



Pennsylvania Orthopaedics

Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society

Summer 2005

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President's Message . . .

P. Christopher Metzger

As the summer heat wave begins, I am reminded of the heat that needs to be generated in the legislature this fall for increased medical liability reforms. Several recent reports indicate many of the reforms included in Act 13 have yet to take effect and Pennsylvania remains a hostile environment to practice medicine.

According to Act 13 of 2002, Insurance Commissioner Diane Koken will soon be determining whether adequate capacity exists in the private medical liability insurance market to assume \$750,000 of the mandated minimum \$1,000,000 coverage level. Currently, the private market provides \$500,000 coverage and the MCARE Fund provides the remaining \$500,000. If Commissioner Koken determines an adequate market exists, orthopaedic surgeons may experience premiums increases as high as 40 percent. Commissioner Koken was required to complete this market study by July 1. An announcement will follow.

A report released in May by the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council stated that Pennsylvania hospitals spent \$636 million in 2004 for medical liability insurance coverage—a stark reminder that millions of dollars in healthcare spending in our state has taken a detour away from patient care and into mandated liability insurance. These expenses do not include the millions of dollars spent by independent physicians. This report comes on the heels of an article from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration which states that medical malpractice claims against Pennsylvania physicians jumped to nearly \$450 million in 2004.

In early June, two independent studies released in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, funded by the PEW Charitable Trust's Project on Medical Liability, indicated Pennsylvania's liability system fails patients and poses a severe threat to patient access to specialty medical care. One study indicated that nine out of ten high-risk specialty surgeons in Pennsylvania practice defensive medicine out of fear of a frivolous lawsuit. The second study pointed to a difference in access to specialty surgeons between states with liability reforms vs. those without reforms. According to the study, states with reforms saw a higher increase in the number of physicians—fewer retiring early and more new doctors.

Clearly these published studies should assist in educating policy makers about the need for common sense liability reforms and also pose the question: Why aren't healthcare dollars being spent on healthcare? I urge you to ask legislators this question. The summer months present a perfect opportunity to visit your local legislator at his or her district office. Schedule an appointment to discuss not only medical liability, but insurance reforms for increased reimbursement and other reform measures pertinent to your practice. Development of a one-on-one relationship with state leaders is an important step in our grassroots advocacy efforts. They want our input! Don't be afraid to make suggestions regarding alternative solutions to the medical liability situation plaguing Pennsylvania. After experiencing a wonderful meeting in Orlando, we are looking forward to Pittsburgh in November.

Medicare Five-Year Review Officially Underway

AAOS needs your help to ensure orthopaedic surgeons receive adequate payment rates for treating Medicare patients

The Medicare five-year review of relative value units (RVUs) is an important process that examines the adequacy and relativity of payment rates under the Medicare physician fee schedule. The AAOS is an advocate for all orthopaedics in this process, but in order to be effective, it will need your help over the course of this summer.

Background

In 1992, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) established a fee schedule for Medicare that standardized payments to physicians using a resource-based relative value scale (RBRVS). Under RBRVS, every medical service and procedure is assigned an RVU that reflects the relative costs of resources required to provide that service. CMS updates the Medicare physician fee schedule on an annual basis.

In addition to annual updates to the Medicare fee schedule, CMS and the medical specialty societies conduct a comprehensive review of RVUs every five years and make any needed adjustments to the fee schedule. The five-year review process presents an opportunity to improve the accuracy and relativity of the RVUs listed in the fee schedule because it gives medical specialty societies the opportunity to identify undervalued services within the Medicare fee schedule. At the same time, the five-year review also provides CMS with the opportunity to identify and adjust overvalued services within the Medicare fee schedule.

Since the inception of RBRVS, there have been two five-year review cycles. In 1997, CMS and the medical specialty societies evaluated more than 1,000 services and procedures; in 2002, more than 800 medical services were evaluated. In both cycles, the AAOS was able to increase the RVUs for a number of musculoskeletal procedures.

A new five-year review process begins

In November 2004, Medicare initiated the third five-year review. There are 126 orthopaedic procedures under consideration during this five-year review. The AAOS identified 96 potentially undervalued procedures, while CMS identified 28 musculoskeletal procedures that were potentially overvalued. The vast majority of undervalued procedures identified by the AAOS were musculoskeletal tumor and fracture treatment codes. CMS targeted a wide array of procedures, including: total hip and knee replacement (27130 and 27447); joint injections (20600 and 20610); spine codes; wrist, hand, and finger codes; and several other fracture, cast, and X-ray codes commonly used by orthopaedic surgeons.

