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Your Academy Works Hard For You

Your Academy continues to work hard for you representing the PA profession to the state of Michigan. Since the fall, we have displayed our MAPA booth at a variety of meetings including the Automotive Industry Action Group Health Solutions meeting, The Medical Group Management Association Third Party Payer Day meeting and The Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Practice Physician meeting. We were also able to present a lecture at the Michigan State Medical Society "Best in Medicine" meeting regarding the physician/physician assistant team approach to medicine. This exposure begins a new era of marketing for the Academy to a variety of industries that have a direct impact on our practices. We continue to reach out to our physician partners to show them we strive to work by their side and not against them as independent providers. We will also market our services to other industry representatives so they can get a better understanding of our abilities to improve health outcomes for our patients in a cost effective manner.



*John G. McGinnity MS, PA-C
MAPA President*

We are working with The Rossman Group to develop a marketing plan for our profession. We continue to develop a speakers bureau for the Academy and target organizations through which we can promote our profession. We will develop a feature story for local media outlets identifying the increased reliance and need for PAs in the state of Michigan. This promotion of the profession will be directed to the legislature as well. With term limits in the state, all professions need to continually educate new legislators about their profession and scope of practice. This critical area is a major strength of the Academy due to the work of our lobbyist and executive director Michael Degrow. By developing a legislative packet we will be able to increase the direct contact we have with our legislators and keep our information in the forefront.

Current students of the profession are a major focus of the Academy. We need to develop future leaders and advocates for our profession. The Academy has developed

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A Few Medical Thoughts in These Economic Times

By Wallace D. Boeve, EdD, PA-C
MAPA President-Elect

The practice of medicine is the hallmark of the physician assistant's experience. At the end of the day, it is not about the number of patients we see (although it can be busy), it is not about the compensation we receive (although it is economically well above the national average of \$50,000), and it is not about the politics of hospital facilities, legislatures, or third party payers (although these can be difficult), the practice of medicine is about the passion and compassion that physician assistants (PAs) bring to patient care. As Bill Leinweber, American Academy of Physician Assistant's (AAPA) Executive Director, recently stated at the Constituent Organizations Resource Exchange (CORE) meeting in D.C. on February 21, 2009, "Power and purpose is not about numbers, but about passion, and we are passionate as PAs... It's a great time to be a PA."

As a PA, opportunities abound to make a lasting impact not only in the lives of patients, but also for the face of medicine in the United States and in Michigan. The time to act is

now. Unfortunately, many individuals (PAs included) are hunkering down due to the negative external programming in the current economic culture. However, another approach must be considered. As successful author, Stedman Graham, recently stated in response to this external programming, "True leadership is about developing an identity for yourself, knowing who you are, where you're going and how you're going to get there, then developing a process for continuous improvement." Along this same line of improvement, NFL Coach, Tony Dungy, when he arrived in Tampa Bay for his

first head coaching position, stated, "Although all the issues were relatively minor, they contributed to the team's second-class, defeatist, excuse-laden mentality. I began to sell the philosophy that we are responsible for what happens to us, not anyone or anything else."

In celebration of the recent Black History month, this philosophy of responsibility is best exemplified by the stories of many African-Americans' pursuit of true freedom. One of Martin Luther King, Junior's quotes rises to the top, "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." Likewise Collin Powell was recently quoted in "Success" magazine, "Dare to take the harder path of work and commitment, a path that leads somewhere. Look for something you love to do and you do well. Go for it."

Due to the many challenges that the PA profession has experienced in educating stakeholders about the PA role, the physician assistant profession is positioned to go for it and use those experiences in shaping the future of medicine. Again, to quote Bill Leinweber at the recent AAPA CORE meeting, PAs need to "propel from discomfort to action." At CORE, Ann Davis, AAPA Director of State Government Affairs, also added, "If you're not at the table, you will be on the menu." May we all as a profession lead the medical community to address disparities by being at the table, to address quality care by being proactive participants and hence fulfill our founder's understanding, "There is a difference between an observer's role and a participant's role." (*Dr. Eugene Stead as quoted by Cindy Lord, AAPA President at CORE*)

It is that time of year again when we are gearing up for the upcoming AAPA House of Delegates. This years AAPA Conference is in San Diego and will prove to be exciting. If you have any concerns regarding our profession, the AAPA, etc, please let me know so we can address these issues.

