Caring for Patients in a Time of Change — TMA’s 2011 Legislative Report Card

Our top priority during the 2011 legislative session was to protect the patient-physician relationship in every aspect of the health care system. With an enormous budget deficit and special interest groups from hospitals to midlevel practitioners lining up to take on medicine, it felt like everyone wanted a piece of our profession. Many of our adversaries wanted control of physicians, our practices, and our patients. Others wanted to weaken the Texas Medical Board (TMB), jeopardizing Texas’ hard-fought liability reforms, and Texans’ access to care. Some believed physicians were the cost drivers and needed restraint.

However, when the session ended, physicians crossed the finish line with the reins still in hand. Even better, major steps were taken to protect and strengthen the patient-physician relationship from future outside interference.

Here is a short list of TMA accomplishments:

• Fought off severe cuts to physicians’ Medicaid payments.
  Result: Physicians won’t be forced to stop seeing Medicaid patients.
• Protected the patient-physician relationship against corporate interference.
  Result: Patients’ health care needs come before a corporation’s bottom line.
• Defended clinical autonomy of physicians employed by rural hospitals, 501(a)’s, and future health care collaboratives.
  Result: Physicians and their patients have ultimate control of health care decisionmaking.
• Won Texas Medical Board reforms.
  Result: The improved TMB disciplinary process is much fairer for physicians without endangering Texas’ medical liability reforms. The anonymous complaint was eliminated.
• No scope-of-practice expansions.
  Result: Midlevel practitioners and allied health professionals must stay within a scope of practice safely permitted by their education, training, and skills. The doctor is the trusted leader of the health care team.
• Safeguarded the public health system.
  Result: Cuts to tobacco cessation and chronic disease prevention programs were mitigated.
• Improved immunization requirements.
  Result: College students are protected from contracting meningococcal meningitis. And new vaccination policies ensure health workers won’t spread infectious diseases to their patients.

“Working with the legislature, we were able to minimize the Medicaid cuts to office-based physicians, so that our hard-working doctors can continue to see the neediest Texas patients and continue their important work of “Improving the health of all Texans”. C. Bruce Malone, MD, TMA President

Editor’s Note—the complete report card can be found on our website, www.nuecesmedsociety.org

“Save The Date” – July 30, 2011

46th Annual Health Fair
sponsored by
Nueces County Medical Society And Nueces County Medical Society Alliance
American Bank Center Exhibit Hall, 8 am – 1 pm
Sponsorships and Exhibitor Spaces are still available
Call Susan or Sandra at 884-5442 for more information.
PERRY signs TMA bills into law.

Gov. Rick Perry has signed more than 1,400 bills into law. Around 200 are health-related bills that TMA actively supported. In addition to winning key reforms to the Texas Medical Board (TMB), TMA also won important protection for physicians who seek employment in rural and urban county hospital districts and nonprofit health care 501(a) corporations, new vaccination requirements to protect Texans from meningitis and pertussis, a study by the Higher Education Coordinating Board to assess the number of graduate medical education slots to make sure the state is maximizing its investment in medical education, and much more.

**New TMB-Reform Laws:** The package of bills to reform TMB includes Senate Bill 227 by Sen. Jane Nelson (R-Flower Mound) and Rep. Susan King (R-Abilene), and House Bill 680 by Rep. Charles Schwertner, MD (R-Georgetown), and Sen. Joan Huffman (R-Southside Place). One of the most important things the bills do is prohibit the filing of anonymous complaints. They also:

- Require the board to notify the physician when insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, or third-party administrators file a complaint;
- Increase the time for a physician to respond to a complaint notice from 30 days to 45 days;
- Allow physicians to tape the proceedings of a TMB informal settlement conference;
- Allow TMB to require a remedial action plan rather than impose a fine for a minor administrative violation; and
- Institute a seven-year statute of limitation on bringing a disciplinary action.

The governor only vetoed two key bills TMA supported: A measure by Senator Nelson and Representative King that would bind TMB to the ruling of an administrative law judge in a proceeding supervised by the State Office of Administrative Hearings and another bill that would ban Texans from texting or reading emails while driving.

