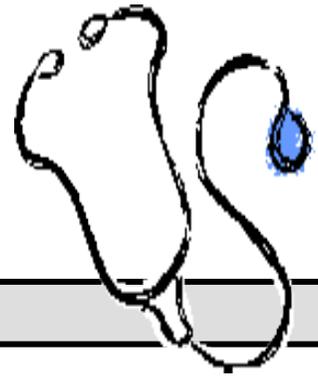


The Stethoscope



Quarterly newsletter of the Erie County Medical Society

Spring 2014 Issue



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ErieCountyMedicalSociety.org

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Erie County (PA)
Medical Society



President's Note...

"MU-SPAM"

Meaningful Use (MU) is the title of a large set of government regulations intended to promote the use of the Electronic Medical Record (EMR). The origin of the concept is to increase the effectiveness of the delivery of medical care. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has specified what doctors and hospitals must do via the EMR, and has instituted penalties for failure to comply.

Spam is the name of a canned precooked meat product. Spam was introduced by Hormel Foods in 1937. While Spam is still sold in the US, its greatest distribution is in other countries where the infrastructure may not support refrigeration. The origin of the term has never been officially revealed. One popular attribution is that "spam" is an acronym for its ingredients, shoulder of pork and ham.

In our computerized culture, "spam" has caught on as the term for irrelevant or inappropriate electronic message content. Spam is voluminous, unwanted, and takes one off task when working in a computer. Here, the origin has been linked to a classic Monty Python comedy sketch wherein every item on the menu at a greasy spoon café was redundantly made from Spam.

Bureaucrats have long confused quantity of documentation with quality of services. Witness the 1995 and 1997 Evaluation and Management (E&M) coding requirements, still in effect, which ridiculously stipulate specific documentation bullet points as if they reflect the complexity of the medical service provided. This in turn gives rise to a coding bureaucracy with audits by nonphysicians, which in turn generate accusations of poor quality plus fraud and abuse, all supporting the notion that more regulation of doctors is the appropriate solution.

This same type of thinking is the substrate of the meaningful use requirements as promulgated. For the physician, the required volume of documentation of unchanged, non-germane findings is even greater. The indicators chosen as basic quality benchmarks often have nothing to do with the patient's presenting problem or its management, which is none-the-less complex. Presumed-to-be-beneficial population health bullets are shot right in there, as well.

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These factors have now given rise to what may be termed MUSPAM, or Moving United States Physicians Away from Medicine. We have been changed into clerks, typists, transcriptionists, data entry technicians and epidemiologists who are forced to displace our work flow as doctors. Instead we must dedicate our time and efforts overstuffing the EMR with MUSPAM.

The overprescribing, micromanaging governmental approach toward medicine should be redirected. There are unaddressed golden governmental opportunities to support the functions of our doctors and hospitals. These include helping to develop medical information technology from its currently unevolved state as a repository into a system which actually presents meaningful and useful data to the physician. ♦

Membership Update

Welcome New Members

February 1, 2014 – May 31, 2014

Active Members

Lauren Donatelli-Seyler, DO – *Trauma Surgery, Critical Care*
Gregory English, MD – *Trauma Surgery, Critical Care*
Ajaipal Kang, MD – *Plastic Surgery*
Jung-Woo Ma, MD – *Physiology*
Rey Ramirez, MD – *Hand Surgery*
Robert Rodak, DO – *Family Medicine*
Aaron Rucks, DO – *Diagnostic Radiology*

Student Members

Neel Iyer

Practice Administrator Members

Melissa Kobert
Thomas Murphy

Erie County Medical Society Back-To-School Health Expo



This year ECMS is collaborating with the Millcreek Mall, Widget Financial, and the United Way on a “Back-To-School Stuff The Bus” campaign. The kick-off date is July 2nd at which time the public will be asked to donate school supplies to a designated location at the Millcreek Mall. You may also bring your donations to the ECMS office. This program will run until August 2nd. Widget Financial and the United Way will distribute the donated school supplies to local children in need.

Then on September 13th, ECMS will present the “**Erie County Medical Society Back-To-School Health Expo**” at the Millcreek Mall where we will provide health-related information that will address many issues pertinent to the youth of our community.

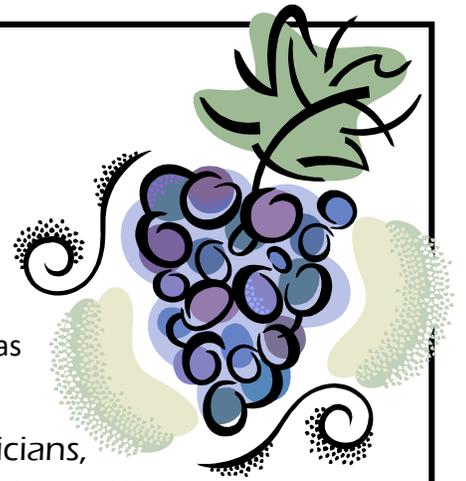


Watch your mail for additional information.

♦
If you are interested in participating in the event
or would like more information,
please contact Renee at the ECMS office
866-6820 or rkubeja@pamedsoc.org



Wine Tasting



ECMS held its first Wine Tasting Event on Wednesday, May 21st in the Erie County Medical Society office. Ashlyn from Courtyard Wineries was on hand to present a variety of wines for tasting and purchase.



A special thank you to the over 35 physicians, residents, students, practice administrators, spouses, and guests who joined in the fun and relaxation of the evening.



Copies of **"Reflections on Erie County Physicians"** by John S. Chaffee, MD were available to those who attended. If you are interested in receiving a copy, contact ECMS at 866-6820.



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ANNUAL HOUSE OF DELEGATES MEETING
OCTOBER 18 & 19, 2014
HERSHEY LODGE ♦ HERSHEY, PA

Each year, the House of Delegates of the Pennsylvania Medical Society convenes in Hershey, PA to set the Society's policies through resolutions and reports. Approximately 300 voting delegates consider these resolutions and elect trustees and officers during a two-day period. Delegates include representatives from county medical societies, specialty societies, and the Society's special membership sections.



Pennsylvania
MEDICAL SOCIETY[®]

Participation in the Annual Meeting enables members to have a direct voice in determining the Society's position on topics of importance to PA physicians. Delegates are exposed to a variety of opinions on the issues during the deliberative process and also can take advantage of valuable networking resources by meeting their peers from across the Commonwealth who represent a variety of medical specialties and practices of all sizes and scope.

We are reaching out to our members (physicians, residents, students) to serve as delegates in order to ensure that a valid cross-section of opinions and perspectives from Erie County are included in the delegation.

If you are interested in serving as a delegate for Erie County, please contact the ECMS office at 814-866-6820 or rkubeja@pamedsoc.org. We would appreciate hearing from you by June 30th if you are interested. We will be happy to provide you with any additional information you may need.