

THE BULLETIN

NEW HANOVER-PENDER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY
Founded 1867

JULY-AUGUST 2000

Society Mission Statement:

To "make effective the opinion of the profession in all scientific, legislative, public health, and socio-economic matters "

What's Inside...

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Year 2000 Calendar (Meetings @ 6 p.m.)

January 19
Cape Fear
Country Club (CFCC)

Feb. 16 Joint Alliance Meeting
Holiday Inn SunSpree

March 15 Dr. Chris Fonvielle
Civil War Historian

April 12 "Spring Member Mixer"

May 17 Bar Association

June 21 Asset Protection

August 16
Summer Social
Cape Fear Country Club

September 20

October 21
Medical Retreat
SunSpree (AM/PM)

November 9-12 NCMS Annual
Mtg. (Greensboro)

November 15

December 6
Holiday Party

!!Meetings!!

Fifth Annual Summer Social

Wed. Aug. 16, 6-9 p.m.
Cape Fear Country Club

Social hour, dinner buffet. See
old friends and meet new
members and spouses.

Reservations due Wednesday,
August 9th, by phone, FAX or E-
mail (see footnote for numbers).
Cash Bar.

Supporters and Exhibitors:
New Hanover Health Network
Pfizer, Inc.
Aventis Pharmaceuticals
Liberty Healthcare Mgmt. Services

Exhibitor:
Cape Fear Area United Way, Inc.

Retired Physicians Section Meeting Announced

Tuesday, August 29th, 11 AM
Hanover Seaside Club
Speaker: Eduardo San Miguel, MD
Luncheon Fee: \$10 Per Person
Spouses, guests welcome!
RSVP by August 22nd - 790-5800

To send material for inclusion or for
corrections, see addresses at the
end of the newsletter. Thank you.

Announcements

New Hanover-Pender County Medical Society Alliance

Ms. Shannon Martinez, a new
member, would like to organize an
ongoing playgroup for toddlers.
Please call her ASAP at 796-1303.

"Welcome Coffee", Monday,
September 11 at the home of
Donna Starling. Mark your
calendar. See Medical Alliance
(below).

Operation Physician Advocacy (OPA) Tuesday August 22, Wilmington Hilton

One of several statewide meetings,
sponsored by the N.C. Medical
Society, to discuss important,
timely issues such as limited scope
practitioners, prompt pay from
insurers, and HMO liability. Please,
unite as one voice for medicine.
See N.C. Med. Society News
(below).

PBS Series on Death and Dying by Bill Moyers September 10-13.

*On our own terms: Moyers on
Dying*, will air 9-10:30 p.m. each
night.

NHPCMS Retreat, Oct. 20, 21
Holiday Inn SunSpree, Wrightsville
Beach. Brochures to be mailed.

Year 2000 NH-PCMS Executive Committee

President	Jeffrey Wright
Past Pres.	Kenneth White
Pres.- Elect	David Lensch
1 st V.P.	David Weatherford
2 nd V.P.	John Sanders
Secretary	Greg Bebb
Treasurer	Charles Kays
Asst. Treas.	Kelly Sennholz
Members-at-large	
N. Hanover	Robert Perry
Pender	Naseem Nasrallah

(Non-voting Members)
 CME Retreat Chairman
 Edward Whitesides
 1975 NCMS Pres. Frank Reynolds
 1999 NCMS Pres. C.K. Rust
 Councilor Michael Moulton
 Retired Physician Section
 Thomas Marshburn
 Alliance Contact Person
 Diane Miller
NH-PCMS Executive Director
Bonnie Brown

Local Statistics for Year 2000	
	(approx. nos.)
Physicians	632
Local Society Members	376
Practicing Physicians	474
N.C. Society Members	294
AMA Members	128

New Members in 2000: Welcome!!!

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CENSORS

The following were recommended for (and elected to) membership:

Samuel Brown Collins, MD, EM, with Eastern Carolina Emergency Physicians and
Steven Komjathy, MD, IM, with SE Medical Group on 6/21/00. Welcome!

These Emergency Medicine physicians were elected to membership, May 17, 2000:
Amy Michele Cohagan, DO;

Philip Bliss Beshany, MD;
Matthew Chet Radack, MD;
Michael Ray Osborne, MD; John Tsung-Long Tseng, MD; Michael Varney, MD. All are with Eastern Carolina Emergency Physicians. Welcome!

NOMINATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Sponsors' signatures have nominated these physicians for membership. Their applications will be presented for voting, September 20th:
Tor Ljung, MD, PS, Azalea Plastic Surgery; **Martha Lee Ljung, MD** and **Monique Renee Minor, MD,** EM with ECEP; **Louis Marty Martinez, MD,** OPH, with Coastal Carolina Eye Clinic & Laser Center; **Mark Bonner, MD,** Derm, with Lower Cape Fear Dermatology Clinic.

