

SCMA News Briefs

The monthly newsletter of the
Sonoma County Medical Association
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August 2009

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TO UNSUBSCRIBE

You are receiving SCMA News Briefs because you are a physician or an affiliated medical professional in Sonoma County. If you wish to unsubscribe, contact Steve Osborn at sosborn@scma.org or 707-525-4325.

Note to our readers

This issue of SCMA News Briefs inaugurates a few minor changes in our format. All our SCMA, local, state and national news stories have been combined into a single section and listed in order of importance and/or relevance to our growing number of readers. On the Web version of the newsletter, which most readers now receive, each story is linked to its headline in the table of contents. The Web version also has a new masthead and other design changes.

We have retained section headings for People, Events (formerly called Resources), Applicants and Classifieds. Headlines for those stories do not appear in the table of contents.

As always, relay any comments or suggestions to our editor, Steve Osborn, at sosborn@scma.org or 525-4325.

SCMA members invited to talk, eat with legislators Wiggins and Huffman

As part of their continuing legislative advocacy for physicians, SCMA and the SCMA Alliance have arranged for two membership meetings with State Sen. Pat Wiggins and Assemblymember Jared Huffman during August.

The meetings will allow SCMA physicians and spouses to speak with Wiggins and Huffman regarding health care financing, the recent state budget, and pending health legislation (see link to CMA's Legislative Hot List below). Dr. Leonard Klay and Ms. Barbara Ramsey will host the meetings.

Both meetings, open to all SCMA members and their spouses, will be held at A'Roma Roasters, 95 Fifth St., Santa Rosa, as follows:

* Coffee klatch with Sen. Pat Wiggins, on Friday, Aug. 14, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

* Lunch with Assemblyman Jared Huffman on Friday, Aug. 28, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

To RSVP, contact Rachel Pandolfi at 525-4375 or rpandolfi@scma.org.

The meetings come on the heels of other SCMA advocacy on behalf of its members. During July, SCMA leaders participated in a conference call with Rep. Mike Thompson about federal health reform efforts, and face-to-face meetings with Thompson and Rep. Lynn Woolsey are scheduled for August.

CMA's Legislative Hot List at cmanet.org/news/hotlist.asp provides a summary and current status of CMA-sponsored bills in the California Legislature, as well as the progress of other significant legislation followed by CMA's Center for Government Relations. For more information on a specific bill, contact the lobbyist identified at the end of each bill summary.

Free SCMA lunchtime seminar on Red Flag Rule scheduled for Aug. 27

Because of the importance of the pending Red Flag Rule—which requires many physicians to develop identity theft prevention programs—SCMA has scheduled a free lunchtime seminar on the topic for Aug. 27. The seminar will be conducted by longtime SCMA attorney Larry McLaughlin.

The Federal Trade Commission recently extended the deadline for implementing the Red Flag Rule to Nov. 1, with an eye to giving physicians adequate time to learn about the rule and implement it in their practices.

The seminar is open to SCMA members and their staff only. To RSVP and receive the location, contact Rachel Pandolfi at 525-4375 or rpandolfi@scma.org.

Need nominations for SCMA awards; dinner set for Dec. 2

After taking a year off to celebrate its 150th anniversary, SCMA is once again bestowing Outstanding Contribution awards to members who have given exemplary service to the community, local medicine, or the medical association. The winners will be honored at the annual SCMA awards dinner, scheduled for Dec. 2 at the Vintners Inn in Santa Rosa.

Use the following form to nominate SCMA members for the awards. Nominations are also needed for the Recognition of Achievement award, presented to nonphysicians who have helped advance local medicine.

Service to the Community

Service to Local Medicine

Service to SCMA

Recognition of Achievement (nonphysician)

Return your nominations by Sept. 15 to Cynthia Melody at cmelody@scma.org or 525-4328 (fax) or 525-4359 (phone).

Local pertussis cases on the rise

Public Health has alerted local physicians that pertussis activity is increasing in the county. Fifteen of the 16 cases reported so far this year have been diagnosed since mid-May, and many are infants or young children. The actual number of cases is probably higher.

