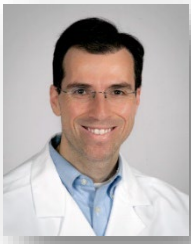




2023 Vol. 2

## Leadership Corner



*Jay Rothkopf, MD  
Board Chair*

On Tuesday, June 6, 2023, MCMS will be hosting our annual meeting at the Joseph Ambler Inn in North Wales beginning at 6:00 PM. All members are invited to attend, and you can register [here](#).

The cost to attend the event is minimal, \$20.00 per person.

While we hope to see you in person to reconnect with colleagues that we have been separated from these past several years, we realize that may not be possible for everyone. That is why we will also be streaming the meeting live beginning at 7:00 PM. To register for the virtual event, [click here](#).



*Joseph Grisafi, MD  
President*

Membership in MCMS allows for networking opportunities, professional growth, and the ability to make a positive impact in our community. Coming together to talk about the latest advances in medicine and share best practices helps us all to improve our knowledge and skills so that we can provide the best patient care possible. Exchanging ideas and experiences can open the doors to collaboration on innovative projects that can benefit our community and aid in our personal growth. Being a member of MCMS also allows individual physicians to add their voices to the advocacy efforts of the Society. Together we can bring awareness to important issues that impact our ability to deliver high-quality care to our patients.

Active participation and collaboration can help us to establish meaningful connections, fight burnout, and aid us in our efforts to improve healthcare outcomes for all. We hope that you will join us at the annual meeting to re-establish these connections, or form new ones, and help to move our Society forward.

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## Practice Management Tips

*Susan B. Orr, Esq.*

### Integrating Behavioral Health into Practice

Most healthcare providers acknowledge that our country finds itself in a behavioral health crisis. The number of people with mental health conditions and substance use disorders is rising and unfortunately, many individuals do not have access to the treatment they need. The two major contributors to this crisis are the shortage of behavioral health providers and limited insurance coverage including high out-of-pocket costs and gaps in coverage.

Although behavioral health and physical health are deeply intertwined, they are typically delivered in separate, poorly coordinated systems. This results in a fragmented system that leads to poor health outcomes. Behavioral factors related

to chronic disease management, mental health issues, substance use, smoking or other tobacco use, stress, and diet and exercise all impact the health of an individual.

As a result, many practices are seeking to integrate behavioral care into their services. In integrated practices, a team of healthcare providers and behavioral health providers work together with patients and families to deliver care that addresses mental health, substance abuse, and other medical needs. By bringing physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, and therapists together, integrated care can de-stigmatize mental health treatment and ensure that all of the individual's health needs are addressed holistically. This will lead to better treatment and a better quality of life. It has been found that reducing the fragmentation between behavioral health and physical health care produces better outcomes for both physical and mental health diagnosis and treatment.

However, many providers feel unprepared to manage patients' mental health and substance abuse needs, especially those patients with severe conditions. The result has been the incorporation of mental health providers into their practice – some as full-time employees while others as part-time independent contractors, but all work out of the physician's office. Patients are more comfortable in having all their care in one location and see this as a team approach between the physician and the behavioral health provider.

However, there are barriers and challenges to integration. The fee-for-service reimbursement model disincentivizes integration by reimbursing providers for individual services rather than integrated care. There are also same-day billing restrictions that limit reimbursement to either service in a single visit. Billing and coding for behavioral health also present their own challenges. Although there are collaborative care models, they do not always cover the cost of care. There can be significant startup costs in bringing a behavioral health specialist into practice, including the cost of recruiting behavioral health providers given the current shortage and creating incentives for them to remain with a practice. Regardless, integrating care can improve early intervention, improve outcomes, and reduce the stigma of obtaining mental health care.

Any questions regarding this article or to discuss how to integrate behavioral health into your practice, please contact Susan Orr, Esquire, at Dilworth Paxson, LLP; [sorr@dilworthlaw.com](mailto:sorr@dilworthlaw.com), 484-678-5532.

Susan Orr is a health law attorney in the law firm of Dilworth, Paxson, LLP in Exton, PA.

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## Pyfer Fund Scholarship

The Pyfer Fund was established in 1915 under a Trust established by Howard F. Pyfer, MD. The Trust was established to help young physicians with continuing medical education costs. If you are a Montgomery County Medical Society member and are under the age of 45, you are eligible for reimbursement for your CME activities up to \$500.

[Click here](#) to learn more and apply. Reimbursement must be claimed before December 15, 2023, and must have occurred in the 2023 calendar year.

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## In Case You Missed It...

*News from the Pennsylvania Medical Society "The Dose"*

### **Pennsylvania Medical Malpractice Venue Ruling Could Spell Financial Trouble**

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court's reversal of a key 20-year-old Medical Care Availability and Reduction of Error Act (MCARE) reform went into effect in January of 2023 and returns medical malpractice venue rules to those in effect before the reform.<sup>1</sup> Supporters of the change cite the need to restore justice and "level the playing field,"<sup>1</sup> while critics

fear a return to an environment that fueled the medical liability crisis of the late 1990s and early 2000s—larger jury awards and a significant increase in liability insurance rates for providers in an already fragile healthcare system.<sup>1</sup>

[Read More](#)

### **FDA Approves First Over-the-Counter Naloxone Nasal Spray**

On March 29, 2023, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Narcan, 4 mg naloxone hydrochloride nasal spray for over-the-counter, nonprescription use. This is the first naloxone product approved for use without a prescription.

[Read More](#)

### **Requirements for Training for Medication Assistant Treatment as Part of the MATE Act**

In December of 2022, the Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act enacted a new one-time, eight-hour training requirement for all Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)-registered practitioners regarding the treatment and management of patients with opioid or other substance use disorders prior to receiving or renewing a DEA registration. This is a one-time requirement that goes into effect on June 27, 2023. The DEA sent a letter to all register prescribers outlining the requirements for the training. PAMED is exploring options to help licensees meet these new DEA requirements. [For more information, click here.](#)

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## **Montgomery County Immunization Coalition (MCIC)**

Get your flu shot yet? It's not too late!

With Flu activity elevated across our county, MCIC is calling for all hands on deck to get out the message that it is not too late to get your flu shot. MCIC has developed social media images to make it easier for you to share this important message with your communities.

We collaborated with our partner organizations to translate the images to 4 languages, including Chinese, Korean, Hindi, and Spanish. Please use and share within your networks to help spread the word!

Direct Links to Social

Media Images: [English](#), [Chinese](#), [Hindi](#), [Korean](#), [Spanish](#)



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### **Have something you would like to see in PULSE?**

Send ideas, comments, and questions to Executive Director, Theresa Barrett, PhD, CMP, CAE at [tbarrett@montmedsoc.com](mailto:tbarrett@montmedsoc.com)

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**MCMS**  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
MEDICAL SOCIETY  
OF PENNSYLVANIA