



Maine Medicine

a quarterly publication of the Maine Medical Association

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2024

Maine Medical Association Mission: **SUPPORT** Maine physicians, **ADVANCE** the quality of medicine in Maine, **PROMOTE** the health of all Maine people.

PLEASE JOIN MMA IN BAR HARBOR IN SEPTEMBER

The Maine Medical Association's 171st Annual Session will take place during the weekend of September 6-8, 2024, at the Harborside Hotel & Marina in Bar Harbor. The weekend will include opportunities for learning, networking, socializing, and deciding upon leaders and priorities of the MMA in the year ahead.

Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease physician Daniel Griffin, MD, PhD, will offer the keynote presentation entitled, "ME/CFS and Long COVID." Former Maine DHHS Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew, PhD, will share some thoughts about reform of the U.S. health care system.

The Awards & Inauguration Dinner on Saturday, September 7th, will feature the presentation of the Mary Floyd Cushman, MD Award for Exceptional Humanitarian Service as a Medical Volunteer, and the President's Award for Distinguished Service. R. Scott Hanson, MD, MPH, will be inaugurated as the 172nd President of the MMA.

On Sunday September 8th, we will start the day with the 41st Annual Edmund Hardy Road Race/Walk: please sign up at the registration desk to participate. Directly after the race/walk we will have our annual family breakfast. The remainder of Sunday morning will feature four clinical presentations:

- Maintenance and Reliever Therapy in **Pediatric Asthma** presented by Colby Wyatt, MD;
- Effects of GLP 1 receptor agonists and SGLT2 inhibitors that have surprised the **Endocrinology** community presented by Irwin Brodsky, MD, MPH;
- **Atrial Fibrillation**, Role for Rhythm Control in 2024 presented by Jordan Leyton-Mange, MD; and
- Updates in **Sports Cardiology** presented by Patrice Hohl, DO.

For more details about this year's Annual Session, go to: <https://www.mainemed.com/171st-mma-annual-session>

Silent Auction: MMA has decided to bring back the Silent Auction. The proceeds of the auction will benefit the charitable and educational affiliate of MMA, the Hanley Center for Health Leadership & Education (formerly known as the Maine Medical Education Trust). If you have an item you would like to donate to the auction, please contact Lisa Martin at lmartin@mainemed.com or call 207-480-4201.

Interested in a round of Golf? Whether registering for the meeting or just interested in golf, you can sign up to play a round on Friday, September 6, 2024, at Kebo Valley Golf Course, \$125 per player, tee times available by contacting Lisa Martin at lmartin@mainemed.com or calling 207-480-4201.

We hope you can join us!



HOW YOU CAN HELP MAINECARE MEMBERS STAY CONNECTED TO STAY COVERED

By DHHS Acting Commissioner Sara Gagné-Holmes

Maine's Medicaid program (MaineCare) is in the midst of significant changes that make it more important than ever to keep Maine people covered. With the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, updates to federal rules mean that all Mainers who have coverage through MaineCare will have their coverage reviewed to ensure they are still eligible – this process is known as the "unwinding" of the continuous Medicaid eligibility requirement. This process started in April 2023, and eligibility redeterminations will be completed by October 31, 2024.

Ensuring that eligible Mainers stay covered -- on MaineCare, or through [CoverME.gov](https://www.coverme.gov) for those who no longer meet MaineCare eligibility requirements -- is a top priority across the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) as we finish the remaining eligibility redeterminations. During the unwinding process to date, we have worked to leverage all our outreach channels across the Department and with external partners across the state, including physicians and other health care practitioners, to educate MaineCare members about the need to renew their coverage, and how to take action to stay covered. Our public awareness campaign centers around the tagline, "Stay connected to stay covered."

As a result, more than 300,000 Mainers have successfully renewed their MaineCare coverage to date.

But the next few months will be a critical period, as we begin the process of determining eligibility for the remaining population that has not yet responded to their

renewal requests, and as we resume disenrolling those who do not take action to renew.

We anticipate that the level of disenrollments will be higher in the coming months than in the unwinding period to date, which is why we are looking to the health care practitioner community to partner with us to help prevent unnecessary coverage loss.