Complete instructions for dealing with confirmed or suspected pertussis cases can be found in the July 10 Health Alert ("Pertussis activity increased in Sonoma County") posted on the Public Health website at sonoma-county.org/health/ph.

Physicians are reminded to immunize adults who may have waning immunity to pertussis. This booster dose is especially important for adults and adolescents who may expose very young infants who cannot be immunized and are at greatest risk of complications from pertussis.

For further questions, contact Disease Control at 565-4566 or phnurse@sonoma-county.org.

Physicians need to verify accuracy of their CPPI quality data by Sept. 11

More than 13,000 California physicians who treat patients insured by Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield of California, or United Healthcare were slated to receive their latest quality performance results from the California Physician Performance Initiative in late July.

CPPI sent each physician their individual quality measure scores based on patient care provided from September 2007 to September 2008. Physicians were provided with a percentile rank compared to their peers; performance scores by measure; and performance scores for each patient group.

Physicians can verify the accuracy of the data used to calculate their scores by requesting their patient lists at www.cchri.org/cppi by Aug. 28. Doctors who believe their scores to be in error have until Sept. 11 to submit correction requests (with supporting data).

H1N1 updates for physicians posted on Public Health website

Local H1N1 updates for physicians can be found in the "For Health Providers" section of the Public Health website at sonoma-county.org/health/ph. Updates are posted as the H1N1 situation warrants.

The latest update, posted July 23, offers recommendations on the use of antiviral medications and specifies requirements for testing.

The county has also established an H1N1 website with information for patients and employers at sonoma-county.org/h1n1.

New state budget cuts Healthy Families, spares Medi-Cal rates

The new California budget includes nearly \$1.5 billion in health care cuts that could prevent the state's most vulnerable residents—children, the elderly, and the poor—from getting adequate health care.

A major victim is the Healthy Families program, which provides health care to nearly one million children from low-income families statewide, including 12,500 in Sonoma County. Funding for Healthy Families was cut by \$400 million, meaning that an estimated 350,000 children (4,500 in Sonoma County) will be unable to enroll in the program during the coming year.

"This is a devastating blow to the swelling ranks of California's needy, who are struggling to get through the worst economic crisis in a generation," said CMA President Dev GnanaDev, MD.

In contrast, the budget does not include a Medi-Cal provider rate cut. A federal appeals court recently upheld the merits of the preliminary injunction issued last year that forced the state to reverse the 10% Medi-Cal rate cut that took effect in July 2008.

The budget assumes that \$1 billion in Medi-Cal savings will come from shifting certain costs for Medi-Cal/Medicare dual-eligibles to the federal government. If the federal funding does not materialize, additional cuts will have to be made.

Center for Well-Being gets \$3,000 grant through SCMA

With the help of SCMA, the Northern California Center for Well-Being has received a \$3,000 grant from NORCAL to support educational programs for patients with chronic diseases. SCMA President Dr.

Richard Powers will present the check to the center's board of directors on Aug. 17.

Local physicians are encouraged to refer patients with chronic diseases to the center, which offers programs for managing diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol, asthma, hepatitis C, and arthritis, among other conditions. For details, visit the center's website at norcalwellbeing.org or call 575-6043.

Group begins major study of Sonoma County primary care

A group convened by Public Health and Sonoma County Health Action has embarked on a major study of local primary care resources and capacity. The group, which includes representatives from SCMA and several other health organizations, will conduct a survey later this year and make recommendations for implementing medical homes and other hallmarks of primary care.

For more details, visit the Health Action website at sonomahealthaction.org.

PEOPLE

Joe Dunn resigns as CEO of CMA

Joe Dunn, a former Orange County state senator who became CEO of the California Medical Association in 2006, has announced that he will leave his post as soon as CMA selects a new CEO. Dunn, who continued to live in Orange County while working at CMA's main office in Sacramento, said he wanted to spend more time with his family.