We are also looking forward to next years (2010) HOD in Atlanta, GA. This is an easy way to get involved, and requires very little time commitment. Please email me boevew@gvsu.edu if you are interested in being a delegate or alternate at the 2010 conference and represent the PA's of Michigan.

If you are new and have not been a delegate before, feel free to email me and we can discuss the responsibilities. It is really a great experience.

Andrew Booth, PA-C
Chief Delegate
andrewdbooth@hotmail.com

MICHIGAN DELEGATES NEEDED

What Does the Stimulus Bill, and the New Federal Budget Mean for Michigan's Health Care System?

By Phil Schafer, PA-C
Chair, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Committee

While Michigan may have been one of the earliest, and hardest hit by the current recession, we are now joined by 45 other states who have sky rocketing budget deficits. Nicholas Johnson of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities says, "The gravity of the problem faced by states isn't anything that we've seen since the Great Depression,"

As Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and continues to wrestle with a new federal budget, many here in Michigan wonder what this will mean for our state. The president has promised to renew the focus on health care. There are big ticket, national items that have made headlines, such as \$19 billion to improve health information technology, a \$6 billion down payment on its goal to doubling the funding for cancer research, and \$87 billion to create nursing home visitation programs. In addition, the following are a few examples of what the AARA, and the new budget (as proposed) would mean for Michigan's health care system:

The AARA directly supplies \$464 million dollars for Michigan's Medicaid rescue fund.

\$2.6 million authorized to support health centers in Michigan through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The HRSA is a network of medical facilities, clinics, and mobile vans.

A 65% subsidy for COBRA, for continuation of insurance premiums for up to nine months to workers who have been involuntarily terminated.

The ARRA supplies \$134 million in provisions from the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. The proposed budget would provide \$4 billion for the Indian Health service (HIS), "to support and expand the provision of health care services, and public health programs for American Indians and Alaska natives." Michigan has 11 federally recognized Indian tribes, with over 1.8 million Native American residents.

The budget invests \$330 million for health professional shortage areas, and \$73 million to improve both access to, and the quality of, health care in rural areas. As of our last survey in 2007, 143 of Michigan's 165 counties were experiencing some health care shortage.

The ARRA blocked last year's Medicare payment reduction for medical education. Michigan has five PA programs, which are eligible to receive moneys through Title VII to promote educational experiences in both rural and urban areas that are medically under served.

And last, and just in, the President just signed FY09 appropriations bill (March 11, 2009). It contains a 14 percent increase in funds for Title VII.

"The gravity of the problem faced by states isn't anything that we've seen since the Great Depression."

— Nicholas Johnson, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

S-CHIP Programs Could Cover Over 100,000 of Michigan's Children in Need

By Phil Schafer, PA-C

Chair, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Committee

Congress and the new President wasted no time re-authorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) through the year 2013. The program is designed to provide insurance to children of low income families whose parents work full-time, and thus do not qualify for Medicaid. Through MICHild, this program has dramatically lowered the percentage of Michigan's children that are uninsured since it's creation in 1997. It is estimated that over 100,000 of Michigan's children are eligible, and that this will bring up to 1.4 billion dollars to Michigan's health care system over the next five years.

Last year, Congress voted to re-authorize the S-CHIP program, but the bill drew criticism from a few law makers because many states, including Michigan, allow certain adults to enroll. It was vetoed by President Bush.

Uninsured children are much less likely to receive preventative health care, and are five times more likely to get their regular care through the emergency department. Educators believe that almost one in five children in urban schools suffer from a health problem that "significantly" affects their ability to learn. Nationally, an estimated 11 million children are eligible for S-CHIP programs. Tens of thousands of children here in Michigan are eligible, but have not been enrolled. Providers should be diligent about recognizing families with these children and assist them with registration.

President Obama in his remarks after signing the bill said "I refuse to accept that millions of our children fail to reach their full potential because we fail to meet their basic needs. In a decent society, there are certain obligations that are not subject to trade off or negotiations, and health care for our children is one of those obligations." The public seems to agree. Surveys show that 84 percent of Americans "strongly support" coverage for children, and a similar percentage believe that health care for our children should be a right. The President's proposed FY 2010 budget calls for increased funding of these programs. At current levels, it is estimated that S-CHIP funds here in Michigan will support or create almost 6,000 jobs.