Specific steps you can take to help your patients *stay connected to stay covered* include:

- Use DHHS resources to communicate this change with patients. Toolkits are available in many languages at www.MaineCare.gov/unwinding.
- Post information in your waiting rooms (toolkits include printable and digital materials).
- Post to your social media channels.

Additionally, based on feedback, MaineCare is implementing a new system update that allows health care practitioners to view a patient's individual renewal date in their HealthPAS account. Clinicians are encouraged to identify staff within your office who can reach out to your patients directly during appointments, or by phone/email, about the need to renew their MaineCare coverage and share their renewal dates, and to build this outreach into regular workflows during the July-October period.

Thank you for your partnership to help your patients with MaineCare *stay connected to stay covered*.

NEW MMA WEBSITE TO LAUNCH IN THE FALL

MMA's new website is in its development phase with web design company, Compete Now and will launch in the fall!

The new site reflects our organization's intentional decision to change how we digitally communicate and engage with members. As the leading voice for all Maine physicians, our programming, advocacy, and partnerships are extensive, and we need an accessible digital footprint that reflects our work. Our guiding principle throughout the website design process was to build a website that uses interactive features to foster collaboration among and between members and the MMA.

- Members will first notice the enhanced user experience with improved navigation, functionality, and accessible with any device.
- The new fast and effective search tool will make finding the exact information a visitor needs easier than ever.
- MMA's education and CME programs drive thousands of visits to our site annually. Our educational offerings, resources, and programming partners will be easy to navigate and searchable to allow members to quickly find the opportunities most relevant to their continuing education.
- Filling open roles in Maine's health care system continues to be a challenge. Our new site's Health Care Career Opportunities section will have updated functionality to drive job seekers to our site. Potential candidates will be able to filter postings to find the opportunities that best match their qualifications.
- MMA has been part of every major health care policy initiative in Maine since the 1980s. Staying up to date with MMA's state, federal, and election advocacy work will be simple with the new site's dedicated pages sharing legislative summaries, submitted testimony, and advocacy updates.
- Accessing MMA's programs and affiliates will be

Continued on page 6

EMAIL DOMAINS FOR THE MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, MMA-CQI, AND MPHP HAVE CHANGED!

For years, the MMA's email domain @mainemed.com has been confusing for people. Some asked why we were .com versus .org and, because of the "mainemed" tag, many thought we were the Maine Medical Center! With the redesign of our website underway, we have decided now is the time to change our email addresses.

The change in emails became effective August 1st. Email address formats are as follows:

MMA Staff New Email Domain: @mainephysicians.org
firstinitiallastname@mainephysicians.org
(ex., jdoe@mainephysicians.org)

MMA Center for Quality Improvement (MMA-CQI) Email Domain: @mma-cqi.org
firstinitiallastname@mma-cqi.org
(ex., jdoe@mma-cqi.org)

Medical Professionals Health Program (MPHP) Email Domain: @mma-mphp.org
firstinitiallastname@mma-cqi.org
(ex., jdoe@mma-mphp.org)

Rest assured, this change will not affect your access to our services or the quality of service we provide. It is merely a change in our digital identity.

Check out the inserts in this issue, including Resources for Opioid Prescribing!

MMA AND MMA-CQI WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM

The MMA and MMA-CQI had four new employees join our team in March/April 2024.

TRACY LLOYD



Tracy joined MMA in March 2024. As a Program Administrator at MMA, she brings her expertise in non-profit organizations, volunteer coordination, and education. Her master's degree in education and conditional license in social work equip her well for supporting various organizations, including the Maine Association

of Psychiatric Physicians, Maine Chapter, American College of Surgeons, and the Hanley Center for Health Leadership & Education. She enjoys spending time with her partner, four adult children, and two grandchildren in Central Maine.

SARA NELSON



Sarah Nelson joined MMA in March 2024 as a Program Administrator. Sarah has an associate's degree in Business Administration. She brings many years of experience in management, HR, safety, and insurance. She obtained certifications, licensing, and classes pertaining to business management, safety and holds

an active producer license in insurance. She provides support to five specialty societies: Rheumatology, Radiology, Gastroenterology, Orthopaedic Surgery, and Urology. Sarah lives in Central Maine with her family and 2 dogs.