"Rest assured," Dunn wrote in a general e-mail to CMA staff, "my decision does not in any way reflect disagreement or dissatisfaction with our organization, our physicians or our amazing management and staff."

The CMA board of directors has begun looking for a new CEO, but no schedule has been released to date.

NASA partners with CAFE Foundation for Green Flight Challenge

NASA has given the green light to the Green Light Challenge, a flight efficiency contest administered by the Comparative Aircraft Flight Efficiency (CAFE) Foundation headed by Santa Rosa ophthalmologist Dr. Brien Seeley.

The contest offers a \$1.5 million prize for the aircraft that performs best while averaging at least 100 mph on a 200-mile flight and achieving greater than 200 passenger miles per gallon. The competition, which is expected to draw entrants from around the world, will be held at the Charles M. Schulz Airport in Santa Rosa during July 2011.

Dr. Loie Sauer relocates to Kaiser

Dr. Loie Sauer, a longtime surgeon at Redwood Regional Medical Group in Santa Rosa, has moved to Kaiser Permanente, 401 Bicentennial Way, Santa Rosa 95403. Phone is 393-4090; fax 393-4557; e-mail loie.g.sauer@kp.org.

Dr. Dee Robbins dies at 95

Dr. Dee Robbins, a founding member of The Bone Palace orthopedic group in Santa Rosa, has died at 95. Born in Salt Lake City, Robbins trained at Northwestern University and UC San Francisco. He served as a lieutenant in the Navy during World War II.

In 1949, Robbins opened a practice in Santa Rosa with Dr. Carl Anderson and then joined forces with several other orthopedic surgeons to open The Bone Palace in the early 1970s. Robbins was well known for his long hours and for his skills as an oil painter and woodcarver.

EVENTS

Jewish Free Clinic fundraiser set for Aug. 23 in Sebastopol

The Jewish Community Free Clinic will be holding a fundraiser at a private home in Sebastopol on Sunday afternoon, Aug. 23. The event will include local musicians, BBQ and vegetarian food, a silent auction and a fashion show.

Tickets are \$18 to \$36 (suggested donation), and children are free. To reserve a spot and receive the location, contact outreach.jcfc@gmail.com or call 585-7780.

CME programs available on NORCAL website

NORCAL, the malpractice carrier endorsed by SCMA, offers a range of CME courses at norcalmutual.com/cme. The courses emphasize risk management and include both clinical and administrative topics.

NORCAL also reminds physicians to check their MBC profiles quarterly at medbd.ca.gov/lookup.html.

APPLICANTS

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CLASSIFIEDS

Medical Director/Family Physician

wanted for Sonoma County Indian Health Project, located among the beautiful vineyards in Sonoma County. Great recreation opportunities including hiking, biking, boating and camping. Great year-round weather.

Experienced medical director to perform 50/50 administration and family practice. Administrator for 20-room outpatient clinic. Great working environment, congenial staff, well-established nonprofit agency. Group's physicians share on-call duties.

Candidates must have an MD or DO degree, valid California license, and be board certified. SCIHP offers an outstanding work environment, competitive compensation plan/benefits package including paid time off, CME allowance with paid time off, holidays and paid malpractice insurance.

In accordance with PL 93-638, American Indian Preference shall be given.

For consideration, please forward CV to: Sonoma County Indian Health Project
144 Stony Point Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
Fax: 707-526-1016
E-mail: bob.orr@crihb.net

Medical office space

Small suite available for reasonable rent. Three exam rooms, southeast Santa Rosa. Call Connie, 707-525-0211.

How to submit a classified ad

To submit a classified ad for News Briefs or Sonoma Medicine, contact Nan Perrott at nperrott@rhscommunications.com or 707-525-4226. The cost is one dollar per word.

ABOUT SCMA

The Sonoma County Medical Association, a 501(c)(6) nonprofit association, supports local physicians and their efforts to enhance the health of the community. Founded in 1858, SCMA is affiliated with the California Medical Association and the American Medical Association.

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