**Source:** TMA Legislative News Hotline, June 21, 2011

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Where does TMA stand?

Want to know where the Texas Medical Association (TMA) stands on issues that have gone to the House and Senate committees this session? All the testimonies presented by TMA leaders and letters sent to state leaders can be found at [www.texmed.org/template.aspx?id=16532](http://www.texmed.org/template.aspx?id=16532).

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Idea to TMA policy – the process

How does an idea become Texas Medical Association (TMA) policy? Many new ideas or changes to existing TMA policy originate from various committees tasked with studying the specific subject. However, any NCMS member can submit an idea to NCMS and it will be presented to the appropriate board or committee. If your colleagues like the idea, and NCMS delegate will present the recommendation as a resolution at the next meeting of the House of Delegates (TexMed), which meets each May. If the resolution is adopted at TexMed, it then becomes TMA policy. Additionally, if it has national appeal, the TMA may forward it to the American Medical Association for further action.

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Young Physicians’ Mixer

**‘Beat the Heat Summer Social’**

at the Havana Club, August 19th, 5:30—7:30 pm

Sponsored by
Cheryl Segrest of Prosperity Bank and Chad Smith of Northwestern Mutual

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**Blue Sky Hospice**

“Making Each Day Count”

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24 Hour On Call Availability

Adult and Pediatric Medical Directors
Skilled Nurses • Pastoral Care
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blueskyhospice.com
Executive Board Actions

At its June 6 meeting, the Executive Board took the following action:

⇒ It was agreed to hold the Newcomers’ Party on Friday, Aug., 19 at the Corpus Christi Yacht Club and the Installation Dinner will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 14 at the Corpus Christi Town Club. Dr. Bruce Malone, TMA President, and Bridget McKeever, TMAA President, will be the guest speakers.

⇒ Triveni A. Kallur, MD, Pediatrics, Cade M. McDowell, MD, Diagnostic Radiology, Kyle R. Shipley, MD, Diagnostic Radiology, Albert J. Wood, MD, Oncology/Hematology were approved for Active Membership.

⇒ Paul Carothers, MD, Family Medicine was approved for Resident Membership.

Need to advertise?
NCMS members get special rates that include design.
For more information, contact Susan at 884-5442.

Newcomers’ Party - August 19th

Hot topics

Medicare re-enrollment

Not sure if you’re enrolled in Pecos? There are two ways to verify PECOS enrollment.

• Go to the Medicare provider/supplier enrollment Web site, www.cms.gov/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/06_MedicareOrderingandReferring.asp#TopOfPage. The file contains the National Provider Identifier (NPI) and the name (last name, first name) of all physicians and non-physician practitioners who are of a type/specialty eligible to order and refer in the Medicare program and who have current enrollment records in Medicare (i.e., they have enrollment records in PECOS that contain an NPI).

• Call the Trailblazer Health Enterprises interactive voice response (IVR) system at 877-567-9230. For the steps to obtain PECOS information via the IVR system go to www.trailblazerhealth.com/Tools/Notices.aspx?DomainID-1&ID=13817.

Stay updated through NCMS email service

The Nueces County Medical Society (NCMS) wants to make sure you receive the most up-to-date information. Let us know if your email address has changed or if you would prefer to have NCMS emails sent to another address. NCMS is no longer mailing the NCMS Notes newsletter; so, please be sure your correct email address is on file.
Mark Your Calendars — RPO Luncheon July 18th at Trinity Towers

7th Annual Diabetes Conference

WHO: Texas A&M Health Science Center Coastal Bend Health Education Center

When: July 22-24

Where: American Bank Center, 1901 N Shoreline Blvd

How: Online registration will be available at www.cbhec.tamhsc.edu/cme

What: The conference will cover a broad range of diabetes-related topics including insulin protocols, cardiovascular disease, psychological issues, obesity, chronic kidney disease and hypertension.