JAMIE PAUL



Jamie Paul started her career at the Maine Medical Association – Center for Quality Improvement in April of 2024. Jamie earned her Master of Business Administration at the University of Phoenix and spent more than 10 years working at the Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While at Maine CDC, Jamie worked

on improving population health outcomes. She is passionate about her work with the MMA-CQI on improving Maternal and Child Health. Jamie has two children and enjoys traveling and cooking.

LAI WRIGHT, MLS



Lai grew up in Upstate New York, earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Buffalo State University, and after moving to Maine in 2015, earned a Masters in Leadership Studies from the University of Southern Maine. Since moving to Maine, Lai has worked at Maine Medical Center Research Institute,

University of Southern Maine, and the Department of Health and Human Services. Lai joined the MMA – Center for Quality Improvement in April 2024, providing marketing and communications support for the CQI team. She has two boys with her husband, and a "cat-dog" named John Deere. During the warm months, she enjoys spending time with her family outdoors doing all Maine things such as hiking, exploring the many beautiful state parks, bike rides along the Androscoggin River, and occasionally heading "upta camp."

MMA NECROLOGY

MMA has learned of and mourns the passing of the following physicians since our last publication:

Charles M. Belisle, MD (1946-2024)

Francis I. Kittredge, MD (1934-2024)

If you are aware of the passing of a Maine physician, please notify Lisa Martin, Director of Membership, at lmartin@mainephysicians.org or 207-480-4201.

NOTES FROM THE CEO

By Andrew MacLean, JD, CEO, Maine Medical Association



I am looking forward to returning to Bar Harbor in September for the 171st MMA Annual Session and I always enjoy spending the weekend with our members and guests. During a short window of time beginning on Friday morning for golfers and

ending mid-day on Sunday, the Annual Session offers a range of professional, personal, and family activities to promote relationships among members. It is a rewarding part of my role to work closely with the members of the Board of Directors and the Officers of the MMA and each Annual Session involves a transition in MMA leadership. I want to express my appreciation and thanks to several physicians whose leadership roles will change in September. Immediate Past President Erik Steele, DO, will leave the Executive Committee but continue service as a member of the Board and Chair of the 1000 Lives Campaign for Maine. Paul Cain, MD, will complete his year as President having guided MMA through the response to the tragedy of gun violence in Lewiston, among his accomplishments, and will serve one more year on the Executive Committee

as Immediate Past President. I am pleased to partner with incoming President Scott Hanson, MD, MPH, President-elect James Jarvis, MD, and Board Chair Minda Gold, MD, as MMA embraces the challenges and opportunities of the year ahead. I acknowledge and thank the following Board members who will retire from Board service: Robert Schlager, MD, Alexandra Barr, DO, Patrick Killoran, MD, MPH, and Madison Oxley, DO, UNE COM '24. I also welcome the following individuals who will be elected as new members of the Board on Saturday, September 7th: Kevin Fickenscher, MD, Gavin Ducker, MD, Kartikey Pandya, MD, and Sarah Micucci, OMS-III, UNE COM '26. I am eager to learn how these new leaders of the MMA will use their unique talent and perspective to shape the MMA and its work on behalf of Maine physicians, residents, medical students, and their patients in the next few years. I encourage any MMA member to consider serving on the Board or in a Committee Chair or other capacity when the time is right in your career!

Please contact me any time with your comments or suggestions about how we might serve you better – amaclean@mainephysicians.org; 207-480-4187 Direct; 207-215-7462 Mobile.

MMA LISTENING SESSIONS ON HEALTH CARE REFORM, 9/26 IN BANGOR AND 10/24 IN PORTLAND

The MMA is hosting two "listening sessions" this Fall to give members and guests an opportunity to continue a dialogue about health system reform in our country and how the MMA's current Statement on Reform of the U.S. Health Care System, adopted by the Board of Directors in June 2023, might be used in individual members' or organizational advocacy to improve our health care system.

The timing of these listening sessions is appropriate because they will take place in the critical electoral campaign season for federal and state offices between Labor Day and Election Day. We have invited physician candidates for the 132nd Maine Legislature, including Jane Pringle, MD, Sam Zager, MD, and Richard Evans, MD, to join us and share what they are hearing from voters and what health care reform topics may be considered at the State House in Augusta in 2025 and 2026. All views

on the topic are welcome and we offer these forums to encourage physicians to become educated on the topic and participate in this important public debate.

