



ALASKA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

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Summer 2011 Newsletter

26th Annual AKAFP Scientific Congress Marin Granholm MD

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Summer 2011 Alaska Academy of Family Physicians Newsletter! As a recent Anchorage transplant from Bethel, one of my goals as president-elect is to more effectively reach out to our often far-flung membership. Expect more email updates and newsletters, as well as updates on our web page: <http://www.alaskaafp.org>. We also have an active discussion on Facebook. All members are welcome to join: http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/home.php?sk=group_163468827020915.

The 26th Annual AKAFP Scientific Congress was June 16-19 in Seward, and a splendid

meeting, with beautiful weather and great CME. My then six-week old even took a break from his colic. The members' meeting was very busy. We reviewed our 2011 strategic plan, including the establishment of education, outreach and technology workgroups, as well as ongoing work on advocacy/practice enhancement and public health. We were also reminded we have funding for members to attend the AAFP's Annual Leadership Forum/National Conference of Special Constituencies in Kansas City in May 3-5; 2012. Please contact us if you would like to be involved in a work group or attend the meeting. We have several members in important national leadership positions: past president Barb Doty, MD was elected to the AAFP Board of Directors and current president John Cullen, MD is serving on a national Health Resources and Services Administration committee. Mary

Ann Foland MD, our immediate past president, is president-elect of the Alaska State Medical Association. Yours truly was elected as delegate for the National AAFP meeting this Fall, joining Drs. Cullen and Paul Davis as alternate. An alternate delegate position is still open—let us know if you are interested. We approved several draft resolutions for that meeting, with topics including appropriate scope of practice for naturopaths and a request for the AAFP to leave the AMA/Specialty Society Relative Value Scale Update Committee (RUC) (which many feel undervalues primary care). For further discussion and word smithing, visit our Facebook page; also see below. Mary Ann updated on us on the Medicare Patient Empowerment Act, sponsored by Senator Murkowski and supported by the AKAFP and ASMA (<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/advocacy/current-topics-advocacy/practice-management/medicare-patient-empowerment-act.page>), to allow Medicare patients and their doctors to enter into private contracts, as well as to allow beneficiaries to use their Medicare benefits to see physicians who do not accept Medicare. We heard two stimulating talks from Ted Epperly, MD, former AAFP President, on the Affordable Care Act and the medical home. The Alaska Family Physician of the Year was awarded to Harold Johnston, MD, founder of the Alaska Family Medicine Residency, at the Alaska SeaLife Center, to several standing ovations.

Next year's Congress will be in at the **Kenai High School, Kenai, AK June 14-17, 2012.**

Alaska eHealth Network

We had a presentation on the Alaska eHealth Network at the AKAFP Winter Update this March. The eHealth Network is a nonprofit selected by the State to run its Health Information Exchange. It also manages our Regional Extension Center, a federally funded center designed to assist providers with the adoption and meaningful use of EHRs. There are ongoing webinars; the service is already up and running and will only become more useful. For more information, go to: <http://www.ak-ehealth.org/>.

Accessing Pre-Existing Condition Insurance under the ACA

FYI: the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP) established by the Affordable Care Act is administered in Alaska by the Alaska Comprehensive Health Insurance Association (ACHIA). Eligibility criteria include: 1) a U. S. citizen or residing here legally; 2) uninsured for at least the last six months; and 3) have a pre-existing condition or have been denied health coverage because of a health condition. For more information and how to apply, go to the ACHIA-FED site at:

<http://www.achia.com/ACHIA-FED> or Find Your State at: www.pcip.gov. You can also call toll free 1-866-717-5826 (TTY 1-866-561-1604) between 8 am and 11 pm EST. For an online brochure that can be printed and distributed, go to: http://www.healthcare.gov/center/brochures/pci_p.pdf.

FamMedPAC

Have an opinion about political decisions that are affecting you? Get involved here: <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/grasroots.html>. Another simple way is to donate to FamMedPAC, the AAFP's political action committee. Its purpose is to elect candidates to the U. S. Congress who support the AAFP's legislative goals and objectives. In 2010, we raised over \$700,000 and contributed over \$675,000 to candidates for federal office, 75% of whom were elected. We are now in a strong position to fight for family medicine and our patients. Our goal for 2011 is \$1,000,000—currently the total stands at \$276,000! The PAC is separate from the AAFP, non-partisan and the only political action committee that advocates for family medicine. Donate now at: <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/fam-medpac.html?navid=fammedpac>.

Alaska Family Medicine Residency Update

Jill Campbell MD

Please join the Alaska Family Medicine Residency Program in congratulating the Class of 2011. The following are their plans after

graduation:

Erin Arthur: Locums in Alaska

Pat Ballard: Tour of Duty in Afghanistan, followed by a move to Craig, AK

Chet Bradstreet: Hospitalist Group for the summer then he and his brother will be hunting in Alaska