CME: A maximum of 19.75 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™

BCBSTX Mini Conferences

WHO: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas

WHEN: August 10 and 11

WHERE: NCMS building, 1000 Morgan

HOW: Call 884-5442 to schedule your 30 minute conference

WHAT: Get updates on online resources and training, ask questions impacting your practice on filing, authorizations, benefits, appeals, and discuss specific issues (please bring samples of the issues you would like to discuss)

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Webinars for ethics CME

- **Avoiding RAC Audits** – Learn about self audits, what to do with your findings, and how to get buy-in for corrective actions, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, TMLT discount, Expires: Dec. 31, 2013
- **Electronic Communications** – Learn about legal and ethical issues physicians face when using e-mail, blogs, and other social media to communicate with patients, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, TMLT discount
- **Employed Physicians** – This webinar includes an overview of physician employment trends in Texas and discussion of the pros and cons of independent vs. employment practice models, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, TMLT discount
- **Evaluating Your Medicare Options** – Let TMA guide you through your Medicare participation options and provide detailed information on the consequences of those choices, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, Expires: Jan. 1, 2012
- **Fraud and Abuse** – This webinar defines fraud and abuse, reviews fines and penalties, shows how your practice profile is utilized for fraud and abuse indicators, and much more, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, TMLT discount, Expires: Jan. 15, 2014
- **HIPAA/HITECH Compliance** – Learn what the new HIPAA privacy and security rules mean to your practice and how to become compliant, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, TMLT discount, Expires: Dec. 31, 2013
- **ICD-10 Implementation** – ICD-10 code sets soon will be the new language of coding for physicians and health care providers across the country. ICD-10 conversion also means that practices must adopt the new 5010 standard for electronic transactions by Jan. 1, 2012 and train physicians and staff on how to code and document to a much greater level of specificity by Oct. 1, 2013. This series of 15-minute webinars will prepare you to meet these important compliance deadlines, 3.75 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 4 AAPC, Expires: Dec. 31, 2011
- **Medical Records – Consent for Treatment of Minors** – This course outlines sensitive issues that arise in treating minors including consent and release of protected health information, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, Expires: Dec. 31, 2011
- **Patient Satisfaction** - From the front desk staff to the physician, providing patients a WOW experience leads to engaged patients and better compliance, and lowers your risk exposure. Find out how to shift attitudes in your practice to create outstanding patient experiences, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, TMLT discount, Expires: Dec. 31, 2013
- **Releasing Medical Records** – Find answers to your questions about releasing medical records including retention requirements, fees for supplying copies, release of medical records, subpoenas for medical records, and allowing patients with past due amounts access to their medical records, 1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, Ethics, TMLT discount, Expires: Dec. 31, 2011

NCMS plans 46th annual Health Fair

The Nueces County Medical Society (NCMS) plans to stage the 46th annual Health Fair on Saturday, July 30th at the American Bank Center Exhibit Hall. Last year’s event attracted almost 5000 people who took advantage of the opportunity to receive free screenings and educational materials related to good health care. With your help, we hope to surpass that number this year.

Corpus Christi’s dubious distinction as the “Fattest City in the United States” makes it even more critical that we make an extra effort to reach out to all of Corpus Christi and lead others to eating healthy, exercising, and becoming educated about diabetes, and other health issues related to obesity. This large obese population jeopardizes our community’s long-term economic viability and forces businesses, insured residents, and taxpayers to pick up the tab for billions of dollars in Emergency Room visits.

The Health Fair provides an opportunity for the medical community to present healthy alternatives to a very unhealthy condition. There will be over 100 booths for the public to visit, including a Children’s Area, sponsored by Driscoll Children’s Health Plan, focusing on children’s wellness, such as nutrition, exercise, immunizations, school physicals, and health insurance programs, such as Medicaid and CHIP. Student athletes can receive school athletic physicals, at no charge. The American Heart Association will be offering training in CPR for family and friends and Coastal Bend Blood Center will be accepting blood donations. There will be a Breast Health information area that will have Mammogram screening assistance. The public will have the opportunity to receive a variety of screens and see demonstrations including:

- Asthma Education
- Blood Donation
- Blood Glucose
- Blood Pressure
- Body Mass Index
- Breast Health/Exam Demos
- Children’s School Immunizations
- Children’s Athletic Physicals
- Children’s Dental Screening
- Cholesterol Screening (fasting req.)
- CPR Training
- Diabetic Retina Screening
- Diabetic Shoe Information
- Ear Pressure
- Exercise Demonstrations
- Hearing Screening
- HIV Testing
- Iron Counts
- Lap Band Information
- Macular Degeneration Screening
- Mastectomy Prosthesis Fittings
- Pediatric Blood Pressure
- Pulmonary Function
- Pulse Oximetry
- sEMG of Neck
- Skin Cancer Exams
- Spirometry
- Tymanograms
- Varicose Vein Screening
- Vision Screening
- Women’s Health

KIII-TV will again be our major media sponsor, providing coverage and entertainment throughout the day, as well as, promotions of the event during the month of July. Sponsors will be listed on the KIII-TV commercials, the program distributed at the Health Fair, and in Coastal Bend Medicine magazine following the event. A live ‘Ask the Doctor’ booth will be available for attendees, and we still need volunteers to man this area.

If you haven’t signed up to be a sponsor for this outstanding public service event, please consider doing so by choosing one of the four levels of sponsorship available:

- Bronze sponsorship begins at the $250 donation level,
- Silver begins at $500
- Gold begins at $1,000 and
- Platinum begins at $2,000 and above

Information on what each level of sponsorship entails can be viewed on the NCMS web site at www.nuecesmedsociety.org. To be included in the advertisements and Health Fair program, we will need a copy of your logo and written confirmation of your donation to the Nueces County Medical Society by July 15, 2010. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to make a difference in our community! We need your support and participation.

Newcomers’ Party

Attend the Nueces County Medical Society (NCMS) Newcomers’ Party on Friday, Aug. 19, 7 p.m. at the Corpus Christi Yacht Club, Yacht Basin L-Head. No charge for NCMS members or newcomers. Spouses and guests are $25 each.

Reservations are required. Your check payable and mailed by August 12th to NCMS, 1000 Morgan Ave., Corpus Christi, TX 78404, confirms your reservations.
AMA backs hot-button health insurance mandate

The nation’s largest physician’s group has affirmed its support for a key part of President Obama’s health care overhaul. At its annual meeting in Chicago, the American Medical Association voted to maintain its official position in favor of the “individual mandate,” which requires nearly all Americans to purchase health insurance. The AMA prefers the term “individual responsibility.” “It was very emotional and it was very heated,” said Dr. Bruce Malone, president of the Texas Medical Association, which opposes the mandate. “These are a large number of very intelligent people who can certainly have a democratic debate, and they did.”

Source: CBS News, June 20, 2011

BUSINESS OF MEDICINE

CMS Announces National Version 5010 Testing Day

The Version 5010 compliance date – Sun., Jan. 1, 2012 – is fast approaching. All HIPAA-covered entities should be taking steps now to get ready, including conducting external testing to ensure timely compliance. Are you prepared for the transition? Medicare Fee-for-Service (FFS) trading partners are encouraged to contact their Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) now and facilitate testing to gain a better understanding of MAC testing protocols and the transition to Version 5010.

To assist in this effort, CMS, in conjunction with the Medicare FFS Program, announces an additional National 5010 Testing Day to be held Wed., Aug. 24, 2011. The National 5010 Testing Days are an opportunity for trading partners to come together and test compliance efforts that are already underway with the added benefit of real-time help desk support and direct and immediate access to MACs.

CMS encourages all trading partners to participate in the additional National 5010 Testing Days. This includes:
- Providers;
- Clearinghouses; and
- Vendors.

More details concerning transactions to be tested are forthcoming from your local MAC. Additionally, there are several State Medicaid Agencies that will be participating in the National 5010 testing day; more details will follow from them as well.

Again, CMS National 5010 Testing Day does not preclude trading partners from testing transactions immediately with their MAC. Don’t wait. You are encouraged to begin working with your MAC now to ensure timely compliance. Note that successful testing is required before a trading partner may be placed into production.