Members of the MMA Board of Directors and advocacy staff will be there to hear your comments. Please join us at one or both events and bring a colleague! RSVP to Sarah Lepoff at slepoff@mainephysicians.org or 207-480-4191.

BANGOR:

Thursday, September 26, 2024, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Sea Dog Brewing Company – Kenduskeag Room,
26 Front Street, Bangor

PORTLAND:

Thursday, October 24, 2024, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Rising Tide Brewing, 103 Fox Street, Portland

UPDATE ON THE STATE'S RESPONSE TO THE OPIOID DRUG EPIDEMIC

By Gordon H. Smith, JD, Director of Opioid Response, State of Maine



Greetings to my MMA friends. Our efforts to positively impact the opioid and SUD crisis in the state continue. We continue to see a decline in the number of lives lost to accidental overdose and I am delighted we are now joined in our efforts by MMA, MOA, MHA,

MEAPA, MNPA, and many other medical organizations in the state participating in the 1000 Lives Campaign, conceived by MMA Immediate Past President Erik Steele, DO. The goal of the Campaign is to save 1000 Mainers from an accidental overdose death by providing specific interventions in several medical settings including hospital emergency departments, inpatient settings, outpatient facilities, and other clinical settings. For example, each emergency department will be expected to offer low barrier access to buprenorphine to patients in the ED presenting with a substance use disorder. Dr. Steele presented briefly to hospital leaders at the MHA Summer Forum in June and is making personal visits to a number of facilities this summer. Several speakers will also promote the Campaign at the Governor's 6th Annual Opioid Response Summit being held on Thursday, July 25th at the Central Maine Community College in Auburn. I hope to see many of you at the Summit which is expected to attract more than 1000 participants.

The Summit this year will feature Keynote speaker Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, PhD, Administrator of

SAMHSA. Other presenters include Governor Mills, Attorney General Aaron Frey, U.S. Attorney Darcie McElwee, and Brandeis University epidemiologist Traci Green, PhD. Dr. Green is the nation's leading expert on drug checking.

In addition to the Summit, our current efforts are focused on the work of the Maine Recovery Council which is beginning to spend the opioid settlement funds which eventually will result in \$235 million coming to Maine during the next 18 years. The 15 members of the Council will be re-appointed or replaced in the Fall as the court documents limit the members to two, two-year terms. The appointing authorities are Governor Mills, Attorney General Frey, presiding officers of the legislature, and the 39 subdivisions which participated in the national, multi-state litigation.

I have also been tasked by the legislature via LD 1364 with studying safe injection sites and reporting back to the next legislature by February 15, 2025. The legislation sets forth the general requirements of the work group and I hope to get the work started by the end of the summer. As there are currently only two such sites operating in the country (both in the city of New York), there may be interest in waiting until the Rhode Island site opens (anticipated Fall 2024) before reaching any conclusions.

Thank you for all you do for your patients and the State of Maine. I hope to see many of you at the MMA Annual Session in Bar Harbor in September.

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

By Paul Cain, MD, President, Maine Medical Association



The Importance of Mentoring

At our last Annual Meeting in September 2023, the Association reviewed and adopted our revised Statement on Reform of the U.S. Health Care System which had been developed by our Ad Hoc Committee on Health System Reform after a long process of research and gathering input from our members. One of the key components of this Statement is that we need to increase patient access to our health care system. We may have some of the best care to offer, but we fall short if there is limited access for the everyday person. If we achieve our goal of increased access, there will undoubtedly be an even greater strain on our physician workforce. The answer to this dilemma is the team concept to medical care, where we work with our advanced practice professionals - nurse practitioners and physician assistants - to see the patients and develop care plans.

This approach to patient care only works if all members of the team feel comfortable in the roles they have attained. This requires excellent communication within the team, including an opportunity to ask questions and receive information. As physician leaders, we need to be available for advice and mentoring of our fellow team members. Hopefully, we have accumulated a certain wealth of knowledge through our medical school training, extended medical residencies, and clinical

experience. It is important that we are an available and accessible resource for those who are or will be part of this team.

