

Lee County Medical Society

Bulletin

Physicians Caring for the Community

**PLAN
YOUR
YEAR**

2024 Calendar of Events

**SATISFACTION
IS OUR GOAL**

Member Survey Results, page 11



BULLETIN

Lee County Medical Society is a Virtual Operation
Mailbox address: 5781 Lee Boulevard, Suite 208-104
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Lucia Huffman, MD Magali Van Den Bergh, MD

Lee County Medical Society Mission Statement

The mission of Lee County Medical Society is to advocate for physicians and their relationships with patients; promote public health and uphold the professionalism of the practice of medicine.

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Cover image of Dr. Daniel de la Torre at the 2023 LCMS Holiday Party. Members are encouraged to submit photos to be considered for the Bulletin cover. Must be large format/300dpi. Email photos to marketing@lcmsfl.org

SEND US YOUR NEW PROFESSIONAL PHOTO

Put your best face forward! Submit new headshots for use in the **2024 Pictorial Directory** by April 26th to marketing@lcmsfl.org.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WED, MAR 6th
11:30am - 1:00pm

LCMS Administrators Luncheon
KJ's Steakhouse

FRI, MAR 8th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Ford's Garage - Cape Coral
Sponsor this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

FRI, APRIL 12th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Deep Lagoon
Sponsor: Wells Fargo/Arc Medical

THU, APR 18th
6:00pm - 8:00pm

LCMS Member Meeting & Dinner
Sponsor/Location: FineMark National Bank & Trust

SAT, APR 27th
8:00am - 10:00am

6th Annual LCMS Foundation 5K Race
Lakes Park
7330 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33908

FRI, MAY 10th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Sponsor/Location: Thompson Orthopedics

Calendar, continued on page 4

RVSP to LCMS events at www.lcmsfl.org

LCMS 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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University Urology



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*Hematology/
Oncology*
Florida Cancer
Specialists



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Casey, MD**
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ENT Specialists
of FL



**Lucia
Huffman, MD**
Family Medicine
Physician Primary
Care of SWFL



**Jordan
Taillon, MD**
Pulmonologist
Lee Physician
Group



**Kristina
Mirabeau-
Beale, MD**
*Radiation
Oncology*
GenesisCare



**Magali
Van Den Bergh,
MD**
*Hematology/
Oncology*
Florida Cancer
Specialists

MEMBERS AT LARGE

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

Stuart Bobman, MD

Stephanie Cruz, DO

Amber Jandik, MD

Julie Ramirez, CAE

MEMBER NEWS

IN MEMORIAM

It is with profound sorrow that we announce the passing of these Lee County Medical Society members:

Carlos A. Cerruto, MD, on November 30, 2023

David C. Brown, III, MD, on December 2, 2023

NEW OFFICE LOCATION

Dr. Claudio Ferreira will open a new practice in March at
1620 Medical Lane, Fort Myers, FL 33907

MEMBER RECOGNITION

LCMS Foundation would like to thank **Mary C. Yankaskas, MD**, a retired OB/GYN, for her generous contribution of over \$1,000 to the Physician Wellness Program.

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(239) 596-4142 or nreyelt@yahoo.com

Newly renovated medical office space (11' x 10') is available for lease off Gladiolus. Space is in a 3,085 sq. ft. office building. For more information or to schedule a walkthrough, email Dr. Oliver Favalli.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS, CONTINUED

SAT, APR 20th
TBD

LCMS Allied Medical Professionals Job Fair
Collaboratory
Recruit employees at this event! Email jramirez@lcmssl.org

TUE, MAY 21st
6:30pm - 8:30pm

LCMS Women Physicians Event
Hyatt Coconut Point Resort & Spa
Sponsors: Markham Norton Mosteller Wright
& Linda Minck Law

SAT, JUNE 1st
TBD

LCMS Family Fun Event
Location: TBD

JULY 9th
6:30pm - 8:30pm

LCMS Residency Reception
FineMark National Bank & Trust

FRI, AUG 16th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Collaboratory
Sponsor: Florida Cancer Specialists

TUE, AUG 27th
6:30pm - 8:30pm

LCMS Women Physicians Event
Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurant
Sponsor: Florida Cancer Specialists

