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From the President



I hope this letter finds you, your family and staff all healthy and safe. By now, the novel coronavirus pandemic has touched all of our lives. In many ways, this pandemic has highlighted differences between inpatient and outpatient care, large corporate groups and small private offices, those with telemedicine capabilities and those without. In many other ways, this virus has erased so many other differences. We in the medical profession intimately understand the challenges facing our colleagues across the US and the globe, the deep commitment we have to the practice of medicine and to each other, and the importance of community, communication and solidarity. This time of great pain and loss may also be a time of creativity, new perspectives and much-needed shifts in our healthcare system. No other time in our lives will highlight the importance of medicine, public health, and local community so starkly.

MOCMS is here for you during this unprecedented time. We are stepping into a new role of physician advocacy, resource connection and collaboration to reflect these challenges. Our new website (mocms.org) launched in March and contains multiple coronavirus resources and medical volunteer links. We have reached out to all the major medical systems in Monroe and Owen counties to offer assistance and coordinate with them. We are keeping up with ISMA activities and advocacy for physicians and their practices. We are connecting with frontline workers to source the things they need, support them and hear their stories. We have surveyed our membership to make sure our efforts help you where you need it. In keeping with the survey results, we will send out weekly COVID emails including self-care, volunteering opportunities, Monroe and Owen county-specific COVID information and resources, and (most importantly) humorous distractions on a regular basis.

Please remember that we can support each other in multiple ways. This pandemic has caused deep pain and stress, but also a time to create community, develop creative solutions and find new pathways. MOCMS will strive to highlight our members' positive contributions to our community in our newsletter and COVID emails. Please send me any emails with any good news you hear of from our membership or our local communities. Good news can be as soothing and inspiring as a fresh spring in the desert right now.

A few positive things we want to highlight:

- Multiple providers, spouses, and co-workers have utilized their sewing machines for masks and hats for community providers: Dr. Carrie Davis sewed hats for the ER, Susie Braun sewed masks for the IU Health pathology department, and Mrs. Claire Boissevain-Crooke, Mrs. Amanda Cook, Mrs. Shenoy, and Carol Weiss-Kennedy are all participating in the Bloomington Mask drive. (<http://patientphysicaltherapy.com/bloomington-indiana-fabric-mask-drive-getmepe>)
- Our New Member Meet and Greet at Switchyard Brewing, held in February, was well attended and offered a great opportunity for new and established providers to connect and laugh.
- The Enigma Program (held prior to social distancing recommendations) in March was well attended and informative for all of us, particularly users of certain allergy medications.

(Cont'd on page 2...)

Welcome New Members

MOCMS would like to welcome the following new members:

Yaser Abu El-Sameed, MD

Pulmonary/Critical Care

Justin Atkins, MD

Family Medicine

Brian R. McNicholas, DO

Emergency Medicine

Kevin M. Simonelic, MD

Internal Medicine

Michael Teague, MD

Family Medicine

(Transferring from Morgan County Medical Society)

- The Book Club in April has been cancelled but we will look to reschedule this, either live or virtually, this summer.

The landscape seems unfamiliar for us all. Outpatient health visits are down, inpatient wards are full, city streets are quiet, and minds are buzzing. But every empty street is a sign of mutual commitment to each other and love for humanity. We can stand together, even at a distance.

Let's keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Laura B. Knudson, MD

President

Monroe Owen County Medical Society

KUDOS

In this difficult and challenging time of COVID-19, we hear many stories of beautiful acts of kindness and humanity that remind us how lucky we are to live in this community.

Some of these people include those who have spent hours making masks for the community, including Dr. Carrie Davis who organized and made scrub caps for staff in the IU Health Emergency Department, employees at Cardinal Spirits who have made hand sanitizer and Big Red Liquors that donated \$5,000 of the hand sanitizer to the community, teachers who have paraded in front of student's homes with signs telling the students how much they miss them, the parents who have had to become teachers for their children at home, the many employees of essential businesses such as Kroger, Target, Walmart, banks, postal employees, UPS, FedEx, Sanitation Department, newspapers and many more who have worked while many others were able to stay at home. And above all, we thank all of our physicians, nurses, and other hospital and physician office staff that work so that we can stay healthy.