From May through August 2005, AAOS members will be asked to complete surveys for orthopaedic procedures identified in the

five-year review. These surveys gather information such as how long it takes to perform a procedure and how many postoperative visits (both hospital and office) are associated with a procedure. Surveys also ask you to compare the intensity and difficulty of two procedures in relation to one another.

Your data makes a difference

Surveys are an extremely important part of the five-year review process. The data collected from surveys is the primary method that specialty societies use to develop recommendations for Medicare reimbursement rates. If you are asked to complete a survey, it is vitally important for you to respond because Medicare reimbursement rates for the surveyed procedures might *decrease* if the AAOS cannot collect sufficient data. Since the five-year review directly impacts your Medicare reimbursement, the AAOS strongly encourages you to participate in the process. Please contact Daniel H. Sung, JD, policy analyst in the AAOS department of socioeconomic and state society affairs with any questions. Dr. Sung can be reached at 847-384-4320 or via e-mail at sung@aaos.org.

Sameer Nagda Named Winner of Spring Resident/ Fellow Competition

Sameer Nagda, MD, Chief Resident, Orthopaedic Surgery, Department of Orthopaedics, University of Pennsylvania, was named winner of the resident/fellow paper presentation competition held at the Spring 2005 Scientific Meeting in Florida in April for his presentation, *"Monitoring of Peripheral Nerve Function During Shoulder Arthroplasty Using Continuous Intraoperative Nerve Monitoring"*. **James L. Carey, MD and Fotios Paul Tjoumakaris, MD**, both residents in Orthopaedic Surgery, Department of Orthopaedics, University of Pennsylvania also presented at the spring meeting.

Competing at the Fall 2005 Scientific Meeting, November 17-18, at the Omni William Penn will be **Aidin Eslampour, MD**, Rothman Institute; **Kang-il Kim, MD**, Rothman Institute; **Sharat K. Kusuma, MD, MBA**, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; **Anjan R. Shah, MD**, Drexel University; **Jesse Torbert, MD**, University of Pennsylvania; and **Brian Vannozzi MD**, University of Pennsylvania.

Behind the Headlines...



Legislative Chair, Chip Hummer, MD (left) and Senator Jeff Piccola (right) appeared on *Behind the Headlines*, a Harrisburg-based television program which provides insights into current events affecting Pennsylvanians, such as the economy, health care, taxes, the environment, schools, and how taxpayer money is being spent. The show, which aired July 11, focused on Access to Patient Care in Pennsylvania. For more information or to download visit www.susvalleypolicy.org and click on *Behind the Headlines*.

50 Years and Growing Stronger— Historical Information Sought

In 2006, the Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. The POS anniversary will provide an excellent opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of POS and inspiring advances in orthopaedic surgery as well as promote POS and the importance of orthopaedic medicine. The 50th Anniversary celebration will focus on current and prospective POS members, as well as patients, the public, elected officials, and other key decision-makers in Pennsylvania.

POS staff needs your assistance in gathering historical information, stories, data, and artifacts. Your participation will be appreciated. Not only will you be contributing to a meaningful celebration for POS, you will also be helping the AAOS to prepare for its 75th Anniversary celebration in 2008.

Do you have any anecdotes about POS members who have made a difference in the practice of orthopaedic medicine, events that have mobilized POS members into action (political, regulatory, natural disasters, economic crisis, wars, etc.), photos, orthopaedic devices, or surgical instruments to share? Or do you have a contact within an orthopaedic device company who would loan appropriate artifacts to POS for display?

If you can help, please contact beth@paorthosociety.org or call 717-909-8901.

PENNSYLVANIA ORTHOPAEDIC SOCIETY CALENDAR

POS Fall 2005 Scientific Meeting

"Controversies in Hip and Knee Arthroplasty"

Gerald A. Engh, MD
Anderson Clinic

Mark Hartzband, MD
Orthopaedic Spine
& Sports Medicine Ctr

Arlen D. Hanssen, MD
Mayo Clinic

Alfred J. Tria, Jr., MD
Orthopaedic Center
of New Jersey

November 17 & 18, 2005

Omni William Penn
Pittsburgh, PA

POS Spring 2006 Scientific Meeting

"Upper Extremity—Shoulder to the Hand Arthroplasty, Trauma and Arthroscopy"

May 4-6, 2006

Atlantis, Paradise Island
The Bahamas

Free Osteoporosis Screenings Provided by POS Staff at Senior Expo



POS staff member, Colin Gabler, assists with a bone density screening.