The demands on health care professionals are great and increasing. Our present system requires that we take on many more administrative tasks and data recording than in the past. We are expected to see more patients, sometimes with fewer resources. It's easy to feel overwhelmed, to put our head down and get through the day. But the quality of our care requires that we take a "big picture" approach and consider the overall patient experience in our practices. We need to set a good example of clinical acumen and lead the team. As the Maine motto goes, "Dirigo—I lead."

Sir William Osler, MD, said, "I desire no other epitaph... than the statement that I taught medical students in the wards, as I regard this as by far the most useful and important work I have been called upon to do." We need to extend this responsibility so that all team members receive the proper instruction and mentoring. How? Most of us don't work in academic institutions, but we should mentor the members of our team and offer guidance where needed. We should take the opportunity to preceptor all types of students; medical, nursing, and physician assistant. We should make sure that advanced practice professionals that we work with are mentored and trained in the specifics of our individual practices. Although this takes time, which is precious in a busy clinical practice, I think you will find this rewarding in many ways. The health care system of tomorrow will require it. I can be reached at president@mainephysicians.org or 207-233-7534.



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Information in this newsletter is intended to provide information and guidance, not legal advice. Since exact language and definitions of key terms are critical to understanding the requirements of legislation, rules or laws, we encourage you to read each carefully. Articles submitted to *Maine Medicine* represent the views of the author only and do not necessarily represent MMA policy.

THANKS TO THE MMA’S RECENT SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Thank you to the following members who have shown support for the MMA’s long-term growth by renewing at an additional sustaining membership level since our last publication.

Michael Curran, MD
Minda Gold, MD, FAAFP

Helping physicians manage their financial health

Jackson Cousins, CFP®
Senior Vice President – Financial Advisor

Benjamin Sicoli, CFP®
Senior Vice President – Financial Advisor

James L. Jackson, CFP®, CIMA®, AIF®
Managing Director – Financial Advisor

Carole Sunday, CPFA™, CRC®
Vice President – Senior Financial Associate

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24-PD-00065 (01/24)

Registration is Now Open!

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT AI, TECHNOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH

September 26-27, 2024
Hilton Garden Inn, 5 Park St, Freeport, ME 04032

1. Disaster Psychiatry – What Every Psychiatrist Should Know – Dr. Ng
2. Digital Therapeutics for Substance Use Disorders: Science and Clinical Applications – Dr. Marsch
3. Using AI to Enhance Digital Assessment and Treatment of Mental Health – Dr. Jacobson
4. The Promising Potential of Neurofeedback – Dr. Martz
5. Transformation, Disintermediation or Integration: The Choice of Medicine in Facing the Technology Wave – Dr. Fickenscher
6. Leveraging Digital Tools as a Psychiatrist – Dr. MacMillan
7. Diagnosis TikTok: When Screen Media Impacts Mental Health – Dr. Weigle

www.mainepsych.org / 207-480-4194

We’re proud to offer our Frontline Heroes Loan to eligible members of the Maine Medical Association.

What is a Frontline Heroes Loan?

We’re offering an exclusive Frontline Heroes Home Loan option for our dedicated frontline heroes to honor the service they provide in our communities. It’s our way of saying “Thank you” for all that you do.

Our Frontline Heroes Loan offers:

- 0% down payment options available
- Maximum seller contribution of 3%
- Minimum borrower contribution of 1% or \$1,000 the lesser of the two
- Minimum FICO score of 700
- Eligible property types include single-family homes and condominiums

All applications are subject to credit approval. Bar Harbor Bank & Trust Loan Origination Company Identifier #525628

Contact me to get started or apply online at www.barharbor.bank/daigle

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Patients need to know about safe medication disposal. We’ve made it easy.

Protect patients by referring them to Maine’s Drug Take-Back Program - providing hundreds of medication drop-off sites throughout the state.

www.medtakebackmaine.org

www.mainemed.com Page 3

SPECIALTY SOCIETY MEETINGS

September 7, 2024

Maine Society of Anesthesiologists
Business Meeting

Register: www.maineanesthesia.org
Atlantic Oceanside Hotel & Event Center
Bar Harbor, ME – 2:00pm – 5:00pm
Contact: Lisa Montagna 207-620-4015 or
mesahq@gmail.com

September 13-15, 2024

2024 Maine Chapter, ACP Annual Scientific
& Chapter Meeting
Atlantic Oceanside Hotel & Conference Center
Bar Harbor, ME
Contact: Lynne Burney 207-441-9849 or
mainechapteracp@gmail.com