We hope all trading partners will join CMS on Wed., Aug. 24 and take advantage of this great opportunity to ensure testing and transition efforts are on track! For more information on HIPAA Version 5010, please visit http://www.CMS.gov/Versions5010andDO.

Source: CMS

Reminder

No Meetings in July
Except for Health Fair, PHR, and HIT

Office Administrators & Managers:
Stay Up to Date
To receive NCMS Notes, send us your name, physician's name, and your email address to sdavis@nuecesmedsociety.org.

Source: TMA & GCREC

Medicare Corner

2013 Medicare penalty – E-Prescribe

Are you taking steps to avoid the 2013 Medicare penalty? Physicians must report at least 25 times by Dec. 31, 2011, to qualify for a 1 percent bonus of Medicare Part B claims and prevent the penalty in 2013.

The Gulf Coast Regional Extension Center (GCREC) provides support to primary care physicians to help with e-prescribing, electronic health record (EHR) selection, workflow analysis, meaningful-use training, EHR incentives, and more. The cost is $300 per physician.

More information is available on the GCREC, available incentives, REC and incentive eligibility, and meaningful use at www.nuecesmedsociety.org. Contact Texas Medical Association’s Health Information Technology helpline at 800-88-5720 for more information on the GCREC or e-Rx.

Source: TMA & GCREC
TMA online and home study CME

Earn CME at your convenience by taking one of Texas Medical Association’s online or home study courses. Below is a sample of the courses offered:

Online

- **Communication Skills: Why Bother?** - Improve your communication skills with patients and colleagues, thereby increasing patient and family satisfaction, strengthening the patient-physician relationship, reducing stress, and improving patient outcomes, **1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, Expires: June 4, 2012**

- **Electronic Medical Record Implementation Guide: The Link to a Better Future, Second Edition** – The implementation guide offers a non technical view of the steps necessary for the successful introduction of HIT with an emphasis on the needs of smaller practices. This publication will walk you through the process of acquiring and learning to use HIT, **3 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 3 Ethics, TMLT discount, Expires: Sept. 1, 2012**

- **Maintenance of Professional Boundaries and Effective Management of Challenging Patient Encounter** – Discusses the importance of maintaining professional boundaries while working with a wide variety of challenging patients, **2 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 2 Ethics, Expires: April 22, 2014**

- **Meaningful Use** – Understand how to transition a medical practice from paper to electronic and how to meaningfully use an EMR, **1 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 1 Ethics, Expires: Dec. 31, 2011**

- **Patient Safety and Medical Errors** – Enhance your patient safety skills. This course will provide both insight into the problem and suggest practices to reduce the incidence of errors in patient care, **2 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 2 Ethics, Expires: July 8, 2013**

Home Studies

- **Policies and Procedures: A Guide for Medical Practices** – TMA’s new Policy and Procedure guide contains more than 200 up-to-date policies and procedures, tools, sample letters, and forms you can customize for your office. TMA’s practical and easy-to-use guide is specific to Texas medical practices and Texas law. Based on “best practices,” it is vital to running an efficient practice – from solo physicians to large groups, **8 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits, Expires March 1, 2014**

- **Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard** – Offers physicians a framework to effect change when there are significant barriers – be it large-scale changes sin health care policy, smaller changes like encouraging patients to make lifestyle changes, or in the day-to-day operations of your practice, organization, or community, **4.5 AMA PRA Cat. 1, TMLT discount, Expires: Feb. 16, 2013**

- **Texas Medical Board: Road to Resolution** – An easy to understand, step-by-step physician guide through the TMB disciplinary process, **3 AMA PRA Cat. 1, 3 Ethics, TMLT, Expires: Dec. 15, 2013**

For more information about these and other CME courses go to the TMA Web site at [www.texmed.org](http://www.texmed.org) and click on CME in the left margin.

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**ACLS Renewal & Provider Courses**

The South Coastal Area Health Education Center (AHEC) will sponsor ACLS Provider/Renewal Courses on **Friday and Saturday, August 12 & 13, 2011**, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The courses will be held at CHRISTUS Spohn Corpus Christi Memorial Hospital. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m.