In recognition of May as Osteoporosis month, Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society

staff provided free osteoporosis screenings at the 6th Annual Dauphin County Senior Expo in Hershey on May 31. Screenings were performed using an ultrasound based Lunar Achilles Insight heel scanner provided by GE Healthcare. The scanner which measures bone density, can aid in early detection of osteoporosis. More than 100 attendees received a free bone density screening, while other participants visited the booth to learn about bone health, patient safety, and growing access to care issues in Pennsylvania.

Spring 2005 Scientific Meeting Goals Accomplished

Thanks to the efficiency and aplomb of Program Chair **Wayne J. Sebastianelli, MD**, POS enjoyed a very successful meeting at Disney's Grand Floridian in Orlando, Florida, April 14-16, 2005. With nearly 100 physicians in attendance, the sports medicine meeting proved both educational and entertaining.



Taking advantage of a session break are (left to right) guest speaker Peter J. Fowler, MD, FRCS; POS President, P. Christopher Metzger, MD; guest speaker Kenneth E. DeHaven, MD and POS Spring 2005 Program Chair, Wayne Sebastianelli, MD



Meeting attendees, staff, and exhibitors take time to enjoy the fun, as well as tasty, side of Disney's Grand Floridian while enroute to the buses taking them to Disney's "IllumiNations" fireworks show.

Exhibitor Company Support Appreciated by POS Members

The Society extends sincere thanks and appreciation to the following companies for their support of the 2005 Spring Meeting in Orlando.



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Orthopaedics



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- R&B Medical, Inc. • Physician-
- Owned Surgery Centers •
- MedEast Post-Op & Surgical, Inc/
- GBA, Inc. • Smith and Nephew
- Orthopaedics • Southwood
- Healthcare Affiliates • Synergy
- Orthopedics-Donjoy • Physical
- Rehab Management • Medical
- Concepts (Linvatec) • Orthopedic
- Products Sales • Scandius
- BioMedical, Inc • IsoTis Ortho-
- Biologics • Stryker Orthopaedics
- OsteoBiologics, Inc • Stryker
- Endoscopy • Sanofi-Aventis •
- Synthes (USA) • Medstrat, Inc.
- Zimmer



Practicing in Pennsylvania: A Look at Thomas S. Muzzonigro, MD, Tri-Rivers Surgical Associates, Inc., Pittsburgh

Thomas S. Muzzonigro, MD, earned his medical degree from Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, New York and in 2001 completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where he served as a clinical instructor in orthopaedics. Although he grew up in New York, found love in sunny California before returning to New York to attend medical school in the Bronx, there's no place Thomas Muzzonigro and his wife of 15 years, Debbie, would rather call home than Pittsburgh, PA.

As a husband and father of three—Cassie, 13, and Hanna, 11, who both play volleyball and soccer; and T.J., 9, who enjoys football, basketball, and baseball, he values the strong sense of community, quality of education, and traditional environment of the keystone state. As an orthopedic surgeon, he enjoys the opportunity to practice with talented and caring colleagues at Tri Rivers Surgical Associates, Inc., one of Pittsburgh's finest orthopaedic services.

"I expect surgical and technological advancements to add to the excitement of practicing orthopaedic surgery in the future."

Dr. Muzzonigro has found a unique balance between his work and his family life. He serves as a team physician for the Pine-Richland Rams and Mars Planets, along with his partner, **D. Kelly Agnew, MD**. Dr. Muzzonigro said, "I love covering the sidelines on Friday nights. The excitement is palpable—my own kids are out in the stands, and I get to relate with the students during the game and relax with the parents and my neighbors after the game." This community service is what sets sports medicine apart from other fields and one of the many things that attracted Dr. Muzzonigro to orthopaedics as a medical student.

He said, "Orthopaedic medicine remains an exciting and rewarding field that combines patient care, medicine and surgery. Sports medicine brings the physician into the community and can be a fun basis for community service. In my own experience, I am frequently sought out by those with whom I play sports regarding orthopaedics."