September 16, 2024

Maine Chapter ACEP Fall Meeting
Hilton Garden Inn – Freeport, ME
Contact: Cathy Stratton 207-592-5725 or
cstratton@mainephysicians.org

September 26-27, 2024

Maine Association of Psychiatric Physicians Fall
Meeting & Symposium
Hilton Garden Inn – Freeport, ME
Contact: Tracy Lloyd 207-480-4194 or
tlloyd@mainephysicians.org

September 27, 2024

Maine Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Fall Business Meeting
(Held in conjunction with the 23rd Annual Downeast
Ophthalmology Symposium)
Harborside Hotel – Bar Harbor, ME
10:30am – 11:45am
Contact: Shirley Goggin 207-445-2260 or
sgoggin@mainephysicians.org

September 27-29, 2024

23rd Annual Downeast Ophthalmology Symposium
(Presented by the Maine Society of Eye Physicians
and Surgeons)
Harborside Hotel – Bar Harbor, ME
Contact: Shirley Goggin 207-445-2260
or sgoggin@mainephysicians.org

ROBERT CHAGRASULIS, MD
RECOGNIZED WITH
HUMANITARIAN SERVICE AWARD



On Saturday, June 22, 2024, in Gulf Shores Alabama, the University of South Alabama College of Medicine presented Maine surgeon Robert “Bob” Chagrasulis, MD, with the Humanitarian Service Award 2024 for his 30 years of leadership of medical teams to the Dominican Republic, serving primarily Haitian migrants, and for his work with Rotary International serving the same population with water, sanitation, and hygiene programs.

Dr. Bob Chagrasulis came to the University of South Alabama College of Medicine in July 1973, following graduation from Northeastern University with a degree in chemical engineering, to work in the Department of Physiology. He left for graduate school at the University of Southern California (Physiology) and returned to USACOM entering in 1977 with the Class of 1981.

Bob completed a postgraduate residency in general surgery at the Maine Medical Center in 1986 and a fellowship at Vanderbilt University in trauma surgery/surgical critical care in 1998.

His career was spent primarily in rural hospitals in Maine. Since stepping out of the operating room, Bob has continued in the practice of MAT for addiction.

Bob also has been recognized with an associate’s degree from the Washington County Community College (2013), the Service Above Self Award from Rotary International (Rotary District 7810, eastern Maine/New Brunswick, Canada) (2015), and the MMA’s Mary Floyd Cushman, MD Award for Exceptional Service as a Medical Volunteer (2018). Bob served the MMA for many years as a member of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Medical Professionals Health Program Advisory Committee.

STATE HOUSE NOTES

By Anne Sedlack, Esq., MSW, Director of Advocacy



Happy Summer! Although it’s a season that is usually a little slower for legislative work, we have still been busy and are so grateful to our Hanley Center Summer Intern, Lucy Frenette, for all her work with us.

State-Level Advocacy Updates

First, we are pleased to present our 131st Maine Legislature, Second Session Legislative Report! It includes information about our work, so please check it out! The main takeaway is complete gratitude for all our members who showed up in small and large ways this year.

You can find the summary on our website or this link:<https://www.mainemed.com/sites/default/files/content/2024%20Legislative%20Report.pdf>.

Second, we are thankful for all the members who filled out the legislative survey sent out in May. The results showed that MMA and MOA members thought joining our legislative committees was very successful because we could advocate more effectively together. We also heard from some members that they didn’t know how to access our committee meetings, to which all are welcome. As such, we will send out an all-member email in December about how to join and ways to share your perspective even if you can’t make our meetings.

Finally, we have begun developing our legislative priorities for the 132nd Maine Legislature! We are gathering information from members about critical issues in your work to create these items. For example, we asked about it in the May Survey, and the following items received the highest ranking of “Top Priority:”

- Expanding and recruiting the health care workforce in Maine;

- Increasing access to affordable and quality health care;
- Protecting reproductive health care autonomy;
- Enacting an actual “red flag” law/extreme risk protection order; and
- Access to mental and behavioral health resources.

Please reach out with any ideas!