R E G I O N A L N E W S

Region 1 Happenings

MAPA's Region 1 (Upper Peninsula) has scheduled a dinner meeting for Friday, May 8th, at Elizabeth's Chop House in Marquette. Our guest speaker has yet to be determined, but new therapies for gout will be discussed. Regional job issues and MAPA updates will be discussed. This dinner is sponsored by Takeda and GlaxoSmithKline pharmaceuticals.

Region 6 Happenings

MAPA invites you to join our team for the 18th Annual Detroit Komen Race for the Cure. Race for the Cure will be held on Saturday, May 30th at 8am. Our team will meet outside of Hockeytown Cafe on Woodward Ave. Team member may choose to run or walk. **FREE T-Shirt** to the first 10 people to register. For maps, directions and other general info please visit <http://www.karmanos.org/racefortheuredetroit/index.asp>

To register for the MAPA Team please use the following link: <http://www.karmanos.org/racefortheuredetroit/index.asp>. Follow the directions for registering and make sure you register as a team member and not an individual. You will then be asked to pick your team. We are under Michigan Academy of Physician Assistants.

The cost is \$25. This link and info will also be on the MAPA website. Please join our team and support a great cause!

Senate Bills Introduced to Solve PA Professional Corporation Issue

*By Phil Schafer, PA-C
Chair, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Committee*

Senate bills 26, 27 and 28 of 2009 have been introduced by Senator Stamas of Midland.

This law would allow PAs to partner with physicians in a professional corporation (PC). These bills represent a multi year process of negotiations by MAPA with Michigan's labor, and licensing departments, the physician organizations as well as the Attorney

General's office. We are hopeful that these bills will move through the legislature in the coming months and finally resolve this issue. MAPA leaders are preparing arguments to support these bills in upcoming committee hearings. If anyone has input or personal experiences with this issue that they would be willing to share, please send me an email to filbertpa@hughes.net.

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***5th Annual
Spring Professional Issues***

April 18, 2009

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www.michiganpa.org**



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Are you interested in becoming involved in physician assistant leadership? Utilize your leadership skills or develop your leadership skills by becoming involved in the Michigan Academy of Physician Assistant (MAPA) Board of Directors!

We are now asking for nominations for the offices of

- President Elect
- Secretary
- Regions 1,3,5
- Chief Delegate
- Delegates and
- Alternate Delegates

The Delegate positions would require travel to the American Academy of Physician Assistant's annual conference in Atlanta, Georgia from May 29 thru June 3, 2010. Please take the time to seriously consider giving back to your profession. We need energetic and creative individuals to ensure the future quality of healthcare for our patients within the state of Michigan. We all lead very active lives, but volunteering your time to give something back to your profession will make a difference for your patients and for you personally.

Be a part of the tradition and excitement that is the Michigan Academy!

Visit www.michiganpa.org for a sample platform statement and sample letter of intent.

Please send your paperwork to: MAPA • Attention: Nominations • 120 West Saginaw Street • East Lansing, MI 48823

Your Academy Works Hard For You, continued from pg. 1

a graduation packet to ease the transition from student to practicing PA. This will help graduating students ensure they are following all the needed legal requirements to practice as a PA in the state. We also provide all fellow members the required forms they need each year to make sure their practice is in compliance with state law on the "members only" section of the MAPA website.

Speaking of the world-wide Web, you will soon see us in a new version of Web media. If, like me, you have used Facebook to reconnect with old friends and make new, you can look for a MAPA presence on Facebook in the near future.

This year, our Academy was well represented at the AAPA's Constituent Organization Resource Exchange (CORE) meeting. This is the AAPA's meeting to help develop constituent leaders and allow these groups to exchange ideas to improve our great profession. We were able to bring six students this year along with some of our board members. This event provided a wealth of information regarding marketing, reimbursement and leadership strategies to improve the organization and the profession. We are very excited about the future leaders this Academy has in the pipeline.

This is an exciting time to see the dramatic changes that are taking place in MAPA, and I urge all of you to get involved. We are an energized group of your peers, and we welcome your ideas to improve our profession. Our entire board will continue to work diligently to represent you at the "table" of healthcare. We would love to make room for you at the table. I appreciate that you are a member of the Academy and hope you can do all you can to let non-members know we can use their support. We will do great things for the physician assistant profession only as a collective. I hope that we can one day say MAPA represents a majority of the PAs in the state with our membership. Currently, we represent about 35% of PAs. I hope the hard work we are doing will convince others to join our cause.

