



THE Honker

Official Newsletter of the Northern Colorado Medical Society

Fall 2014

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Kate Alfano

Presidential perspective

John C. Cawley, MD



Hello, I can't believe it's happened again. With a blink the year is almost gone, our trees have lost their

tively stable liability climate for CMS to focus on for the upcoming year. He has also laid out an aggressive plan to upgrade and repurpose communications to physician constituencies, streamline our administrative and governance functions, and boost outreach to medical students and other component societies.

leaves, ski resorts are opening up, the election ads have finally stopped, and the holiday and year-end season will be in full swing within days.

This is my last chance to address you as the NCMS President. It has been an exciting, active year and our medical society has continued to grow and evolve. Here's a brief recap of what's been going on.

We had a fantastic turnout for Legislative Night with a great showing of current seated politicians, candidates, and physicians. We narrowed the focus this year and focused on Medicaid funding and access to care, as well as behavioral health, tort reform, and telemedicine.

The Colorado Medical Society has been busy and elected Tamaan Osbourne-Roberts, MD, as our new president and he has set out the priorities of Medicaid reform, repealing the SGR, and maintaining our rela-

As a local medical society we have helped sponsor Mental Health First Aid and I had the opportunity to sit in on one of their community-based training programs. The program is working to actively increase awareness and decrease the stigma of mental health disorders to community members. The focus isn't on diagnosis or treatment but rather on training lay community members to recognize when something isn't right, assess for risk of suicide or harm, listen in a non-judgmental fashion, give reassurance and information, encourage appropriate professional help, and encourage both self-help as well as other healthy support strategies and techniques. For more information on this great program – check out their website, www.touchstonehealthpartners.org/mental-health-first-aid.

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I'm excited to share with you that we're going to have a bit of a different Annual Meeting. This year's meeting is scheduled just one month away on Dec. 10 at the Midtown Arts Center in midtown Fort Collins. We will still have our full general membership business meeting (I wholeheartedly promise you this will be short), the presentation of the 3rd Annual Dr. Michael Wiggins Scholarship, followed by an interactive performance and discussion by Dr. Richard Kogan. He is a Juilliard-trained concert pianist, board-certified, practicing psychiatrist, and is both the co-director of the Weill Cornell Medical College Human Sexuality Program and co-director of their Music and Medicine Initiative.

Dr. Kogan has gained renown for his lectures and recitals that explore

the role of music in healing and the influence of psychological factors on the creative masterpieces of composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, George Gershwin, and Leonard Bernstein. He will be sharing with us "The Power of Music in Healing Mind and Body" featuring George Gershwin's masterpieces including "Porgy and Bess" and "Rhapsody in Blue." This will be an event to remember – save the date now.

Lastly, I want to thank the medical society, our fantastic staff, and wonderful physicians for making this an exciting and fulfilling year. I have had the privilege to know so many more of y'all, visit your practices, and have many wonderful experiences. Thank you for this opportunity to lead the Northern Colorado Medical Society.



Welcome, new members!

We welcome our new members to NCMS, the third largest component chapter in the Colorado Medical Society. We are currently 783 members strong! Your membership connects you to your colleagues and to a host of benefits through NCMS and CMS.

Go to www.nocomedsoc.org or www.cms.org to learn more about the societies.

- I Shawn Ahmed, MD, PhD
- Nilesh H Ahuja, MD
- Ian S Anderson, MD
- Jennifer K Beckman, MD
- Travis M Brown, DO
- Gregory A Feldpausch, DO
- Jason C Hatch, MD, FACC
- Samuel M Jeng, MD
- Jeremy B McCue, MD
- D Kiley Mortensen, DO
- Bret C Peterson, MD
- Mike B Schneider, MD, MS
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- Melinda M Tonelli, MD

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- Robert T Kelley, DO
- Nicole M Matthews, MD
- Nicole S Niemann, MD
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- Stephanie A Sayers, DO
- Laura D Smith, MD
- Bryce C Spitze, MD, MPH
- Ryan D Stopher-Mitchell, MD
- Chad A Vaccarelli-Conboy, DO
- Tyler A Weigang, MD, MPH

Make plans to join NCMS Dec. 10 for the 2014 Annual Meeting

The Northern Colorado Medical Society Board of Directors cordially invites members and their guests to join us for the 2014 NCMS Annual Meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 10, 2014. It will be held at Midtown Arts Center, 3750 S. Mason Street in Fort Collins.