Sam Chelmo: Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) in Kodiak, AK

Julia Havlovic: Ochsner Health System in New Orleans Louisiana

Jenny Lessner: Locums in Rural Alaska

Barb Novotny: Zuni Indian Hospital in Zuni Pueblo, New Mexico

Nicole Pressman-Schneider: SCF in September, but staying in Alaska until then

Sarah Roberts: Chief Resident at Alaska Family Medicine Residency

Szilvia Salamon: Anchorage Neighborhood Health in Anchorage, AK

Rae Stevenson: Locums in Seward, AK

Wonca Guidebook on Rural Medical Education

Barb Doty MD, Wonca Working Party on Rural Medicine member

A meeting on a Guidebook on Rurally Based Medical Education organized by the Wonca Working Party on Rural Medicine was held in the Rockefeller Center in Bellagio, Italy May 30-June 3, 2011. The Working Party on Rural Medicine of Wonca had a terrific opportunity to utilize the Center to organize the publication of a new 20 chapter Guidebook on Rural Medical Education, slated to be published through the Rural and Remote Medicine online journal (Australia) in 2012. The lead editors are Dr. Alan Bruce Chater of Theodore, Queensland, Australia and Dr. James Rourke, Dean of Medicine at Memorial University in St. Johns, Newfoundland. Dr. Barbara Doty, AAFP Board of Directors member from Wasilla, Alaska attended the meeting representing the U.S. and is coordinating the chapter on Support at the Rural Training Site, which includes subchapters on mentoring, the learner in difficulty, support of the student and student's family in the rural setting, and establishing professional relationships in a rural setting. The guidebook will include major sections on Undergraduate Medical Training for Rural Education in the Post-Graduate and

Practice setting, an overview of Rural Medical Education Systems in different settings, and a section discussing the bigger picture of Rural Medical Education development, which includes some of the advocacy, political, and government interface issues that may be factors in successful rural medical education development. Participants include rural family physicians from Australia, Canada, U.S., Malaysia, Greece, Great Britain, South Africa, Nigeria, to name a few.

U.S. authors participating include Drs. Tom Norris, Professor and Interim Chair of University of Washington Department of Family Medicine, and Suzanne Allen, Vice Dean for Regional Affairs, Co-director of Targeted Rural/Underserved Track (Trust) of University of Washington, and Dr. David Schmitz, President of the Idaho Rural Health Association.

The purpose of the guidebook is to organize and co-locate resources on rural medical education in an enduring interactive format, useful for rural medical education planning and implementation around the world.

The gathering in Italy was the result of a generous grant from the Rockefeller Center which sponsors conferences that promote opportunities for improvement in global health and well-being.

For interest or more information, contact Barbara Doty at barbara.doty@aafp.org

Naturopath bill/resolution

While Alaska House Bill 122 (to establish an Alaska Naturopathic Medical Board and expand naturopath scope of practice to potentially include screening physicals and workman's comp. exams, ordering labs and x-rays, and delivering IV medications) has reportedly stalled (in no small part thanks to your efforts), we realized in preparing testimony that the AAFP has no formal policy on the regulation of naturopaths. The following draft Resolution was approved pending further editing (see above):

WHEREAS, periodically some naturopaths lobby State legislatures for licensure, and, in the minority of States where they are licensed, an inappropriate and potentially dangerous expansion of their scope of practice (such as liberal prescribing authority, “primary care physician” status, and mandated insurance coverage), and

WHEREAS, family doctors are testifying against licensure and/or inappropriate expansion of naturopath privileges or procedures, despite perceived positives such as patient support and/or workforce shortages, and

WHEREAS, the AMA opposes the licensure of naturopaths, and

WHEREAS, the AAFP defines “primary care physician” as an MD or DO trained in general internal medicine, family medicine, or general pediatrics, and

WHEREAS, the AAFP currently has no policy on licensure and/or an appropriate scope of practice for naturopaths, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the AAFP oppose any expansion of naturopaths’ scope of practice not supported by their training, to include but not necessarily limited to liberal prescribing authority, “primary care physician” status, and procedures traditionally performed by physicians, such as work/school physicals and surgery.

Leaving the RUC?/Resolution

Responding to a resolution adopted at the AAFP’s National Conference of Special Constituencies in May, in a June 10 letter AAFP Board Chair Dr. Lori Heim called on the AMA/Specialty Society Relative Value Update Committee (RUC) (which makes recommendations to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the relative value of CPT codes) to improve primary care and consumer representation, as well as voter

transparency. AAFP has also created a task force to investigate alternatives to the RUC. ([http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/news/news-now/practice-professional-](http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/news/news-now/practice-professional-issues/20110610rucletter.html)

[issues/20110610rucletter.html](http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/news/news-now/practice-professional-issues/20110610rucletter.html)). The Alaska academy will be one of several submitting resolutions at the national AAFP meeting this Fall proposing that the AAFP leave the RUC. What is the RUC and how does it impact primary care? See this article for a summary: <http://idihealtheconomist.com/he000009.shtml>.

RUC Resolution

Whereas

The compensation for family physicians for providing health care for the United States neither reflects the difficulty or the amount of time required for provision of comprehensive primary care

and further Whereas

Family medicine compensation lags behind their subspecialist colleagues,

and further Whereas

this negatively impacts on the numbers of medical students seeking positions in family medicine

and further Whereas

this leads to a system dominated by subspecialists

and further Whereas

this leads to a costly health care system which cannot be sustained

Therefore

the board should withdraw from the RUC after ensuring that the most common family medicine codes are exempted from the BBA mandated medicare adjustment and allowing this to take place.

GME Resolution

Whereas

Family medicine education is vitally important to the health of this country

Whereas

Many GME slots are not filled

GME Resolution

Whereas

These are redistributed based on a formula of population versus HPSA with a preference for more rural states and primary care

Whereas

Primary care includes Internal medicine, OB/GYN, pediatrics, as well as family medicine

Whereas

Most rural providers are family physicians

Therefore,

Suggest to HRSA that GME slots be redistributed to Family medicine residencies with a proven track record for placing family physicians in rural communities

Mark the Date AKAFP CME

Registration now open for our Annual
Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics
Anchorage, Alaska Nov. 12-13, 2011
<http://www.alaskaafp.org/also.htm>

14th Annual Winter Update Ski Meeting

March 9-11, 2012
Hotel Alyeska, Girdwood, AK

27th Annual Scientific Congress

June 14-17, 2012
Kenai High School, Kenai, AK

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