I can tell you that my short time as your Academy president has flown by and is half over. I do not feel that I have accomplished as much as I thought I could, but I know the glass is still half full and not half empty. Thank you for allowing me the privilege to work for you.

“Decoding Interviewer’s Ploys: Choosing Employers Wisely”©

By Marcos A. Vargas, MSA, PA-C

Experienced job seekers look beyond the work-related incentives offered during an interview. They not only read between the lines, they also seek to discern and put in context potential behavioral clues uncovered during that face-to-face meeting. And as the demand for PAs continues to grow, so too will the number of unscrupulous hiring employers. While most employers are ethical and law-abiding in their hiring practices, some are not. In fact, a few may be deceitful in very subtle ways during that very important first encounter—the interview.

Would you be able to recognize one of these “chameleons” if you came across one of them during an interview?

While the degree of deceitful interviewing & hiring practices are infinite, luckily the telltale signs are basically the same across the board—sort-of-speak. In other words, knowing these chameleon archetypes could prevent you from becoming **wrongfully** employed.

Here are some of the deceiving interviewing personality types to beware of when job hunting:

The Lavisher

You’ll find that money was no objection during “courting” you. Meaning during the pre-interview process, you’ll be “wined & dined”. For instance, you will be placed at the most luxurious hotel, even watch an opera event or provided with a host of other extravagant pre-employment expenses at no cost to you. But beware, this façade may be a bait lulling you into thinking this employer is extremely generous when, in reality, he’s trying to buy your loyalty through guilt. After all, how could anyone be so ungrateful for such displayed acts of generosity by a would be employer to an incoming employee.

The Promiser or Planner

Beware of offers that sound too “good to be true”, another ploy to allure the unsuspecting interviewee. This individual

has nothing concrete to offer other than pies in the sky—all at some point in the future. Once you have “earned” his/her trust or exceeded some unrealistic quotas, then you will be rewarded “accordingly”. Look-out for agreeing to accept this type of employment offer based on a “honorable handshake.” Agreed promises must be written at the very least before signing on the dotted line. Otherwise, there’s no binding or enforceable contract if a dispute arises later on when you discover all you were given were nothing more than broken promises.

The Pressurer

In these situations, the interviewer often times is insistent that you finalize the deal immediately, ASAP, hoping to create a false sense of urgency due to some pressing needs of his or the fact that he has other “potential candidates ready to start” even though he would prefer to hire you for all the “obvious reasons”. Do not succumb to this tactic. Time is on your side, and take your time deciding. Be firm if pressured. Hasty decision-making is usually detrimental. You need time to consider the pros and cons of the offer. Any good employer would understand that.

The Prestigious One

Working with the “*great one*” is what everybody dreams of—right? Wrong!!! Because once hired, you are treated as a servant. For this employing individual, everyone else is subservient to his narcissistic or self-centeredness. Thus, you should feel “honored” by being employed by such even though your employment benefit package is a noncompetitive one. In other words, your professional fulfillment should be derived by your employment association and (erroneously) nothing else.

A shrewd listener and observer will not fall for these baits that sometimes an unscrupulous interviewing employer may attempt to use on the unsuspecting interviewee.

Would you be able to recognize one of these “chameleons” if you came across one of them during an interview?

Student's Presence at AAPA CORE Conference Sign of Strong Future Leadership

Brandi Alspach PA-S, Breanna Bailey PA-S, Paul Damm PA-S, Patrick Smith PA-S, Jay Williamson PA-S

Five students from four PA programs (Central Michigan University, University of Detroit Mercy, Wayne State, and Grand Valley State University) attended the Constituent Organization Resource Exchange (CORE) in Washington, D.C. on February 20-22nd. At the conference, the students learned how to lead and strengthen constituent organizations of the AAPA, such as MAPA.

The AAPA winter events like CORE allow students a great opportunity to expand their involvement with MAPA. In addition to gaining practical knowledge about leadership, students were able to network with important members of the MAPA, AAPA and leaders from each constituent organization. By spending this valuable time with physician assistant leaders, students are mentored and encouraged to become more active in MAPA.

The students quickly picked up on a general theme of the conference; **in order to increase active members and leaders within the constituent organizations, you have to start asking members for their assistance.** A general consensus among the students was that in time the current leaders will move on, and it will be up to current students and young professionals to fill roles of their predecessors to keep the profession strong.