From the NH-PC Medical Alliance

2000-2001 officers:
 President - Diane Miller
 President-elect - Deb Church
 Treasurer - Donna Starling
 Recording Secretary/
 Corresponding Secretary/
 Family Support - Christy Eakins
 Membership - Kim Dalton
 State Communications - Peggy Temple
 Arrangements - Amy Sutton
 Health Promotions - Shelley Miles
 Race Directors - Donna Starling and Deb Church
 Yahweh Center & Healing Arts Network - Holly Hubbard
 Carousel Center - Deb Church
 Moms & Tots - Carolyn Medley

The Medical Alliance is preparing for our "**Welcome Coffee**" on **Monday, September 11** at the home of **Donna Starling.** Mark your calendar; more details to come. We are planning a variety of charitable,

informative and fun events for the coming year. Please join us and be a part of the Alliance. It doesn't mean everyone has to do everything, just what is of interest to you. Call **Diane Miller at 686-2310** for info.

The Alliance is very fortunate to have a new member in Wilmington, **Shannon Martinez,** who would like to organize an ongoing **playgroup for toddlers.** Please call her ASAP at 796-1303 so this fun and supportive component of the Alliance can get underway!!!

If you have any ideas, suggestions, etc. for the *Alliance*, please call **Diane Miller 686-2310.**

Local Society News:

Society Office News

Delivery of a **new computer** for the office is imminent. It will add reliability and speed to the task of managing the increasing size and complexity of the Society's databases and volume of communications with members and the general public.

2000-2001 Physician/Spouse Directories were mailed to the homes of 582 Society and Alliance members and newcomers on July 27th. (If the U.S. Mail failed, please advise!) Thanks to **Bonnie Brown,** executive director and **Venetta Wilson,** administrative assistant, for their hard work.

Executive Committee Meeting:
 No meeting in July.

May 17, 2000 Meeting Summary

The annual joint meeting with the New Hanover County Bar association was held at the Elks Club. The NH County Bar Association President **James MacDonald, JD**, and **Jeffrey Wright, MD**, NH-PCMS President, presided. It was sponsored by **C. WM. BARKER, P. A.** which was represented by Bill Barker, Stephanie Heath-Jones, and Wanda Carlberg.



James MacDonald, JD (left) and Jeffrey Wright, MD.

June 21, 2000 Meeting Summary

The meeting was held at the Cape Fear Country Club and featured **David Sousa, JD**, Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Medical Mutual Insurance Co. of N.C. (MMIC-NC) who spoke about asset protection from excessive malpractice verdicts. In his talk he stated that one of ten MMIC insured physicians will be the target of a law suit **annually**. The average award over the past three years has been \$300,000. For awards greater than \$500,000, the average has been \$3.5 million per case. Jury awards continue to climb in N.C., a state with a previously lower rate of malpractice awards. A copy of a summary of recommendations can be obtained from the NHPCMS office or through Medical

Mutual at 800-662-7917 or:

www.medicalmutualgroup.com.

Michael Reich, VP of Corporate Relations for MMIC-N.C. gave an update on the company.

William Gillen, MD, a neurologist, was presented for membership in the Fifty Year Club by **William Parker, MD**. Dr. Gillen recently contributed his large personal collection of historical medical books to the UNC-W library. Congratulations to Dr. Gillen and thank you. Sponsors were: **Morgan Stanley Dean Witter** represented by Walt Flippin and **Medical Mutual Insurance Company of NC** represented by Michael Reich and David Sousa, JD.

NHPCMS Retreat-October!

Mark your calendar now for the Medical Society retreat to be held at the **Holiday Inn SunSpree**. The **scientific program** will be held on **Saturday Oct. 21**. Sporting events will precede on Friday the Oct. 20. Our thanks go to **Ed Whitesides, MD** for the overall planning, to **Dan Gottovi, MD** for scientific program planning, and to all members of the Retreat Planning Committee for bringing this opportunity for the medical community to fruition.

Athletic Physicals

One of the year's largest undertakings*, provision of athletic physical screenings for New Hanover County athletes, took place in June. Thank you, physicians, NP's, and PA's (a significant number of whom were not Society members) for giving of your of time and expertise to benefit the community. Participants will receive a 2000-2001 Season's Pass for two to all New Hanover County Schools' non-tournament athletic events.