Speaking of physicians, in February, Mayor John Hamilton announced that **Dr. Tashera Perry** was one of five local women being honored for their outstanding service to our community.

Dr. Perry received the Woman of the Year Award for her dedication to women's health. **Dr. Perry** serves as staff physician and Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor, Obstetrics and Gynecology for the Indiana University School of Medicine, Medical Science Program, and an advocate for women's health in a variety of positions both locally and nationally. Within the IU Health system, locally, **Dr. Perry** has served as Clinical Informatics Physicians Advisor, physician sponsor for the OB/GYN Clinical Effectiveness Council, and as representative for the Women's CORE uplift Governance Council. On a state and national scale, she serves as Fellow for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; member of the American Medical Association; representative for the Indiana State Medical Society; and ISMA Delegate for the **Monroe Owen County Medical Society**.

There are so many people in our community that deserve thanks and praise; these are some that have been brought to our attention. Please let us know if you hear of anyone that deserves to be recognized.

Mental Health and Covid-19

Polly Lybrook, MD

How do you deal with your patients' anxieties regarding the novel Coronavirus, when fears are real and you, the provider, may be coping with your own new level of worry?

We read daily the details of disease progression and the devastating toll physically, emotionally and economically, with many of our nation's health care providers assuming the greatest risks. While a sense of sadness and loss are common (and will become increasingly so as meaningful events and interactions are limited, and social isolation continue), anxiety is the predominant theme. Even our most basic tasks, like grocery shopping, are fraught with urgency and angst. A new survey by the American Psychiatric Association, conducted March 18-19, 2020, revealed that 36% of American adults believe Coronavirus is having a serious impact on their mental health.

During the past several weeks, there has been a plethora of digital psych newsletters headlining dealing with Coronavirus, yet offering little truly useful information for attenuating this anxiety. I'm sure much will be forthcoming, but what do we do in the interim? Consider that when your patients are asking you about testing, statistics, and other aspects of COVID-19, they are also likely seeking reassurance, comfort and guidance. In addition to your usual queries, I suggest a couple questions to inform next steps:

1. How have you been coping with the changes in your life since Coronavirus?
2. How are you doing with your _____ (eating, drinking, sleeping, etc. It's helpful here if you know the patient and their vulnerabilities)?

These questions can shed light on how a person is functioning, how anxious they are, and also how resourceful. It may be useful to ask yourself these questions too!

What next, for our anxious patients? A provider can (and may need to) increase current psychotropic medication, or initiate one, but this seems inadequate to address the extreme emotional nature of this pandemic, and certain patients may not be good candidates for anxiolytics. I contacted recently retired clinical psychologist, Dr. Louise Miracle, for suggestions. She provided practical and actionable information, and referred me to a short CNN Health video for a concise summary: <https://www.cnn.com/videos/health/2020/03/25/mental-health-during-coronavirus-cnn-lon-orig.cnn>. I found this a very helpful resource. If you recommend it to patients, you might suggest they replay it and write the information down, which helps with learning the steps. A summary follows.

5 Things You Can Do To Take Care of Your Mental Health During Coronavirus

1. **Avoid Information Overload**
 - Reduce exposure to information about the virus.
 - Find just a few trusted sources, like the CDC and local news.

- Limit frequency of checking news, and limit phone notifications.
- Practice social media self discipline, consider uninstalling apps.

2. Name Your Fears and Prepare

- Specify your fears (write them out).
- How realistic are they?
- Try not to overestimate the likelihood they will occur, or underestimate your ability to deal with them.
- If fears are more practical, think about an action plan. Consider options, and be prepared for those scenarios.