The **Provider** course is a full Friday and half day on Saturday; fees are $250.00 for physicians and dentists and $200.00 for residents. Registration fee covers the updated AHA / ACLS Provider Manual, study materials, continental breakfast and lunch. The South Coastal Area Health Education Center is accredited by TMA to sponsor CME for physicians and designates this activity as meeting the criteria for 16 credit hours in Category 1 of the PRA of the AMA.

The **Renewal** course is a full day on Saturday; fee is $175.00. Registration fee covers the updated AHA/ACLS Provider Manual, study materials, refreshments, continental breakfast and lunch. Attendees must present a current ACLS card at the door for verification upon check-in. The South Coastal Area Health Education Center is accredited by TMA to sponsor CME for physicians and designates this activity as meeting the criteria for 8 credit hours in Category 1 of the PRA of the AMA.

For information, contact Mary Moreno at 902-4467 or Email: m.moreno@christushealth.org.
Seminars to Teach Death Registration

Registering deaths electronically – required by state law – is one of the topics to be covered in seminars the Texas Public Health Association and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Vital Statistics Unit will conduct in five cities next month. The seminars will be in Waco, July 11; Abilene, July 13; Nacogdoches, July 15; Galveston, July 18; and Laredo, July 20.

Physicians may earn 1.5 hours of continuing medical education credit by attending the seminar.

Doctors who do not use the Texas Electronic Registrar (TER) Death Registration system to register patient deaths are subject to a $500 fine by the Texas Medical Board. DSHS officials say registering deaths electronically is faster and less susceptible to fraud than is paper registration.

For information about registration, contact Terri Pali at (512) 336-2520, or email txpha@aol.com.

Source: TMA Action, June 15, 2011

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RPO Summer Luncheon

July 18th, 11:30 am — 1:00 pm
at
Trinity Towers
101 N. Upper Broadway

Patty Clark, Executive Director of Mission of Mercy will speak

Call 884-5442 to RSVP or for more information

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TMA Announces Member Benefit for PQRS

TMA presents PQRIwizard, a simple and cost-effective online tool that eligible physicians can use to collect and report quality measure data under the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), an initiative created by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2007.

In 2011, reporting for PQRS (formerly PQRI) will earn physicians 1 percent of their total allowed charges for Medicare Physician Fee Schedule services. Physicians who do not report data to PQRS will see a 1.5-percent cut in their payment in 2015. That penalty increases to 2 percent in 2016 and subsequent years.

PQRIwizard guides you through four easy steps: (1) select your measures, (2) register, (3) enter chart data from 30 Medicare part B patients, and (4) review and submit. You will answer a series of questions for each patient. PQRIwizard will let you know when your report is complete and ready to submit to CMS.

The tool’s Progress Monitor tracks data so that you have continuous feedback on patients. It provides and alert when all submission criteria have been met and data are ready for you to review and submit. The system calculates measures and provides a printable report of measure results in real time.

After CMS reviews and accepts your data, you will receive an incentive payment equal to 1 percent of your total Medicare Part B Physician Fee Schedule charges for all covered services provided during the reporting period. In other words, the incentive covers all payments received from Medicare fee-for-service, not just those that are applied to the services reported.

The TMA discounted fee for PQRIwizard is $250. The tool enables you to participate in the PQRS program without modifying your billing process. On average, 2009 bonus payments for satisfactory reporters in PQRS were $1,956 per eligible professional.

Interested? Then access the PQRIwizard and begin enrolling for your 2011 incentive. For more information, contact the TMA Knowledge Center at (800) 880-7955 or by email.

Source: TMA Action, June 15, 2011
Billing Headaches???
We can help lower your expenses and increase your income.

Custom Medical Billing Plus, Inc. is a complete medical billing service with state-of-the-art computer equipment and medical billing software. We don’t just file claims—we handle the entire billing process, and in doing so, remove that expense and headache from your office.

Owners Helen Carmichael and Nelda Peña each have over 20 years experience in billing for physicians.