Federal Advocacy Updates

We want to ensure members know about two compliance issues. This is a high-level overview, so please see our e-news article from June 27th for more information:

- **The Corporate Transparency Act (CTA)** requires businesses that meet specific criteria to submit a Beneficial Ownership Information Report to the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. For physicians and other medical practices formed through filings with Maine’s or another state’s Secretary of State’s office, you will likely need to comply with the CTA. For those reporting companies formed before January 1, 2024, a report must be filed before January 1, 2025. Those formed after January 1, 2024, have 90 days to file a report.
- **HIPAA Privacy Rule to Support Reproductive Health Care Privacy:** Requires policies detailing that a covered entity or business associate may not use or disclose PHI in connection with any person seeking, obtaining, providing, or facilitating reproductive health care that was lawfully provided when the purpose of the disclosure is: (1) To investigate or to impose civil/criminal liability on any person; (2) To identify any person for merely seeking, obtaining, providing or facilitating reproductive health care. It requires compliance by December 2024.

As always, please reach out with any questions! My email is asedlack@mainephysicians.org.

UPCOMING MMA SENIOR SECTION MEETINGS

AUGUST 21 AND OCTOBER 16 | 11:30am – 1:30pm | MMA Headquarters (Hybrid)

Transforming Moral Suffering
in Healthcare

A Regional Inservice Summit for Healthcare Professionals

Join us in exploring strategies to support healthcare workers when facing emotional challenges, helping you stay strong and gain wisdom from your experiences.



Save the Date!
OCTOBER 5, 2024
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
BIDDEFORD, MAINE

Brought to you by VOA Northern New England & VOA Massachusetts



Registration is Now Open!

Maine Neurological Society’s 2024 Fall Symposium

November 15-16, 2024

The Harraseeket Inn & Event House, Freeport, ME

Topics include:

Surgical Options for Epilepsy, Parkinson Disease Treatment, Advances in the Understanding of ARIA, Pharmacology for Myasthenia Gravis, and more.

Go to www.maineneuro.com to register. Registration is open to all physicians, APNs, PA’s, and others with an interest in neurology.

By Lani Graham, MD, MPH



Public Health Under Siege

For those physicians who may believe that politics aren't really our business, I am hoping that June 2024 was a wake-up call. June 28th was the date the Supreme Court invalidated the so-called "Chevron deference," a precedent of 40 years which supported an understanding far older, namely, that if there was ambiguity in the law, those with scientific expertise were the ones to resolve it. The potential impacts of this decision on public health and health care policy are hard to overstate. Decision making in ambiguous situations has now been shifted from those with scientific expertise to the biases and whims of unelected judges with no such expertise. Everything from the Clean Air Act to infectious disease control to standards of eligibility for Medicaid beneficiaries will be at risk. But this decision, while momentous, is just one of many that should underscore for all the value of physicians participating as community leaders in political action.

Alarm bells have been ringing about this Supreme Court and its impact on public health since the COVID-19 Pandemic, when restrictions on large religious gatherings, enacted to prevent spread of the disease and death, were struck down under the banner of religious freedom. Similarly, regulations regarding suspending evictions during the pandemic, which had clearly been shown to enhance spread of the disease, were struck down. From there, the Court moved on to invalidate the New York framework to control firearms. And that same

year, in June of 2022, the Court issued the landmark Dobbs decision that removed a woman's right to have an abortion. Finally, the medical community took notice and in March of 2023, the *JAMA* published an article warning of the ever-increasing danger to public health being operationalized by this Supreme Court. A year later, in June 2024, we have had the elimination of expertise in public health decision making and the suspension of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "good neighbor" plan.

This last one, "the good neighbor" plan, has special implications for Maine. The Plan aimed to ensure compliance with the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards law. To carry out the law's mandate, the EPA required "upwind" states to develop plans to reduce air pollution affecting "downwind" states. Maine is a "downwind" state. Not only does Maine suffer with air pollution thanks to coal fired plants in the Midwest, but that air pollution is also a major cause of yet another public health problem, mercury in freshwater fish. Air pollution landing on Maine rivers and lakes is responsible for an estimated 40% of the mercury contamination of fish. And then there is progress on climate change, also affected by this suspension. Twenty-three states had no plans to come into compliance with the Clean Air law. Now it seems quite possible they never will.

