80113

303-321-9700 fax 720-941-6230

M.D.: University of Nevada

Anne M. Lent, M.D.

Allergy, Asthma & Immunology

Allergy & Asthma Consultants of the Rockies
3601 S. Clarkson #200
Englewood 80113

303-274-4573 fax 303-761-0943

M.D.: University of Minnesota

Dennis L. Carter, M.D.

Radiation/Oncology

Sky Ridge Radiation Oncology
10103 Ridge Gate Pkwy. #G01
Lone Tree 80124

720-225-4200 fax 720-225-4208

M.D.: University of Washington

Jonathan L. Hughes, D.O.

Anesthesiology

South Denver Anesthesiologists, PC
333 W. Hampden Ave. #600
Englewood 80110

303-761-5646 fax 303-761-7989

M.D.: Western University

Dexter S. Levy, M.D.

Family Practice

Solo Practice
8966 W. Bowles Ave. #L
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303-972-2727 fax 303-972-8652

M.D.: SUNY at Buffalo

Anne M. Coury, M.D.

Obstetrics/Gynecology

The Women's Group
6179 S. Balsam Wy. #200
Littleton 80123

303-933-2555 fax 303-948-3200

M.D.: University of South Dakota

Eve D. Langston, M.D.

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M.D.: Loyola University

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Englewood 80110

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M.D.: Stritch School of Medicine

James R. Devito, M.D.

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Meridian Skin Care
9570 S. Kingston Ct. #100
Englewood 80112

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M.D.: Tulane University

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Anesthesiology

South Denver Anesthesiologists, PC
333 W. Hampden Ave. #600
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303-761-5648 fax 303-761-7989

M.D.: Loyola University

Asela C. Russell, M.D.

Obstetrics/Gynecology

Solo Practice
125 Inverness Dr. E. #210
Englewood 80112

303-755-1020 fax: 303-316-7143

M.D.: Duke University

Managed Care Contracts:

Read and Evaluate Before you Sign!

Insurance Companies offering managed care plans will often forward new agreements. Generally, the new agreement is accompanied by a positive cover letter explaining the rationale for the new agreement such as complying with federal or state mandated language changes, updating payment methodologies or possibly replacing a terminated agreement with an Independent Practice Association (IPA).

Generally, there is a positive spin conveyed in the cover letter, stating that changes in the new agreement will be favorable for the provider. Sometimes they are, sometimes they aren't. It is the prudent provider that reads, understands and evaluates how changes will impact their practice prior to signing the agreement; documented below are a several areas you may want to pay particular attention to.

- What type of an agreement is it, a group agreement or individual?
- What products are covered under the agreement, HMO, PPO, POS?
- What are the limitations to timely filing for claims?
- What is the time frame for claims payment and what recourse does the provider have if claims are not paid timely?
- What are the specific time frames for disputing a claim payment and are they reciprocal for the provider and the payor?
- Who and how may the Agreement be Amended, is it by written mutual consent?
- What is the termination period?
- Is there a dispute resolution process and what is the process?
- What is the payment methodology; is it clearly defined for all services the provider offers their patients (supplies, lab, unique services, drugs, etc.).
- If the payor is utilizing a percentage of Medicare's resource based relative value scale (RBRVS) will payment be differentiated by where the services are rendered, facility or non-facility based, is a specific year version referenced or is the rate fixed or floating from one year to the next?
- How are injectables, DME and lab reimbursed?
- How are cpt-4 codes reimbursed that do not have an allowable amount assigned?
- How does the proposed reimbursement in the new agreement compare to the reimbursement in the current agreement based on which services the provider offers their patients?

“It is the prudent provider that reads, understands and evaluates how changes will impact their practice prior to signing the agreement”...



Review contract specifics before signing!

Article provided by Robertson Consulting, Inc.

Welcome New Society Members!

(continued from page 3)

Todd J. Avant, M.D.

Family Practice

Hampden Medical Group
221 E. Hampden Ave.
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303-789-2251 f: 303-789-2505
M.D.: University of Minnesota

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M.D.: Duke University

Julie E. Jeffers, D.O.