You can benefit from our experience.

Call today!

A PLUS FOR YOUR PRACTICE

3765 S. Alameda, Ste. 317
Corpus Christi, Texas 78411
361.855.2455

Public Health Focus
Hurricane season is here! Are you ready?

Hurricane season began June 1. Are you prepared? The time to plan is before a potential storm is threatening the Gulf Coast. Having an emergency preparedness plan will not stop a disaster, but it certainly will help you and your staff deal more effectively with the challenges a disaster can bring.

Nueces County Medical Society (NCMS) has detailed information on preparing your practice and patients for a disaster. Go to www.nuecesmedsociety.org. Make sure you are signed up on the NCMS Physician Alert System so that NCMS can contact you in the event of a major emergency.

NCMS Physician Alert System
In case of a major disaster of public health emergency, it is imperative that NCMS has your contact information. This database will be utilized only in the case of an emergency or to apprise you of a critical public health problem. In the past, the Alert System was used to recruit volunteers for Hurricane Katrina evacuees, H1N1, and much more. Sign up by going to nuecesmedsociety.org.

Presented by the NCMS Emergency Preparedness Committee

TMB Needs Physicians to Review Cases

The Texas Medical Board (TMB) is looking for physicians to serve on its expert physician panels to review standard-of-care cases. TMB pays reviewers $100 per hour. TMB says it can add five experts in most specialties to its roster. Spine surgeons and pediatric subspecialties are especially needed.

TMB says it wants active, licenses, board-certified physicians “who truly represent the best of the medical profession,” who have no history of license restriction or peer discipline, and who have an “acceptable” malpractice compliant history. Malpractice limits will be evaluated on an individual basis, a TMB spokesperson said. Experience in peer review is preferred.

Email TMB Medical Director Linda Gage-White, MD, PhD for an application if you are interested.

Presented by the NCMS Emergency Preparedness Committee

Source: TMA Action, June 15, 2011
Please come join

South Texas Brain & Spine Center

for our Annual Party on July 1st, Friday

5:30 pm until ?

Physicians and Staff are welcome to
enjoy food, drinks, and live music
by “Lyrical Binge”

1227 Third Street,
Corpus Christi, TX 78404
Bill Blue Cross With National Drug Codes

Effective Dec. 1, 2011, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) will begin paying all properly submitted drug claims in accordance with a forthcoming National Drug Code (NDC) fee schedule.

BCBSTX already requires inclusion of the NDC in conjunction with the applicable HCPCS or CPT code(s) on claims billing for unlisted or “Not Otherwise Classified” physician-administered and home infusion therapy drugs.

Starting Dec. 1, the NDC must appear on claims billing for all physician-administered and –supplied drugs. If the NDC number, NDC unit, and/or NDC unit of measurement is not included on the service line of the claim, the line will be denied with an explanation of the needed information.

BCBSTX already accepts and – encourages – use of the NDC for billing of all drugs. Here are some tips to help you with proper submission of valid NDCs and related information:

- The NDC must be in the proper format (11 numeric characters, no spaces or special characters).
- The NDC must be active for the date of service.
- The appropriate qualifier, unit of measure, number of units, and price per unit also must be included, as indicated in the guidelines.

Source: TMA Practice E-Tips, June 16, 2011

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46th Annual Health Fair Exhibitors*