SAT, AUG 24th
TBD

LCMS Family Fun Night
Location: TBD

FRI, SEPT 13th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Location: TBD

THU, SEPT 19th
6:00pm - 8:00pm

LCMS Member Meeting & Dinner
Sponsor/Location: FineMark National
Bank & Trust

FRI, OCT 11th
6:00pm

**LCMS Foundation: Annual
Medical Service Awards**
Forest Country Club

SAT, OCT 12th
7:30am

LCMS Foundation: Annual Golf Tourney
Forest Country Club

SAT, NOV 2nd
7:30am

LCMS CME Day
The Doubletree at Bell Tower

FRI, NOV 8th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Location: TBD

NOV TBD
12:00pm - 1:30pm

LCMS Retired Member Luncheon
Location: TBD

THU, Nov 14th
6:00pm - 8:00pm

LCMS Member Meeting & Dinner
Sponsor/Location: FineMark National
Bank & Trust

THUR, DEC 5th
6:00pm

LCMS Annual Holiday Party
Location: TBD

NEW MEMBERS AS OF JANUARY 19, 2024



Lincoln de la Parte Perez, MD
Internal Medicine
Physicians' Primary Care
1255 Viscaya Parkway, Ste. 200
Cape Coral, FL 33990
(239) 574-1988
www.ppcswfl.com



Kathy Porter, MD
Maternal Fetal Medicine
Maternal Fetal Medicine of SW FL
16261 Bass Rd., Ste. 100
Fort Myers, FL 33908
(239) 481-5477
www.mfmswfl.com



Donata Vaiciunaite, DO
General Surgeon
GenesisCare
21 Barkley Circle
Fort Myers, FL 33907
(239) 939-2616
www.genescare.com/us



Brian Frank, MD
Gastroenterology
Associates in Digestive Health
13051 University Dr., Ste. 101
Fort Myers, FL 33907
(239) 433-3636
www.uniteddigestive.com



Silvano Samartine, MD
Radiologist
Advent Health
2600 Westhall Lane
Maitland, FL 32751
(407) 200-2273



Ashley Yazdani, DO
Pediatrics
Physicians' Primary Care
1261 Viscaya Parkway, Ste. 101
Cape Coral, FL 33990
(239) 573-7337
www.ppcswfl.com



Veska Pandika, MD
Diagnostic Radiology
Florida Radiology Consultants
8791 Conference Dr., Ste. 101
Fort Myers, FL 33919
(239) 331-5566
www.flrad.com



Price Sonkarley, MD
Otolaryngology/Head & Neck
Surgeon
Mark Montgomery, MD
9240 Bonita Beach Rd., Ste. 1106
Bonita Springs, FL 34135
(239) 495-6200
drmarkmontgomery.com



Warlyn Sosa Popoteur, MD
Internal Medicine
Physicians' Primary Care
5700 Lee Boulevard
Lehigh Acres, FL 33971
(239) 482-1010
www.ppcswfl.com



Richard Torricelli, MD
Internal Medicine
Millennium Physician Group
162 Del Prado Blvd.
Cape Coral, FL 33912
(239) 573-1606
www.millenniumphysician.com



Membership has its Benefits!
*Renew online or request a copy of
your statement from
admin@lcmssl.org
DEADLINE: March 31st*

A PROMISING YEAR AHEAD

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Scott Caesar, MD

I am honored to be serving as the 2024 Lee County Medical Society president. This year, I look forward to focusing on three key areas.

As physicians, our patients come first, and as members of the Lee County Medical Society, we strive to keep this at the forefront in serving our community. In addition to service to patients, my hope is that this year, as a society, we also focus on physician wellness and physician advocacy.

Physician wellness comes in many forms. Our physicians' mental health is of utmost importance. The LCMS Physician Wellness Program offers our members the opportunity to anonymously meet with mental health specialists for any reason. Physician burnout is real. To best serve our patients and community, we must ensure that we take care of ourselves. Do not hesitate to inquire about the Wellness program and avail yourself of any necessary services.

Another aspect of wellness comes in the form of connections with and support amongst our colleagues. We look forward to hosting many social events throughout the year. Besides our monthly happy hours and scheduled member meetings, we plan to build upon the larger events of the year—the 5K run/walk, the annual

holiday party, and our newly founded golf tournament entering its second year. To help us support our practices, we also look forward to our inaugural physician extender job fair to connect potential candidates with our members.

Physician advocacy is of paramount importance to the society and also a passion of mine. With circumstances increasingly stacked against the practice of medicine, we must do everything we can to advocate for ourselves and our profession. There are several ways that members can get involved in advocacy, including becoming delegates at the Florida Medical Association annual meeting, or working closely with the FMA PAC. In the coming months, I look forward to sharing specific things that we can all do to make sure our profession is protected and that we are given the freedom to practice in a way that is best for our patients, ourselves and our families.