The relationships he has with his patients are what make Dr. Muzzonigro exceptional. "I have a low-key approach to the physician-patient relationship that is similar to my style with friends," he said. He credits his physician assistant, **Gretchen Fineman, PA-C**, with giving him the opportunity to spend more time with new and current patients. "Time" he said, "is the

greatest challenge to getting to know patients—developing rapport, developing a working diagnosis, and then making informed surgical decisions." He continued, "With advances in technology and information,



Thomas S. Muzzonigro, MD, above, performing an arthroscopic procedure on one of his patients.

patients are becoming better educated. Advertising has also added to interesting patient discussions, as patients often have specific questions about surgical approaches and implant design." He believes these relationships will only improve as patients become more and more knowledgeable about medicine. He added, "I see the practice of orthopaedic medicine growing in terms of the population growth of the baby boomers and Americans being and staying more active. I also expect continued surgical and technological advancements to add to the excitement of practicing orthopaedic surgery in the future."

Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeons

Board-certified orthopaedic surgeons are being sought for non-treatment disability evaluation centers throughout New York State:

- Full-time & part-time employment
- Malpractice included
- New York practice NOT required to perform exams

For more information, please reply with CV to:

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Representative John Perzel Honored by OrthoPAC Leadership Circle

Members of OrthoPAC's prestigious Leadership Circle held an intimate gathering for House Speaker John Perzel on May 12 in Philadelphia. Discussion focused on



Left to right, Jeffrey A. Baum, MD; P. Christopher Metzger, MD; Rep. John M. Perzel; Arthur R. Bartolozzi, MD; William Markmann, MD; and Lewis S. Sharps, MD

medical liability reforms needed and initiatives to improve the delivery of Orthopaedic care in Pennsylvania. Perzel thanked the surgeons for being a valuable resource on "The Hill" and said he looks forward to championing MCARE efforts in the fall and medical liability reforms next year.

Annual John Lachman Lecture to be Featured by POS

The John Lachman Society (JLS), named in honor of the former Professor and Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Temple University, is proud to sponsor an annual guest speaker for POS fall scientific meetings. The society was founded by a group of orthopaedics surgeons concerned with ethics, education and quality of patient care to recognize Dr. Lachman's dedication to these principles. JLS president **John D. Kelly IV, MD** stated, "The society wishes to promote the values and principles which Dr. Lachman demonstrated in his career. Those values are patient care, education, and integrity. The JLS wishes to accomplish its goals through the funding of lectures dealing with ethical issues embracing orthopedics, the publication of the JLS newsletter, and the formation of the JLS research fund—a means in assisting resident research."

JLS sponsored speaker David F. Apple, MD, Medical Director, Shepherd Center, Atlanta, Georgia for the POS Inaugural John Lachman Lecture held at POS's Fall Scientific Meeting at the Park Hyatt Philadelphia at The Bellevue in Philadelphia, November 2004. Dr. Apple spoke on "Practical Ethics in Orthopaedic Practice." John A. Bergfeld, M.D., Director of Medical Affairs for Cleveland Clinic Sports Health and President of the International Society of Arthroscopy, Knee Surgery and Orthopaedic Sports Medicine, also sponsored by JLS, will address "Should the Team Doctor Pay to Play" at the POS Fall 2005 Scientific Meeting being held November 17 and 18.

For more information on the John Lachman Society, please contact Joseph S. Torg, MD at torgjs@tuhs.temple.edu

Physical Therapy—your help is still needed

Please contact your congressional delegation (Representatives and Senators), on behalf of The Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society, and ask them to **not co-sponsor physical therapy direct Access bills** H.R. 1333 and S. 647. Additional cosponsors are being added daily. Below you will find a list of co-sponsors as of June 20, 2005. If members of your congressional delegation are already cosponsors, a letter is still appropriate—let him or her know that you are aware of their co-sponsorship and why this is bad public policy. They need to hear from you because you can be assured, they **are** hearing from the physical therapists! Please contact beth@paorthosociety.org for additional information or sample letter(s).