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303-471-4711 f: 303-471-4767
M.D.: Touro University

Ian E. Parsons, M.D.

Family Practice

FPI – PC
3531 S. Logan St. #D347
Englewood 80113
303-519-8702 f: 303-973-8436
M.D.: Creighton University

ADEMS - on the web!

Over the next few weeks, ADEMS will launch its new website.

www.ademedicalsociety.org

Effective immediately, all email addresses have been changed to reflect our new domain name.

Darin Sandoval, Executive Assistant, may be reached at dsandoval@ademedicalsociety.org

Andrea Chase, Executive Director, may be reached at achase@ademedicalsociety.org

The changes you see will be continuing over the next several months to provide you with valuable resources and links. Look for:

- **Master Calendar** (ADEMS, ADEMMA, Hospital events..etc....)
- **Community Connection Page** (Community based activities/benefits and resources)

This is a continuing work in progress, but if you have any questions or ideas about content or applications, feel free to contact our office.

This is just one of the many ideas being applied from our recent Strategic Planning session. Our goal is to enhance the value of your membership. The new website will be a great tool to assist us in that effort.



“Our 2005 goal is to enhance the value of your membership”

2005 Colorado Medical Society Annual Meeting

Colorado at the Medical Crossroad



Get out your Road Map

The 2005 Annual Meeting for the Colorado Medical Society

is scheduled for :

September 15—18

Sheraton Steamboat Resort and Conference Center

Registration is now available at: www.cms.org

All members are welcome to attend. If you are interested in becoming an alternate delegate for ADEMS, please contact Andrea at 303-761-2887 or achase@ademedicalsociety.org

CMS Announces Plans for Transitioning to the National Provider Identifier (NPI) in the Fee-for Service Medicare Program

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announces the following plans for transitioning to the National Provider Identifier (NPI) in the Fee-for Service Medicare Program:

Between May 23, 2005 and January 2, 2006, CMS claims processing systems will accept an existing legacy Medicare number and reject, as unprocessable, any claim that includes only an NPI.

Beginning January 3, 2006, and

through October 1, 2006, CMS systems will accept an existing legacy Medicare number **or** an NPI as long as it is accompanied by an existing legacy Medicare number.

Beginning October 2, 2006, and through May 22, 2007, CMS systems will accept an existing legacy Medicare number **and/or** an NPI. This will allow for 6-7 months of provider testing before only an NPI will be accepted by the Medicare Program on May 23, 2007.

Beginning May 23, 2007, our systems will **only** accept an NPI .

For additional information, to complete an NPI application, and to access educational tools, visit <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> on the web.



“NPI will be accepted by the Medicare Program on May 23, 2007 after 6-7 months of provider testing”

Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Information

The fourth in a series of Medlearn Matters articles on the new Medicare prescription drug coverage was released on June 3, 2005. "New Educational Products Available" describes an upcoming mailing to beneficiaries, as well as new educa-

tional products/tools available to providers regarding drug coverage. Visit <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/drugcoverage.asp> to view the



ARAPAHOE-DOUGLAS-ELBERT MEDICAL MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

Annual Dinner

“Pig In The Park”

July 27, 2005

5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Westland Park, Center Pavilion

RSVP to 303-761-2887 or

dsandoval@ademedicalsociety.org

RETIRED/RETIRING PHYSICIAN LUNCHEON

Guest Speaker: Barbara O. Jacobsen,
Author and Project Cure Angel Ambassador

Topic: Presentation of her latest book

Swedish Medical Center

Spruce C

Monday, July 11, 2005

RSVP to 303-761-2887 or
dsandoval@ademedicalsociety.org

ADEMMA presents...

Human Resource Attorney,

Steve Moore

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Porter Adventist Hospital

11:45 am to 1:00 pm

Dinning Rooms 2 & 3

RSVP 303-761-2887

dsandoval@ademedicalsociety.org

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- MTC offers a \$15.00 per month discount to ADEMS member offices.
- MTC is a member in good standing with the Association of TeleServices International (www.atsi.org) We subscribe to ATSI's Code of Ethics and we participate annually in the Award of Excellence program.
- MTC is a member in good standing with the Denver/Boulder Better Business Bureau.