I look forward to an exciting and productive year ahead.



INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Your 2024 Board of Directors were sworn in by Dr. Daniel De la Torre at the January 19th Member Meeting.



(l-r) President Elect Gamini Soori, MD; Past President Ryan Lundquist, MD; Ex Officio Member Amber Jandik, MD; Ex Officio Member Stuart Bobman, MD; President Scott Caesar, MD; Treasurer Asif Azam, MD; Director Magali Van Den Bergh, MD; Director Liliana Bustamante, MD; Director Lucia Huffman, MD; Director Kristina Mirabeau-Beale, MD; and Ex Officio Member Stephanie Cruz, DO. Not pictured are Secretary Arie Dosoretz, MD; and Directors Justin Casey, MD and Jordan Taillon, MD.

EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, WELLNESS & SOCIALIZATION

THE RAMIREZ REPORT: Julie Ramirez, CAE, LCMS Executive Director



Happy New Year 2024! As we move quickly into this new year, I am blessed to be writing this Ramirez Report knowing that we have at least 78 new physicians that joined the Society in 2023! With all the new members, I dedicate this report to detailing some of the benefits that the Society offers.

McCourt Scholarship: A scholarship in honor of Jerry McCourt, an Endocrinologist, and his family that died in an airplane crash in 1982. The Medical Society has continued the tradition of sending newly diabetic diagnosed children to the Florida Diabetic Camp every year. If you have a recent type 1 diagnosed pediatric patient, please consider referring them to attend the Florida Diabetes Camp in Gainesville this summer. The Society will grant funding for 3-5 children this summer. Feel free to email Julie at jramirez@lcmsfl.org or call for more information.

Florida Medical Association Delegation Opportunity: This August 2-4, Lee County Medical Society will bring 13 Lee County physicians to Orlando to participate in the Florida Medical Association's House of Delegates. At this meeting, physicians will review resolutions presented to the FMA and vote on whether or not they are important enough to be presented to the state legislature. If you like advocacy and what to see a change in policy, this is the place to start, and you could be one of our 13 delegates! Email Julie to join the delegation.

Physician Wellness Program: In 2017, we lost a physician member to depression. Vowing to put safeguards in place to protect a physician in a crisis, the Medical Society created the Medical Society Foundation that raises money for free psychology visits. The 5k and Golf Tournaments are fundraising events with the intent on raising \$30,000 a year. The Physician Wellness Program is a super confidential program that allows physicians to talk with a licensed and vetted psychologist group 6 times a year for free. We have 2 groups to choose from that are listed on our website. Life gets messy sometimes and it is helpful to have someone to talk to, to get you back on the right track. This program might not be for you in your present life journey but keep it in mind for a physician friend and for the future. <https://www.lcmsfl.org/Our-programs>

And our events! We have 30 different events scheduled this coming year. The Society wants to make sure that every demographic has an opportunity to feel like they belong. From cocktail hours with spouses, to family events and retiree luncheons, we want everyone to feel welcome. So thank you for your comments on the membership survey that will help steer our events this next year.



2023 HOLIDAY PARTY PHOTOS

December 14, 2023 at Burroughs House & Gardens



proceeds support LCMS Foundation and the Physician Wellness Program

5k Run • 2k Walk



Lee County Medical Society Foundation
Saturday, April 27, 2024

LAKES PARK

SATURDAY • APRIL 27, 2023
Race Starts at 8:00AM
7330 Gladiolus Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33908

CATEGORIES

ADULT RUN 5K
YOUTH RUN 5K
ADULT WALK 2K
YOUTH WALK 2K
*LARGEST TEAM

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If you or your business is interested in being a sponsor, please call 239.936.1645

DIAGNOSIS-RELATED MEDICAL MALPRACTICE CLAIMS WITH INDEMNITIES OVER \$1 MILLION: UNDERSTANDING THE PRIMARY DRIVERS

by: Jacqueline Ross, RN, PhD, Coding Director, and Kathrine Soulsby, RN, BSN, Senior Patient Safety Analyst, Department of Patient Safety and Risk Management, The Doctors Company, Part of TDC Group

Among physician members of The Doctors Company, the frequency of medical malpractice claims has decreased over a 20-year period. However, during roughly the same time, the percentage of medical malpractice claims with high-indemnity payments (greater than \$500,000) has increased dramatically, and in recent years, most states have reported verdicts greater than \$10 million.

