

San Bernardino

President's Letter

Creating the Right Patient Experience

Years ago, before planning for leasehold improvements in my new practice space, I remember sitting in what was to become the reception room, contemplating what I would want to see, hear and experience if I were a patient. My intuition revealed that the area should not have bright fluorescent lights, uncomfortable Naugahyde chairs, out-of-date magazines or worn carpet. It needed to be a zone of comfort for reflection, relaxation and rest. What came to mind was an environment of healing that was warm, inviting and even safe.

After the renovations were done, my first patient came in several minutes early and sat down in the reception area that we had designed to look and sound like my grandmother's living room. It featured antiques, ambient lighting and soft classical music. About two minutes later, the medical assistant called her back to the examining room. The patient exclaimed, "What, he's ready now?" She wanted to sit and relax a bit longer.

There are many components to building the right patient experience. The practice's physical space is one and its employees are another. The inflections of their voices and their "can-do" attitudes tell patients that they are valued, wanted and welcome. Employ-

ees should speak so that others can "hear" the smile on their faces. When a departing patient is ready to pay and the phone interrupts the encounter, does



> Clifford Walters, MD, EMBA

the receptionist say "May I place you on hold?" rather than "Hang on please."

Good phone etiquette is essential, and patients expect simple courtesies in a professional office. Comments like, "She's all booked up," "The doctor is too busy to see you today" or "I just can't work you in" essentially say "We have no time for you" or worse, "We don't really care about you."

Also, the focus doctors place on making the medical encounter efficient leaves an impression on patients. Can you draw blood so the patient doesn't have to go to wait at the lab? Can you do simple procedures saving another appointment elsewhere? How much of a one-stop shop can you be?

Visualizing the patient's experience from the moment the door is opened through

to the time when the patient walks out is a worthy investment of time to create a healing environment and healthy patient visit.

Patients assume that physicians have the medical knowledge necessary to treat their health issues. But having an incredible experience with a caring physician who understands the "soft skills" is appreciated even more. A combination of outstanding knowledge, superb communication skills and professionalism is a heavenly experience.

On the issue of keeping appointment times, patients are amazed when physicians and staff members value their time and eliminate long waits. A delay in the proverbial "waiting room" is only a form of decreasing access to care!

These improvements in the patient experience are not about delivering concierge care, but "golden rule" care. The right patient experience does not happen by chance, but by purposefully thinking and creating, followed by a lot of training. Carefully select the staff who will adopt the practice philosophy you want. After all, the stage must be right, the actors well rehearsed and the director confident. The patrons are waiting. Let the show begin on time! Would you want it any other way if you sat in the audience?

Members Enjoy Fundraiser for Assemblywoman Wilmer Carter

On Dec. 18, 2007, leaders from the San Bernardino County Medical Society attended a fundraiser hosted by the California Medical Association Political Action Committee and the California Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons for Assemblywoman Wilmer Amina Carter at the Claim Jumper Restaurant in San Bernardino.

Carter represents the 62nd District, which includes the cities of Rialto and Colton, portions of Fontana and San Bernardino, and the communities of Bloomington and Muscog. She is the chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Inland Empire Transportation and sits on six Assembly committees, including Transportation, Insurance, Business & Professions, Aging and Long-Term Care, Rules, and Veterans Affairs.



> Gathering to discuss politics are, from left, Thelma Korpman, MD (CALPAC treasurer); Guillermo Valenzuela, MD (SBCMS president-elect); Assemblywoman Wilmer Amina Carter; Paul Sinkhorn, MD (SBCMS board member); Rodney Borger, MD (SBCMS vice president); and Dev GnanaDev, MD (CMA president-elect).

Student Health BY CHRISTINE RIDLEY, RN, AND MARTI BAUM, MD

School Nurses, Physicians Form Partnership to Support Student Health

In 2005, the San Bernardino County Medical Society, the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools and Inland Empire Health Plan formed a School Nurse Physician Collaborative. This dynamic collaborative provides an opportunity for local pediatricians and school district nurses to work together for the health and safety of children in San Bernardino County.

The collaborative is coordinated by Linda Stratton, SBCMS executive director. Brad Gilbert, MD, IEHP executive officer, hosts the quarterly meetings. The School Nurse Physician Collaborative is co-chaired by Marti Baum, MD, director of the OK Kids Program at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, and Christine Ridley, RN, coordinator of School Health Services for the San Bernardino Schools.

Participating school nurses and pediatricians have accomplished a lot. School health forms on a variety of topics were developed to provide consistency across all districts within San Bernardino County. The forms are available for schools and physicians to download on the SBCMS Web site at www.sbcms.org. See the link, "School Nurse Physician Collaborative." They include:

- Diabetes Medical Management Plan 2007
- Medication Administration Form 2007
- Physical Education Form 2007



> **Mary Ann Schaepper, MD, resident program director of psychiatry at Loma Linda University School of Medicine, speaks at the Oct. 10, 2007, School Nurse Physician Collaborative meeting. Her topic was "That Which Looks Like Attention Deficit Disorder...But Is Not."**

■ Symptom-Based Asthma Action Plan

■ Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations

In addition to the health forms, the Web site also includes resource documents, meeting announcements and minutes from previous meetings.