The event starts with social time at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. and a presentation at 7 by Richard Kogan, MD. Dr. Kogan is a Juilliard-trained concert pianist and Harvard educated psychiatrist, clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical Center and Artistic Director of the Weill Cornell Music and Medical Program.

In his presentation, "Music and Medicine: George Gershwin," Dr. Ko-

gan will explore the impact of medical and psychiatric illness on the creative output of the great American composer George Gershwin. He will perform Gershwin's masterpieces, such as Rhapsody in Blue and Porgy and Bess.

The evening will conclude with a brief business meeting and installation of NCMS officers. RSVP to Nan Lee by phone at (970) 324-3035 or (970) 324-1779 or by e-mail to nocomedsoc@gmail.com by Dec. 5, 2014. Seating is limited but tickets may be available for non-members for the cost of the meal. Contact Nan for more information.

Report from the 144th Colorado Medical Society Annual Meeting

More than 200 physicians and medical students from around the state attended the 144th Colorado Medical Society Annual Meeting in Vail in September. "Carnival in the Mountains" featured fun and fellowship, interactive programming and education, and policy-making and elections.

The CMS Board of Directors met Friday afternoon to review the activities of CMS in fiscal year 2014-2015 and adopt a work plan that provides consensus on activities and allows the physician leadership and staff to hit the ground running following the Annual Meeting.

The House of Delegates convened to deliberate on four resolutions and set policy on governance, Medicaid specialty access, workers' compensation innovation, telemedicine, and more.

The House of Delegates elected new leaders and presented awards. They selected Michael Volz, MD, a board certified allergy/immunology specialist, to be CMS president-elect; re-elected Lee Morgan, MD, as delegate to the American Medical Association; and selected Katie Lozano, MD, as alternate delegate to the American Medical Association. Elisabeth Arenales, of the Colorado Center on Law and Policy, was honored with the Tip of the Spear Award for her work to create the Colorado Commission on Affordable Health Care.

NCMS member John L. Bender, MD, completed his year of service as CMS president and is now the CMS Immediate Past President.

Attendees participated in interactive sessions on scope of practice, the State Innovation Model, and physician wellness. Attendees enjoyed various social events including a Carnival-themed Exhibitors reception with live music, giveaways and a photo booth; and the President's Gala, with dinner, dancing, entertainment, and the installation of 2014-2015 CMS President



Top: Ten local physicians traveled to Vail to represent Northern Colorado in the CMS House of Delegates. **Middle left:** NCMS Board Member Jan Gillespie, MD, talks with Longmont physician Laird Cagan, MD. **Middle right:** CMS Immediate Past President John L. Bender, MD, demonstrates the latest in telemedicine technology. **Bottom left:**

Tamaan Osbourne-Roberts, MD.

Watch for more extensive coverage of the meeting in the November/December issue of CMS's magazine, Colorado Medicine.

Bottom right: NCMS members participate in a morning caucus.

New law on immunization exemptions a good step

Rick Budensiek, DO

Plenty of Coloradans remember the ravages of the polio epidemic that swept the nation 60 years ago. It was a frightening and tragic time. Of the 57,628 cases reported throughout the U.S. in 1952, the worst year of the epidemic, 3,145 people, mostly children and teens, died. Another 21,269 were left with mild to disabling paralysis. Families were torn asunder as stricken children were quarantined. Parents were terrified for their children.

It was the development of the polio vaccine by researchers Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin that turned the corner in our fight against polio. Mass immunizations using a vaccine pioneered by Salk were in full swing by 1957, and the incidence of polio dropped dramatically to 5,600 cases from a peak of nearly 58,000 cases a few years earlier. By 1961, there were only 161 new cases of polio recorded in the U.S., and the disease had been all but eradicated by the 1970s.

The timely introduction of the polio vaccines also had another effect on our society: It educated Americans about the need to immunize their children against disease. Many came to realize their decisions about immunizations were very much a life-and-death matter.