Volunteers for girls' exams:
David Esposito, ORS, Coordinator
Sally Cummings, NP
Andy Culbreth, PAC
Doug Messina, ORS
Lydia Wright, OBGyn
Dan Shapiro, PAC
Kyle Rhodes, OBGyn
Jim Markworth, ORS
Russell Williams, IM
Amy Rogge, PA
Richard Tamisiea, CD
Sonja Shanley, FP
Richard Gutsin, IM

(All participants in the boys' screenings, June 27th, are asked to contact Bonnie Brown at the Society office [790-5800] to confirm their service.)

*This project is possible through the combined efforts of the Medical Society, the New Hanover County School System, and New Hanover Health Network.

Physicians in the Community



Kenneth White, MD (left), NHPCMS Past President, presents Mr. Tony Lapatka, with 6 CPR mannequins donated to the New Hanover County Schools at the Oct. 20, 1999 meeting held on Battleship USS North Carolina.

Lula Patrick Marshburn June 25, 1925-July 1, 2000

We regret to report the death of **Lula Patrick Marshburn** on July first. "Pat" was the wife of colleague **Elisha Thomas Marshburn, Jr., MD**. To Dr. Marshburn and his family, we express our sincere condolences.

N.C. Medical Society News

The **OPA (Operation Physician Advocacy) Meeting**, which NCMS is holding here, will be **Tuesday, August 22nd. All physicians, whether or not they are local or state members, are invited** to attend, have a light meal, and voice their ideas and concerns to State staff. The venue is the Hilton Riverside, 6 PM. Program begins at 6:30 PM and ends no later than 8:30 PM. New Hanover - Pender had one of the largest turnouts in the state for the last OPA meeting here! Those desiring to attend should **make reservations through NCMS: 1-800-722-1350.**

Managed Care

In May and June we were made aware of the importance of a N.C. bill to be considered at the most recent legislative session in July regarding the following facts:

1. There is NO STANDARD in North Carolina law for the timely processing of health claims.
2. There is no enforcement mechanism or effective remedy for consumers, hospitals or physicians when health plans delay payment.
3. There is NO INFORMATION available to regulators about the prompt processing of claims.
4. There is NO DISCLOSURE of the problems a health plan identifies with a claim. The bill should be amended to assure physicians are told at the outset about problems with their claims.
5. The bill adopts a widely used business standard for the payment of business obligations (30 days, 18% interest per year on unpaid claims).

Through grass roots efforts on the part of the N.C. Medical Society and N.C. physicians the bill was successfully passed on

July 14, 00. This represents a true milestone in the ongoing struggle for physicians to have recourse regarding the rampant non-payment and late payment of medical claims by third party payors. The press release follows:

Subject: NCMS Legislative Update

Friday, July 14, 2000 3:47 PM

VICTORY! Prompt Pay Gets Final Approval

In the last hours of the 2000 legislative session Thursday evening, lawmakers put their final stamp of approval on the NCMS proposal for prompt payment of health insurance claims. The unanimous vote marked a victory in the laborious two-year project headed up by the NCMS and the NC Academy of Family Physicians. Thanks to the tireless efforts of physicians all across North Carolina, our legislative team had the necessary support to pass this much-needed legislation this summer. Your phone calls, emails, letters, and personal visits with legislators were crucial to our success in Raleigh. In a strategic effort to ensure passage of prompt pay language, NCMS advocates identified and amended a health-related bill on the fast track in the Senate, H1340 Respiratory Care Practice Act, to include our proposal. This placed the prompt pay measure in two vehicles, positioning the NCMS with several options in the final days of the session. Speaker James B. Black (D-Mecklenburg) placed H1340 on the calendar for consideration Thursday resulting in a 98-0 final vote.

Prompt Pay Highlights:

1. Requires health plans to pay claims or fully disclose claim problems within 30 days.
2. Gives health plans one opportunity to notify providers of deficiencies in a claim.
3. Imposes interest at the rate of 18% for failure to pay claims within the specified period.

4. Authorizes the Insurance Commissioner to impose fines for non-compliance

The NCMS will provide a detailed analysis of this and other bills affecting the practice of medicine in the 2000 Legislative Summary. The Summary should be available on the NCMS website within the next few weeks. Congratulations to everyone on a successful team effort!!

North Carolina Medical Society
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Raleigh, NC 27611
800-722-1350
www.ncmedsoc.org

The NCMS Government Affairs Staff may be contacted as follows:
Jean Lewis
jlewis@ncmedsoc.org

Any bill mentioned in our summary may be viewed at the General Assembly web site: www.ncleg.net

Editor's Corner



(Newsweek)

We are soliciting information about accomplishments or activities of local Society or Alliance members, professional or personal, that would be of interest to the general readership for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please submit to:

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nhpcmeds@wilmington.net

or to: John W. Sanders, MD,
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JohnWSanders@worldnet.att.net