The proportion of medical malpractice awards greater than \$500,000

INCREASED 100%



Identifying and concentrating on factors related to these high-indemnity claims can help to both improve patient outcomes and reduce financial losses. One common thread in high-indemnity claims is diagnostic errors. Therefore, understanding more about how to protect against and prevent diagnostic errors is paramount to patient safety and to mitigating loss costs.

Study Design

A recent addition to our taxonomy for the coding and analysis of malpractice claims has been the ability to identify primary drivers, which are contributing factors pinpointed as the main catalysts for the events that caused the major injury or negligence. This analysis may be the first to focus on the primary drivers of malpractice claims.

This exploratory, descriptive analysis included those closed diagnosis-related claims against members of The Doctors Company from the loss years of 2010 to 2022 that concluded with an indemnity payment of \$1 million or more and that had a primary driver coded. Each claim included in this study, 121 total, had at least one primary driver coded (claims may contain more than one primary driver).

Many diagnosis-related errors have been identified as having preventable contributing factors. The use of the Diagnosis-Related Process of Care framework from Candello, a data collaborative of medical professional liability insurers and health systems, contributed to our analysis.

Results

- Injury severity, based on the National Association of

Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) Severity of Injury Scale, was high overall, with 91 percent of patients experiencing either death (34 percent) or a high-severity injury (57 percent).

- The primary driver of patient assessment was found in 94 percent of all high-indemnity claims.
- The failure to obtain a consultation or referral (22 percent) and communication among providers (18 percent) were also common primary drivers.
- Forty-five percent of the high-indemnity claims in this analysis had primary drivers in the testing and processing phase.

Risk Mitigation Strategies

- Acknowledge the potential for cognitive bias within daily practice, and use [tools such as those from The Joint Commission](#). The influence of cognitive bias is suggested by the overwhelming prominence of the primary driver of patient assessment, accompanied by the commonality of the primary drivers of failure to obtain a consultation/referral and communication among providers. Although the potential for cognitive bias exists throughout the diagnostic process, its early phases are heavily laden with gathering, receiving, and processing information, making these phases especially vulnerable to any flaws in reasoning.
- Access tools for self-assessment related to diagnostic issues, such as [Calibrate Dx](#) from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).
- Create systems using a [systems engineering framework](#) to close the loops and ensure that patients complete their tests, consultations, and appointments. With nearly half of the claims in this analysis revealing primary drivers in the testing and processing phase, the value of closed-loop communication to support practitioners is clear.
- Use [checklists](#), such as those from the Society to Improve Diagnosis in Medicine.

We hope these insights will assist clinician leaders, healthcare systems, and hospitals to improve understanding of where to place patient safety initiatives and how to target efforts when working with healthcare practitioners to improve patient outcomes and reduce injury. [READ THE FULL STUDY HERE.](#)

The guidelines suggested here are not rules, do not constitute legal advice, and do not ensure a successful outcome. The ultimate decision regarding the appropriateness of any treatment must be made by each healthcare provider considering the circumstances of the individual situation and in accordance with the laws of the jurisdiction in which the care is rendered.

Discover New Advancements in Cardiovascular Care

3rd Annual Naples Cardiovascular Summit



March 1-2, 2024

Arthrex One Conference Center
1250 Creekside Pkwy Naples, FL
NCHcardiosummit.com

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A MESSAGE FROM CANCER ALLIANCE NETWORK

The joy of welcoming your first-born can swiftly shift when faced with life's unexpected challenges. Maria, born on January 2, 2021, started her life with symptoms of yellow eyes, a hard belly, and non-growing nails. The devastating news came on August 11, 2021: **stage 3 Hepatoblastoma**, a rare liver cancer. Suddenly, Maria's mom was submerged in fear and worry. Financial challenges loomed with the mounting medical bills while she was out of work due to caring for her daughter.

Enter Cancer Alliance Network (CAN). Upon a visit, a caseworker at CAN provided immediate assistance and solace. Within a week, CAN began covering car payments and providing gift cards for necessities, ensuring they were not battling alone. Maria's journey involved intense chemotherapy sessions and an agonizing wait for a liver transplant. At just one-year old in January 2022, she successfully underwent her transplant. By March 24, 2022, following further treatments, the bells rang signifying Maria's victory against cancer. Set to turn three in 2024, Maria's mom expresses profound gratitude for the organ donor and CAN's unwavering

support. She says, "CAN's assistance was the lifeline I needed during our darkest times."