And yet, today, there are still too many households where children are not getting their immunizations — across the country and right here in Colorado. Indeed, Colorado continues to have one of the nation's lower immunization rates, and that should trouble us all.

To be sure, some parents have sincere — though, arguably, unfounded — objections to immunization. Many others simply seem unaware of the dangers their children face. And in

other households, the failure to immunize is part of a broader pattern of neglect of children's health care due to a variety of social and economic factors. All told, too many of our children are attending school unprotected against disease — and are putting others at risk.

Colorado's General Assembly has acknowledged this troubling reality and took an important step this spring toward improving our state's record. It passed House Bill 1288, which requires every school in Colorado to make the immunization rate of its students publicly available upon request. Parents have a right to know how well their own children will be safeguarded from debilitating and even fatal diseases when they attend school.

Certainly, parents and guardians with reservations about immunization must have their concerns addressed, and those who still object must be respected.

It is also reasonable to expect public institutions like our schools to fully and publicly disclose their immunization rates so we know the potential dangers to which our children are exposed. HB 1288 accomplishes that. It is a significant stride toward greater accountability in public health.

We know what an epidemic like polio can do, and we know what immunization can do for prevention. Let's learn from history — for the sake of our children.

Rick Budensiek, DO, is a family physician in Greeley and an NCMS board member. This op-ed was originally published in the Coloradoan on June 4.

Register with the PDMP by Nov. 30

A bill passed during the 2014 regular session of the Colorado General Assembly made modifications to the electronic prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP), including mandating registration of physicians and other providers to the PDMP. The bill does not require use of the system. The Colorado Medical Society supports greater use of the PDMP as one of many strategies to reduce opioid abuse and misuse, and supports the efforts of the Colorado State Board of Pharmacy to make the PDMP more user-friendly for physicians.

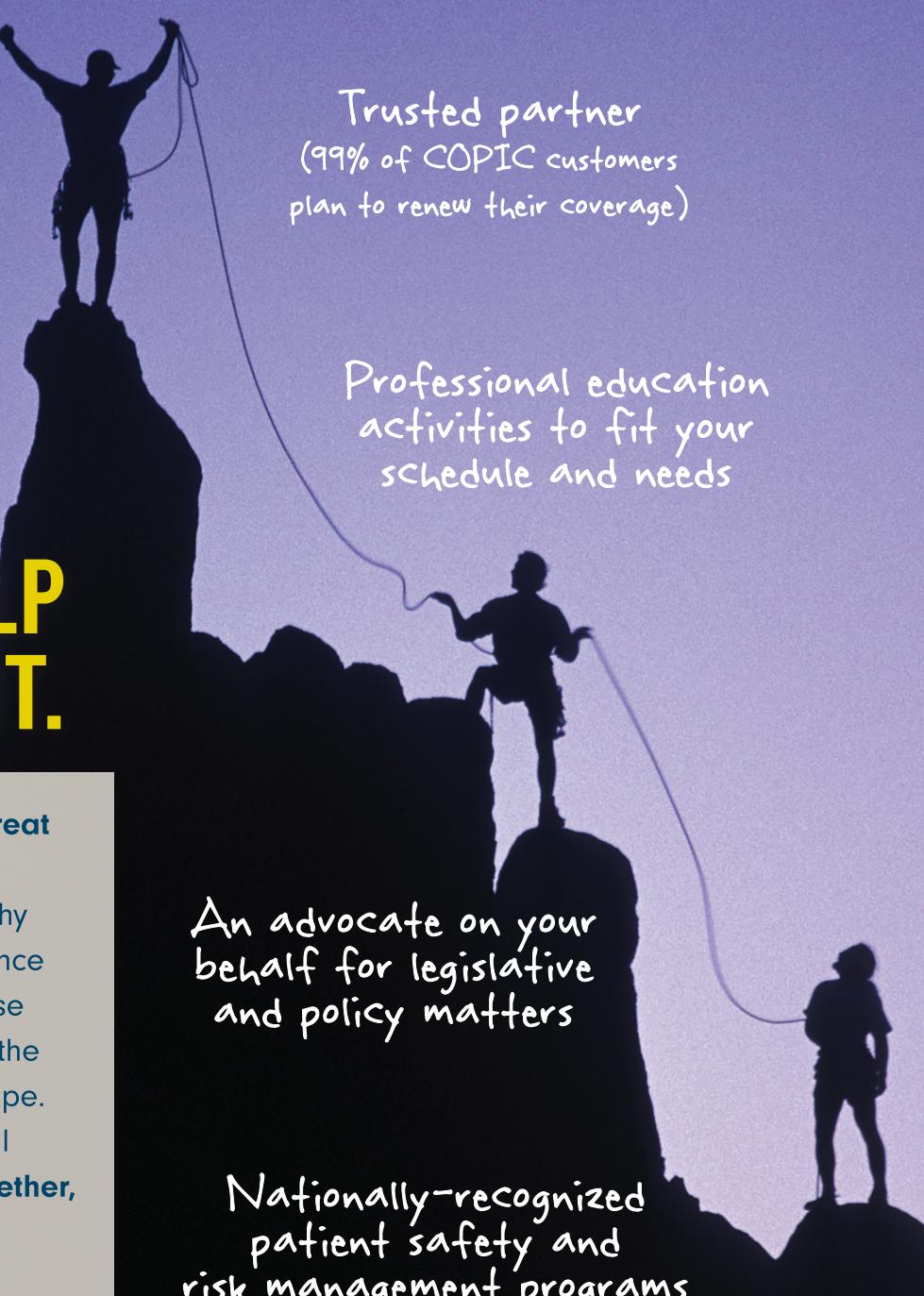
The Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) Division of Professions and Occupations Healthcare Branch has announced the due dates for mandatory practitioner PDMP user account registration. All DEA-registered medical board licensees must register by Nov. 30, 2014.