House Bill 1333 sponsor **Senate Bill S. 647 co-sponsors**
Rep. Melissa Hart (PA-4) *Sen. Arlen Specter*

House Bill 1333 co-sponsors
Rep. Phil English (PA-3) *Rep. Joseph Pitts (PA-16)*
Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick (PA-8) *Rep. Todd Platts (PA-19)*
Rep. Jim Gerlach (PA-6) *Rep. Bill Shuster (PA-9)*
Rep. Tim Murphy (PA-18)

3PSC Golf Tournament a Success



POS members Dean Trevlyn, MD, left, Curt Miller, MD, right, with wife Cindy Miller, center, on the 10th hole at the 3PSC Golf Tournament

Have You Contributed Yet?

Thanks to your support, POS saved orthopaedic surgeons the cost of their 2005 MCARE surcharge by prioritizing MCARE relief for high-risk specialists. Although we have been successful for the past three years, MCARE relief remains a priority. A tough fight is expected for the present budget cycle as the state faces budget challenges due to Medicaid cost increases.

We are asking **EVERY POS MEMBER** to contribute \$1000—just a fraction of your savings from the 2005 MCARE abatement—to help us get meaningful relief for patients and for ourselves. Your contribution will be used for education and advocacy for orthopaedic surgeons to assist in achieving our legislative goals. If you can't give \$1000, give what you can!

POS extends its appreciation to the following members who have already generously contributed to our grassroots efforts:

Jack Abboudi, MD	Michael Dolecki, MD	Jeffery A. Mogerman, MD
John A. Avallone, DO	James H. Ellison, MD	David C. Napoli, MD
Vincent R. Avallone, DO	John R. Frankeny II, MD	D. Scott Nord, MD
Armando Avolio Jr., MD	John P. Furia, MD	A. Lee Osterman, MD
David J. Ball, DO	Chad Ghigiarelli, MD	Gerald W. Pifer, MD
Carl E. Becker II, MD	Alan P. Gillick, MD	John T. Rich Jr., MD
Robert J. Bischoff, MD	Robert P. Good, MD	Vincent J. Ripepi, DO
Gregory Bisignani, MD	Daniel L. Haffner, MD	Peter F. Sharkey, MD
Joseph G. Cesare, MD	Jack Henzes, MD	George T. Stollsteime, MD
Kim M. Clabbers, MD	William J. Jason, MD	Joseph P. Stracci, DO
Randall W. Culp, MD	Stephen J. Lowe, MD	Douglas C. Sutton, MD
Samuel D. D'Agata, MD	John D. Lubahn, MD	Dean W. Trevlyn, MD
Daniel J. D'Arco, MD	Edwin S. Malloy, MD	Trevor W. Yardley, MD
Walter W. Dearolf III, MD	Jeffrey Malumed, MD	David S. Zelouf, MD
William W. Demuth, MD	Leonard Marchinski, MD	Richard W. Ziegler, MD
John H. Doherty, Jr., MD	P. Christopher Metzger, MD	

To make a contribution, contact beth@paorthosociety.org or call 888.772.7900. Corporate contributions accepted.

New Members Welcomed by POS

Active:

Kim Clabbers MD, *Yardley*
John Deitch MD, *University Park*
James DeLullo MD, *Erie*
Kevin Freedman MD, *Bryn Mawr*
Jack Rocco MD, *Altoona*

Resident:

John Gibbs DO, *Danville*

Workers' Comp

—Revised Forms Update

Effective August 1, 2005, earlier versions of *Statement of Wages (LIBC 494C)* and the *Notification of Suspension or Modification Pursuant to 413 (C) & (D) (LIBC 751)* forms will no longer be accepted and will be returned. The Bureau has revised the Statement of Wages (LIBC-494C) and Notification of Suspension or Modification (LIBC-751). THE START DATE FOR UTILIZING THE REVISED FORMS HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO AUGUST 1, 2005. PRIOR VERSIONS OF THESE FORMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU. A notice of the revised forms was mailed to Pennsylvania workers' compensation insurers, employers, and third party administrators. A PDF version of each form is available on the web for referencing purposes only. The electronic copy is not to scale and cannot be used for reproduction. All revised forms must be tested and approved by the Bureau before usage. A printer's copy is available from the Bureau of Workers' Compensation Helpline by calling 800-482-2383 (toll free in Pennsylvania).

Additional forms and resources are available on the web at www.state.pa.us, PA Keyword: "workers' comp," then click on "Downloadable Forms."

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- Patient billing/statements
- Customized reports
- Verification of patient insurance eligibility
- Aged AR recovery program



Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society

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