Physicians in the collaborative are involved in ongoing discussions and policy development regarding health issues that nurses face in the school setting. Physicians and nurses also receive current information on health topics relevant to school-aged children, such as how to address the student and family dynamics related to Attention Deficit Disorder and dermatologic issues.

The next meeting of the School Nurse Physician Collaborative is April 23, at 11:30 am. Speaker Jeffrey



> **Forty people attended the meeting of school nurses and physicians Oct. 10, 2007. In back, Dr. Schaepper writes on the board.**



> **Christine Ridley, RN, (left) and Marti Baum, MD, (right) are co-chairs of the School Nurse Physician Collaborative.**

Mar, MD, will discuss eating disorders in children. The meeting will be held in IEHP's conference room at 303 E. Vanderbilt Way, San Bernardino. Pediatricians interested in joining the collaborative or attending a meeting should contact Stratton at 951/787-7700 or lstratton@sbcms.org.

Over the past few years, this partnership has proven helpful for both the schools and the physicians who meet students' health needs. So much more can be accomplished when we work together!

Christine Ridley, RN, is coordinator of School Health Services for the San Bernardino Schools.

Marti Baum, MD, is director of the OK Kids Program at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital. They co-chair the School Nurse Physician Collaborative.

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Membership Report

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Albert Quan, DO
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General Surgery*
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Transfers

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Nuclear Medicine
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Clinical Pathology
San Bernardino

Christer A. Joretteg, MD
Internal Medicine*
Banning

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House Officers

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Michael Than, MD
An T. Tran, MD
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* Board Certified

Membership Categories

(As of Dec. 14, 2007)

Regular Active	-----865
Applicants	-----39
Government Employees	---8
Affiliates	-----8
Postgraduate Leave of	
Absence	-----1
House Officers	-----91
Students	-----488
Retired	-----234
Total Members	-----1,734

Honoring Excellence Among Us

Select fellow members and an outstanding citizen for recognition by the San Bernardino County Medical Society. Nominations are due March 14.

The society is now accepting nominations for the 2008 SBCMS Outstanding Physician and Citizen Awards. Four awards are available: Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Medical Society; Award for Outstanding Contribution to Medicine; Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Community; and Outstanding Citizen Award.

This is your chance to recognize excellence right here in our county. Nominate a colleague or citizen who has:

- Made a significant contribution to the healthcare field;
- Displayed extraordinary professional competence;
- Been active within SBCMS;
- Been active in health promotion and disease prevention through public speaking presentations and/or involvement with community organizations; or
- Made charitable gifts or participated in acts

demonstrating a desire to help others.

The recipients of 2008 Outstanding Physician and Citizen Awards will be honored in June at the SBCMS Installation of Officers dinner.

For a copy of the nomination form, go to the SBCMS Web site at www.sbcms.org. Click on "SBCMS Accepting 2008 Nominations for Annual Outstanding Physician and Citizen Awards," then the link, "Nomination Form." SBCMS members must make the nominations and physician nominees must be members.

Save These Dates

For additional information and to register for the following events, call the San Bernardino County Medical Society at 951/787-7700 or 909/825-6526, except where noted.

SBCMS/RCMA QUARTERLY MEDICAL STAFF FORUM

Wednesday, Feb. 27, 6 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Inland Empire Conference Room, 3993 Jurupa Ave., Riverside

Guest speaker Greg Abrams, Esq., will provide a legal update on medical staff issues. This forum was developed to allow Medical Executive Committee members and medical staff coordinators to come together to learn and to share concerns related to medical staff issues. There is no charge to attend, but reservations are required.

CERTIFIED MEDICAL CODER PREPARATORY COURSE

Five Wednesdays: March 5, 12 and 26, April 2 and 9, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Inland Empire Conference Room, 3993 Jurupa Ave., Riverside

Improve your practice's financial health by developing your billing staff. Guard against improper claim submission and achieve a higher rate of paid claims. This class is limited to 30 participants. Required materials for each class include CPT, ICD-9-CM Volumes 1 and 2, HCPCS manual, and medical dictionary. The member fee is \$649; nonmembers pay \$949.

BLACK TIE GALA AND SILENT AUCTION TO BENEFIT THE SBCMS MEDICAL STUDENT SECTION

Sunday, April 13, 5 p.m.
Redlands Country Club

The event features violinist Jason Uyeyama, director of String Studies at La Sierra University. He leads an active career as recitalist, chamber musician and soloist throughout the United States, Canada and Japan. He performs regularly with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

2008 CMA LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Tuesday, April 15
Sheraton Grand Sacramento and the State Capitol
Don't miss this opportunity to meet with elected officials in the State Assembly and Senate

to discuss important health policy issues that affect your practice. Attendees receive a CMA health policy briefing and a short course on "Lobbying 101" to prepare for the afternoon one-on-one legislative appointments.

INTRODUCTION TO MEDICARE

Thursday, April 17, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Inland Empire Conference Room, 3993 Jurupa Ave., Riverside

Participate in a billing class for people new to the program. Register at www.medicarenhic.com.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MEDICAL MUSEUM ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE AND SPECIAL LECTURE

Sunday, April 27, 2 p.m.
Southern California Medical Museum, 3993 Jurupa Ave., Riverside

In a special presentation, Historical Committee members Stanley Korfmacher, MD, and Hans Davidson, MD, will take a fascinating look at medical quackery. Stay for refreshments and docent-led tours of the medical museum.