3. Think Outside of Yourself

- Actions can counter anxiety.
- Consider helping someone else.
- Volunteering can minimize stress and depression.

4. Seek Support Wisely

- Seek support, but avoid those as anxious as you.
- Consider professional help, if you continue to struggle with anxious thoughts.

5. Keep a Routine

- Maintain a consistent sleep schedule (really important in a time of stress to physical and mental health).
- Try to include consistent activity and exercise, which is known to reduce anxiety.

The second section above is really the critical piece here, and represents the rudiments of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Dr. Miracle points out that anxiety is actually exacerbated by two common default coping mechanisms, avoidance and distraction. They provide temporary relief, but can perpetuate the idea that what we are afraid of is overwhelming and impossible to tolerate. What we need to do instead is write down as bluntly as possible what exactly the fearful thought is, challenge it through some rational self-questioning, and replace it with a more reasonable thought. Research shows these anxious thoughts must be uncovered then confronted.

If someone has ongoing struggles with anxiety and/or depression and it's getting in the way of their functioning, a referral to a mental health professional may be in order.

In addition to the above, I would add a couple things. Now is a great time to take a moment to be mindful, and pause to notice the beauty around us, in the natural world, in the kindness and caring of others, and in our loved ones. Look for bits of joy and express gratitude. And, remind ourselves and our patients we have a common purpose in this brief sacrifice, for the greater well-being of all humankind.

Volunteers in Medicine Opens as HealthNet Bloomington Health Center

Submitted by Nancy E. Richman, Project Director

Effective December 30, the assets of the Volunteers in Medicine clinic were acquired by HealthNet, a not-for-profit federally qualified health center (FQHC) network based in Indianapolis.

This was the culmination of nearly three years of research, discussions, and extensive due diligence.

With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the expansion of Healthy IN Plan 2.0 many local individuals, previously served by the VIM clinic, became insured and were transferred to other outpatient health centers. It became clear to the board of directors that the free clinic model was too limited for the changing healthcare environment.

Now called **HealthNet Bloomington Health Center**, the clinic serves ALL people regardless of age, income, citizenship, insurance status, or geographic location. Patients are given a sliding scale fee based on income and family size. The HealthNet mission is "To improve lives with compassionate health care and support services regardless of ability to pay."

While the new clinic is officially open at the VIM location, the building is currently under construction in order to double the number of exam rooms. Thus, capacity is somewhat limited and until a pediatrician is recruited, children's services will be very limited. In addition, the dental clinic will be expanded with the addition of a .8 FTE dentist and will open after construction is completed. For more information call Nancy Richman, 812.333.4032. To schedule an appointment, call 812.333.4001.

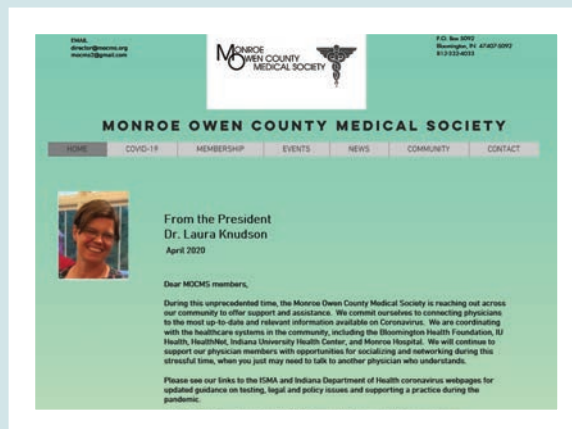
ISMA Resolutions 2020 Timeline

One of the many benefits of being an ISMA member is the opportunity to use your voice at the annual ISMA convention every September. Every year members can send resolutions to the annual convention. This provides a voice on medical issues to protect you, your profession and your patients from harmful legislation. The deadline to submit these resolutions to ISMA is **July 13** this year. However, if you have a resolution to submit and would like the support of your local Monroe Owen County Medical Society, there is a timeline to follow. **May 15** is the deadline for you to submit your resolution to the MOCMS Executive Committee. The committee will then send the resolution out to the general membership and ask for comments. The resolutions and comments will be reviewed at the **June 9** Executive Committee meeting. At that time, a vote will be taken as to whether the committee will endorse the resolution on behalf of the entire society. Remember that resolutions can always be sent to ISMA before **July 13**, BUT if a member wants the support of the MOCMS executive committee, this timeline will be followed.