Register by visiting the Colorado PDMP webpage, www.hidinc.com/copdmp.

Download wellness toolkit from CMS

The Colorado Medical Society partnered with experts at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus to develop a toolkit tailored to physicians to address wellness and burnout.

Go to www.cms.org to download "DIMENSIONS: Work and Well-Being Toolkit for Physicians."



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Report from Legislative Night

Elected officials, candidates discuss top issues with NCMS members

Thanks to all the NCMS members who attended the 2014 NCMS Legislative Night on Wednesday, Oct. 22. We hosted the following special guests:

- Jeni Arndt, D - Candidate for HD 53
- John Cooke, R - Candidate for SD 13
- Rep. Brian DelGrosso, R - HD 51
- Grant Doherty, U - Candidate for CD 4
- Rep. Joann Ginal, D - HD 52
- Steve House, R - Representing gubernatorial candidate Bob Beauprez
- Sen. John Kefalas, D - SD 14
- Sen. Kevin Lundberg, R - SD 15
- Sen. Vicki Marble, R - SD 23
- Vic Meyers, D - Candidate for CD 4
- Joe Perez, D - Candidate for SD 13
- Rep. Lori Saine, R - HD 63
- Jake Swanson, D - Representing US Sen. Mark Udall
- Donna Walter, R - Candidate for HD 52
- Rep. Dave Young, D - HD 50

Attendees enjoyed a social hour with cocktails before a buffet dinner and a facilitated discussion led by NCMS President John Cawley, MD, on Medicaid payment reform and health care access, telemedicine, and tort reform. Physicians gave their thoughts on each topic followed by candidate questions and thoughts.

Top: NCMS President-elect Cory Carroll, MD, talks with colleagues before the facilitated discussion. **Middle left:** Sen. Vicki Marble greets a constituent. **Middle right:** NCMS President John Cawley, MD, leads the discussion. **Bottom:** Rep. Joann Ginal shares a laugh with constituents.



Keep funding Connect for Health; it works

Mark Wallace, MD, MPH

Coloradans value hard work, timely innovation, wise investments, marketplace choice and finding local solutions that meet the needs of a diverse population.