For more information contact us at:

Phn: (303) 761-6594
 Fax: (303) 761-4026
 E-mail: info@medteleco.com

See our website at: www.medteleco.com

Medical TeleCommunications
 777 East Girard Avenue, Suite 100
 Englewood, CO 80113



Important Notices:

Each month The advocate newsletter will have space to post notices for our members. Please contact us by the 15th of the month prior to place the notice.

Medical Office Equipment For Sale!

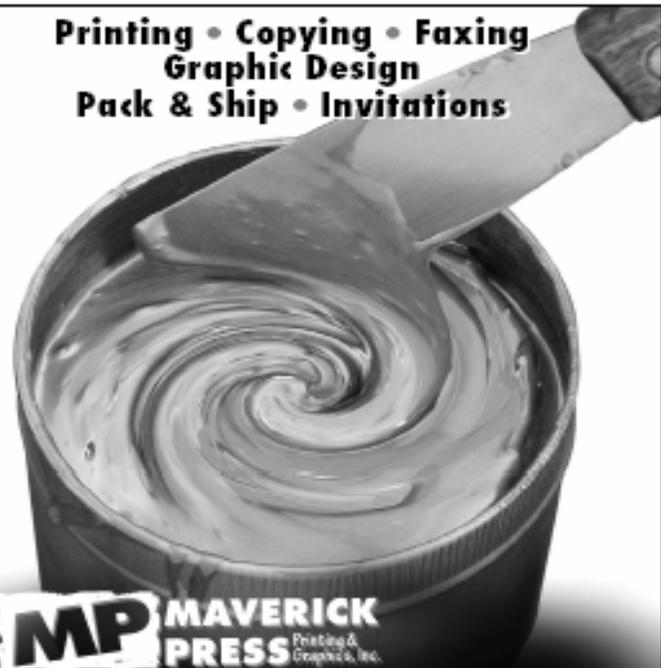
Nebulizers.; Playnix pediatric theme exam tables; Tympanogram ; Hemocue; Autoclave; Incubator; Small Refrigerator/Freezer (Two Door) ; Pulse Oximeter; Wall Blackboards; Standing Scale; Slant Chart Files; Playnax LG Dollhouse; Tv-Vcr Cabinet; Call 303-933-8250 before July 15th After July 15th call 303-979-7059

Join your colleagues and have fun while helping patients from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. the first Thursday of every month for Doctor Line 9 on Channel 9 News. It's everything you love about patient care without the things you hate – no paperwork, no hassles, no liability risks. Participants also get to take a tour of the studio and watch how they do the news live!

9 News & CMS Partnership

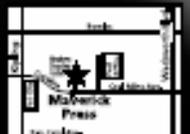
- Calendar of topics
- 7/7/05 Dermatology
- 8/4/05 Pediatrics/Back to School
- 9/1/05 Plastic Surgery
- 10/6/05 Women's Health
- 11/7/05 Ophthalmologists
- 12/1/05 Pain/Chronic Illness

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Responsive to your expectations....

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 Bruce R. Baird, M.D., *Swedish Medical Center*

Andrea Chase, *Executive Director*
 Darin Sandoval, *Executive Assistant*

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Calendar of Events:

	July																		
	4	Holiday	Independence Day																
	6	6:15 pm	(CEPM) Current Events in Practice Management																
	11	Noon	Retired/Retiring Physician Luncheon @ Swedish																
	12	6:15 pm	(PAC) Physician Advocacy Committee																
	13	7 - 9:00am	CMS - Auto Ins. / Tort reform Work session @ CMS																
	13	Noon	ADEMMA—Board of Directors																
	14	Noon	ADEMMA - Human Resource Attorney Presentation																
			@ Porter Adventist Hospital																
	19	6:15 pm	ADEMS - Board of Directors																
	27	5:00 pm	ADEMMA Annual Dinner @ Westland Park																



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