MOCMS Has a New Website

Check out the new MOCMS website at mocms.org.

- COVID-19 Updates
- MOCMS News
- Membership Information
- Community Involvement
- MOCMS Events



Enigma 2020

Before the CDC recommended to limit and/or cancel social events, MOCMS members gathered to participate in the third Enigma CME event. Before the presentations, physicians enjoyed social time and catching up with their peers. Specialties that were represented in the attendees included GI, Family & Internal Medicine, Cardiology, Psychiatry, Neurology, Pathology, Emergency Medicine, Urology and Vascular Surgery. The attendees heard three presentations by Drs. Eric Knabel, Dr. Gregory Sidell and Mayo Mehrizi. Each physician presented a unique case with patient history and symptoms. They shared the challenging clinical findings and asked for feed-back and opinions. They included their own reflections and thought processes that led to their diagnoses and treatment. The Enigma is an excellent opportunity to encourage collegiality and camaraderie among physicians, retired and actively practicing. Enigma was designed to remind physicians why they do what they do.

Two CME credits were awarded to the physicians. Evaluations were almost all "5s". Comments included, "excellent format", "this was perfect" and one physician shared, "I will go anywhere at any time for Enigma program". MOCMS looks forward to making Enigma an annual event, and encourages members to think of some of their unique cases to share at future events.



Save the Date

This space is reserved for dates of future MOCMS events. Unfortunately, we are not able to currently plan events. Hopefully we will be able to safely gather soon; watch your emails for future events. Until that time, see photos of two MOCMS events that were held earlier in 2020.

Book Club 1-10-2020 (Before We Were Yours)



Meet and Greet 2-5-2020



Leaving Practice or Retiring Soon?

Please let MOCMS know where your medical records will be stored.

One of the most common phone calls received at the MOCMS office involves locating patient medical records for physicians who have moved or retired from practice. MOCMS keeps a database of that information for a number of physicians but certainly not for all former or current members. If your medical records are not housed at Storage Unlimited or with an ongoing practice from which you have retired, please contact the office to update that information for our database. You may email to director@mocms.org or call 812-332-4033. Thank you very much!

Hurlow

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PLEASE KEEP US UPDATED

In our increased effort to “go green”, MOCMS is hoping to communicate with you through email. If you would like to help MOCMS use less paper, please be sure we have your updated email address by sending an email to director@mocms.org and check that your spam blocker will allow communications from MOCMS.

MOVED LATELY?

Please forward your new address for your **home** and/or your **practice** to MOCMS right away. You may call MOCMS at 812.332.4033, write to us at PO Box 5092, Bloomington, IN 47407-5092 or email: director@mocms.org. Please help us keep your information current/correct in the MOCMS database, Physician Directory and on our website at www.mocms.org.

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The Monroe Owen County Medical Society (MOCMS) Newsletter is published each spring, summer and fall by approval of the Executive Committee. The MOCMS Newsletter accepts submissions of articles, announcements, obituaries, and editorials related to the interests of our members. Materials submitted for consideration should be typed as a Word document. The MOCMS reserves the right to edit all articles submitted. MOCMS retains final editorial judgment regarding newsletter content. It reserves the right to reject articles, announcements, letters, advertisements, and other items that do not correspond with the goals and purposes of the organization.

The information contained in the newsletter is believed to be correct and accurate. Unless specifically stated otherwise, the opinions expressed in any article, advertisement, or column are those of the individual author and do not represent an official position of, or endorsement by, the Monroe Owen County Medical Society, its officers, Executive Committee, or the newsletter staff.

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