Breanna Bailey, PA-S from CMU, commented "As students there were many reasons why we decided to attend. Attending such events not only allows us to network with PAs in our own state and from other states, but it also provides insight on all the hard work that many of our colleagues and fellow PAs perform daily in order to keep our profession secure."

General sessions at the conference enlightened the students in a multitude of areas. Notable topics covered included enhancing membership marketing using social media tools such as Facebook and twitter. In addition, the basics of volunteer management and emphasizing the development of new leadership with the constituent organizations were addressed. The students also participated in breakout sessions in budgeting, marketing, CME, hosting conferences and conducting board meetings.

The students also attended the AAPA North Central Regional meeting while at the conference. At this meeting, each constituent organization in the North Central Region (Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Ohio and Missouri) shared information on recent legislation, chapter challenges and exchanged information about their annual CME conference.

The students were very grateful for the foresight of the current leadership to assist them in making the trek to Washington and for encouraging their participation on a collegial level. With that said, the students strongly encourage other students, new graduates and young professionals to get involved with MAPA.



What is New With the NRCME That Everyone is Waiting to Sign-Up?

By Karl Wagner, PA-C

With the new administration, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), a section within the Department of Transportation,

is bringing the program process to their attention so all understand the importance of this project and the amount of work that has been put forth already. I have an excerpt from the website to update everyone as to some of the issues floating around about approved training programs popping up and to inform everyone not to pay for any program until we inform you this has been a go.

Section 4116 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requires the FMCSA to establish a national registry of medical examiners that are qualified to perform examinations and issue medical certificates. The FMCSA National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME) program would require that medical examiners receive training and pass a certification test before being listed on the registry -

which will be available to commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers and motor carriers to identify medical examiners authorized to conduct the CMV driver physical examination.

The NRCME program would establish core curriculum specifications for training - based on a comprehensive role delineation study - that addresses the range of knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform physical examinations of CMV drivers. The specifications would be available to qualified training organizations for development and delivery of FMCSA medical examiner training.

The role delineation study will also be the foundation for the development of a certification test to assess the competence of the medical examiner. Long-term quality management of the program, accomplished through national accreditation, would include consistent application of the certification process, the avoidance of bias and the representation of stakeholders' needs.

The NRCME program is integral to FMCSA's medical program and would be the only program to qualify and list certified medical examiners that perform the required physical examination of interstate commerce CMV drivers. **Until FMCSA completes the notice-and-comment rulemaking, medical examiners are not required to be listed on a registry or other database concerning qualifications to perform physical examinations of truck and bus drivers.** At this time, FMCSA does not endorse any medical examiner training, education or certification programs.

If anyone has any questions or issues about NRCME, I will be happy to respond and confirm or deny rumors that are surfacing at least weekly. Please email me at karl.wagner@stjohn.org

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34th Annual Fall CME Conference

October 8-11, 2009

Boyne Mountain, Boyne Falls, MI

Register online www.michiganpa.org

BCBSM Adds TRW Automotive to the List

Group Name	Included (for PA reimbursement)	Excluded (for PA reimbursement)
Ford	Active Hourly & Salaried	Hourly Retirees, surviving spouses of retirees, sponsored dependents of retirees and COBRA retirees
General Motors	Active Hourly	Hourly, Non-UAW active employees, retirees, surviving spouses of retirees, COBRA non-UAW union employees
General Motors	Salaried Enhanced Medical Plan members	
Delphi	Salaried	Hourly all
Chrysler & GEMA		Hourly & Salaried, Retirees, surviving spouses of retirees
Chrysler	Active Hourly and Salaried	
Chrysler Financial		Salaried Retirees, surviving spouses of retirees
Chrysler	Non-Bargaining Unit Active employees and Retirees	
Continental		Hourly & Salaried Retirees, surviving spouses of retirees

Add TRW Automotive to the list of auto related companies that exclude independently provided PA-rendered services as payable provider types.

These patients will have payment for services denied if “direct billing” criteria are used by the PA using his or her own NPI. However, these services ARE payable when the services meet the “indirect billing” criteria published by Blue Cross in the April 2008 issue of *The Record*. When you document the involvement of your supervising physician in the care of that patient, the claim can be submitted with the physician’s NPI and full reimbursement can be expected. This process was officially clarified on page 3 of the February 2009 issue of BCBSM’s *The Record*.



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WEDNESDAY

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LEGISLATIVE DAY

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Lansing, MI – Capitol

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