Abdominal Specialists of South TX
Advanced Research Associates
Allergy Asthma and Dermatology Clinic
American Cancer Society
American Diabetes Association
Amistad Community Health Center
Bay Area Quick Care
Beacon Chiropractic Clinic
Be the Match
Better Business Bureau
Breast Cancer Support
CCNCPHD Immunizations
CASA of the Coastal Bend
CHRISTUS Spohn
City of Corpus Christi - Storm Water
Coastal Bend Autism Advocacy
Coastal Bend Blood Center
Coastal Community and Teachers C.U.
Coastal Imaging
CC Pregnancy Resource Center
Corpus Christi Athletic Club
Corpus Christi Cancer Center
Corpus Christi IV Infusion Center
Corpus Christi Medical Center
Corpus Christi Metro Ministries
Corpus Christi-Nueces County MRC
Corpus Christi Prosthetics
Corpus Christi Urology Group PLLC
Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse
DARS - Division for Blind Services
Diabetes Hands On/Food Bank of the Coastal Bend
Driscoll Asthma Educator
Driscoll Dietitians
Driscoll Injury Prevention Program
Driscoll WIC
Economy Medical Rental
Environmental Public Health
Evercare
Family and Friends CPR Training 2011/American Heart Association
Family Counseling Service
Family Planning of the Coastal Bend
First Friday Mammogram Assistance
Garden Estates
Hear Again Hearing Aids!
Hearing Aid Company of Texas
Home Instead Senior Care
Internet Medical Clinics
KIII-TV
Law Office of Kathleen Day
Legacy Home Health Agency Inc
Mary Kay Cosmetics
Maximus Inc
Moore's Pharmacy Inc
Morgan Pediatric Center
NCMS Alliance
New York Life
Northwest Behavioral Hospital
OBGYN Associates of Corpus Christi
CC-NC Public Health Dept. Emergency Preparedness
Radiology & Imaging of South Texas
Radiology Associates
Restorative Health Care of South TX
Sole Support Medical
SO TX Family Planning & Health Corp
South Padre Island Pediatric Center
South Texas Blood & Tissue Center
South Texas Brain & Spine Center
S Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
South Texas Retina Consultants
Sun Orthodontix
Talecris Plasma Resources
Terry R Summers DDS
Texas Legal Services Center
Texas Vein and Vascular
Thomas-Spann Clinic, PA
Transplant Support Group South Texas
Trisun Health Care
Valley Aids Council
Vein Centers of Texas
Visiting Angels

*as of June 30th
DocBookMD® is a smartphone platform designed by Physicians for Physicians. DocBookMD provides doctors-on-the-go an exclusive HIPAA-compliant professional network to connect, communicate and collaborate.

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Expect change.

Wayne A. Fagan, M.D.

Clinical Pathology Laboratories

Bronze

Miguel A. Berastain, MD, PA

*As of June 30, 2011

2011 Health Fair - July 30th, 8 am-1 pm
“Ask the Doctor”

We need your help! Please look at these July dates.

NCMS is looking for volunteers for the “Ask the Doctor” Series on KIII-TV, 5 p.m. newscast on Mondays in July. We need at least 8 members to take phone calls from viewers in the phone bank. Participants should be at the KIII-TV studio (5002 SPID) at 4:45 p.m., newscast starts at 5:00 p.m. and calls end by 5:30 p.m. All members will have a name card and will be included in live shots during the newscast. Members should wear white coats with their names, if possible.

Please sign up for a very interesting hour; it’s a great way to publicize your practice!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Phone Bank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon. July 11</td>
<td>The ABCs of Diabetes</td>
<td>Dr. Marilyn Upmanyu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. July 18</td>
<td>Nutrition and age related eye disease</td>
<td>Dr. Charles Campbell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. July 25</td>
<td>Managing your brain health</td>
<td>Dr. Morgan Campbell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat. July 30</td>
<td>Health Fair ‘Ask the Doctor’ and Women’s Health booth</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Health Fair volunteers will do 1 or 2 hour shifts answering a variety of health questions.

Fax form to: 884-5478
For more information or to suggest a topic, call Susan at 884-5442 or email to: sdavis@nuecesmedsociety.org

The 2011 NCMS Directory is here! Active members receive a Directory complimentary copy; however, additional copies may be ordered by submitting the form below. Mail checks to 1000 Morgan Ave., Corpus Christi, TX 78404.

NCMS Pictorial Directory
$20.00 each
Plus shipping and handling charges ($5.00). To avoid S & H charges pick up your order at the NCMS office – 1000 Morgan Ave.

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Amount to be charged on card: ___________________ Signature: _________________________

Mail to: NCMS * 1000 Morgan Ave. * Corpus Christi, TX 78404
For questions, call the Society at 884-5442.