Cancer Alliance Network (CAN) offers services and programs to help those who are currently battling cancer in Collier and Lee counties. Services provided can include financial assistance to help with everyday needs such as rent, mortgage, utilities, carpayments, groceries & gas.



CAN was formed in 2002 to help our neighbors and friends in our community through the most difficult times whose lives are being turned upside down financially and emotionally. Facing a world of unknowns as well as dealing with the mounting pressures of everyday living expenses, CAN helps, when there is nowhere else to turn.

To support CAN's mission of neighbors helping neighbors, join them in their upcoming fundraising event, "Fancy Pants", a TopGolf Event on April 20th in Ft Myers. Visit www.CancerAllianceNetwork.org, or call 239-643-HOPE (4673) for ticket sales.

JOIN OUR TEAM

INTERNAL MEDICINE, LIPID & WELLNESS PRACTICE OF FORT MYERS



Our concierge practice is growing steadily and **we need more doctor power**. If you want to return to how medical care should be delivered, providing the highest quality possible, consider joining our team.

We seek an internal medicine or family practice physician who can provide contemporary, patient focused care while maintaining the traditional patient care oath. This is a once in a lifetime, unprecedented career opportunity. We work/contract directly with patients and are free of third-party payment interference.

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Send your Curriculum Vitae:

By email: drk@imlwp.com

By mail: 6160 Winkler Road, Fort Myers, FL 33919

Questions? Call Dr. Raymond Kordonowy: (239) 362-3005

FMA BOARD OF GOVERNORS UPDATE

The FMA approved the creation of a Women Physicians' Task Force to better help our women members practice medicine. LCMS member Rebekah Bernard, MD, is the chair of this task force and welcomes your participation! If you'd like to receive her **FMA Women Physician newsletter** to stay informed of task force activities, email [Dr. Bernard](mailto:Dr.Bernard). The Task Force plans include:

- Developing a webinar series based on identified topics of interest to women physicians including fertility issues, contract negotiations, and conflict management.
- Hosting a virtual Town Hall in Spring 2024
- Investigating the feasibility of offering onsite childcare during the FMA Annual Meeting to increase participation of women physicians
- Evaluate the possibility of creating an online, opt-in directory that would allow physicians to share information to facilitate mentor-mentee connections on a variety of topics.

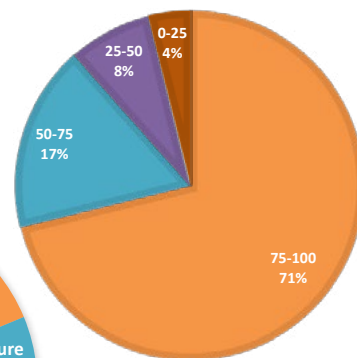
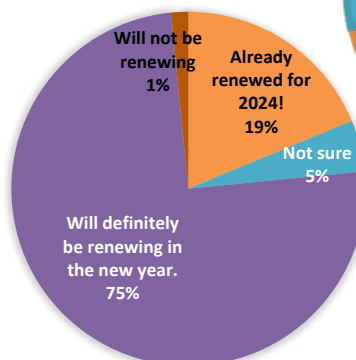
A Women's Task Force Reception will take place at this year's annual meeting (thank you to ACOG for financial support!).

Save the Date

LCMS Women Physicians Garden Party • May 21, 2024

MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

On a scale from 1-100,
How satisfied are you
with your membership?



How likely are
you to renew your
membership?

What would make your membership
more valuable to you?

More family activities
More CME options
More networking events
Events hosted in Bonita/Estero/North Ft. Myers
More practice-building guidance
More local business discounts
More women-physician activities
More Latin-physician events



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PHYSICIAN WELLNESS PROGRAM

The **Physician Wellness Program (PWP)** provides a safe harbor for active LCMS physicians to address normal life difficulties in a confidential and professional environment. Our program works with two independent, local psychology groups that provide member-physicians with up to six visits for calendar year 2024.

This is a confidential and free member benefit. No insurance will be billed and LCMS will not be given any personal information about those who use the program. LCMS pays a monthly bill based on the number of sessions provided. Full details on how to enroll or donate to this program can be found at www.lcmsfl.org/our-programs.