That is reflected when we built our own health insurance marketplace, known as Connect for Health Colorado. Now, over 300,000 Coloradans have enrolled in public and private coverage, with crucial support from the in-person assistance network and call center. As the board for Connect for Health looks to decide next year's budget, it is important to Northern Colorado that these vital programs for outreach and enrollment be maintained and fully funded to continue our success.

Before the marketplace opened for business in October, nearly one in five Coloradans were without health insurance. And I'd proffer that far more Coloradans had little or no real understanding about health insurance, including coverage they might have received from their employer. This makes one-on-one assistance especially important.

In fact, an Enroll America survey revealed that people who worked with a coverage guide were twice as likely to complete enrollment. Connect for Health Colorado would not have met its enrollment goals without drawing on the highly trained marketplace assistants and brokers, positioned in

local agencies around the state, that comprise the assistance network.

The North Colorado Health Alliance, a nonprofit community collaborative seeking to generate health in support of economic vitality, learned first hand the value of the assistance network. The alliance served as a regional hub for 18 counties, coordinating the face-to-face support our staff gave to uninsured individuals with work of similar health coverage guides around northeastern Colorado. In our local hub, almost 17,000 people enrolled for coverage. That sounds like success to me.

Imagine never having had health insurance before because it was unaffordable or denied to you due to a pre-existing condition. Then think about being directed for the first time to a marketplace in which there were 10 different insurance carriers offering 150 different health plans. Having that many options to sift through when you've never shopped for health insurance would be overwhelming. It would feel a bit like standing for the first time in the cereal aisle of a grocery store and being expected to pick out a low-cost, highly nutritious breakfast.

Patient health coverage guides helped individuals learn the principals and language of insurance (for example: deductible, premium, co-pay, etc.), use the marketplace webpage, choose an af-

fordable plan and access cost savings.

Our team of coverage guides heard over and over that people could not have gotten through the enrollment process without face-to-face help. One gentleman said, "I have a Ph.D., and I do not understand how to do this." Another family said they "had no understanding of insurance" because they'd "never had health insurance." Another self-employed woman was confused by the options available to her and wanted reassurance she was completing the applications correctly. She attributed her successful enrollment to the in-person help she received from our team.

The assistance network investment has paid off, but the goal remains to have as many Coloradans with health coverage as possible. However, in order to achieve that goal, they must be satisfied with their plan, understand and maintain their coverage, be wise consumers and have access to quality affordable care when it's needed. Let's continue our commitment to uninsured Coloradans by offering them assistance with the enrollment process.

Mark Wallace, MD, MPH, is the CEO and chief medical officer for the North Colorado Health Alliance. He also is also a board member for NCMS and the Colorado Health Foundation. This op-ed was originally published in the Coloradoan on June 13.

Select the next NCMS Physician of the Year; Nominations due Nov. 20

The Northern Colorado Medical Society Board of Directors is seeking nominations for the 2014 NCMS Physician of the Year, the society's highest honor. The award will be presented at the NCMS Annual Meeting on Dec. 10, 2014.

Nominees should provide the community with compassionate and caring medical service in practice, education or research, enhance the quality of his or her community, serve as a credible role model

to others, and be an active member in good standing of NCMS.

If you know a colleague who you feel goes above and beyond, go to www.nocomedsoc.org to download a nomination form and send the completed form to NCMS Executive Director Nan Lee at nocomedsoc@gmail.com. Nominations are due Nov. 20.

Questions? Contact Nan at nocomedsoc@gmail.com or (970) 324-3035.



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NEW MEMBER BENEFIT: Listings in 2015 NCMS Directory are now included with membership

The NCMS Board of Directors voted at their September meeting to make physician listings in the 2015 NCMS physician pictorial directory available to all members at no additional charge. Previously, physicians paid a fee to be listed in the directory to cover printing costs.

The directory is distributed to area hospitals, medical clinics, senior centers, pharmacies, and other locations. Consumers recognize our directory as a valuable reference that provides information they cannot

get anywhere else. Because listings are now available to members at no additional cost, the information in this year's directory will be more robust and reflective of the northern Colorado medical community.

Watch for a letter in December containing the contact information we have on file for you. We ask that you make corrections and return the letter. Or go to www.cms.org/member/login and update your information online. Members will be able to opt-out of listings if preferred. Thank you!