So, in summary, the Supreme Court has, in just 4 years, decimated public health laws and regulations. Everything from gun control to reproductive health, to health policy to a healthy environment is under siege. We must do what we can to face off against this onslaught in our own legislature, through our elected representatives, and through our statements as community leaders. It is perilous times for public health.

1000 LIVES CAMPAIGN FOR MAINE UPDATE

By Erik Steele, DO, Immediate Past President, MMA



It may be the lazy days of summer but the campaign to reduce opioid-related deaths in Maine by 1000 from what is projected during the next 5 years (well, now 4 ½ years) is in high gear. Almost every major caregiver association in the state has now signed on to the 1000 Lives Campaign – from retail pharmacists to nurse practitioners to anesthesiologists, the Maine Hospital Association, and many others.

The Campaign is now moving from its highly successful engagement stage to identification and implementation of interventions in different parts of the health care delivery system designed to save those lives. This is where you come in.

What can you do? A lot – starting with stepping up and getting involved. No one, especially no health care professional, should be standing on the sidelines in a fight against what is now the leading cause of death for Mainers under the age of 50, the state's 3rd or 4th leading cause of death overall, and its number one cause of life years lost to early death. Number one!

What else?

- 1. Educate yourself about the Campaign – go to the MMA website and learn more. That website will be a growing resource for the Campaign.
- 2. Check with the leadership of your specialty professional association and ask what your society is doing in the 1000 Lives Campaign for Maine. If they know, join that effort and do those things in

your practice. If they don't know, ask them to call the MMA, or go to the MMA website, learn about the Campaign, and sign on. We need their help.

- 3. Screen your patients for Opioid Use Disorder – you have them, whether you are a specialist or a primary care provider. If you think there are none in your practice, think again; it is estimated that 3.7% of the American population has OUD, and the majority of patients who have it are not getting help.
- 4. If you are not a buprenorphine prescriber, and you are a primary care physician, do what the professional associations of pediatricians, family docs, and internists all recommend – get educated, and get to it. PCPs are the ideal longitudinal providers of OUD treatment with buprenorphine.
- 5. Connect with local addiction medicine specialty practices that can manage complex OUD patients, so you have a place to refer such patients.
- 6. Work on your biases about SUD patients including those with OUD, and the biases of your staff and colleagues. Bias and stigma are not only barriers to treatment for OUD and other SUD patients, they are killers.
- 7. Work with your hospital and your emergency department to make sure they provide consistent, good, OUD care. Such care – including starting appropriate OUD patients in the ED or the hospital on buprenorphine is now the standard of care, no different from providing nitro and TPA to acute MI patients.

Whatever you do, don't stand on the sidelines while the population of a Maine town dies every year from OUD.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE HANLEY CENTER'S PELI ADVANCED 8 GRADUATES - THE NEWEST MCAFEE FELLOWS!

We are thrilled to congratulate the latest McAfee Fellows, graduates of our Physician and Provider Executive Leadership Institute's (PELI) Advanced 8 course. These outstanding professionals demonstrated exceptional dedication and commitment as they integrated new learning into their professional environments, engaged in deep discussions on complex issues, and cultivated lasting professional relationships with their peers.

The Advanced Course is a cornerstone of our PELI program, designed to equip physician and advanced practice provider leaders with the essential management and leadership skills necessary to address and overcome the myriad challenges facing today's health care environment. By collaborating with the esteemed faculty of Brandeis University, our participants receive education tailored specifically to the unique needs of physicians and advanced practice providers in the region.

Our PELI Advanced course is a competency-based, highly experiential program that spans six, 2.5 -day residential sessions during 10 months. The course honors the legacy of the late Dr. Robert McAfee, a distinguished physician leader known for his contributions to health care improvement and his advocacy for the prevention of family violence. Using Dr. McAfee's influence as a guiding light for our program, the McAfee Fellows are prepared to follow in his footsteps, coming out of the course equipped with the knowledge and skills to drive innovation and excellence in health care.

Our latest cohort of graduates includes an impressive array of physicians and advanced practice providers who are now ready to make significant impacts in their respective fields. We proudly recognize the following McAfee Fellows:

- Aaron Karmes, DO
- Alicia Faller, MD
- Amanda Iantosca, DO
- Brad Huot, MD
- Candice Dersch, MD
- Catherine Chodkiewicz, MD
- Catherine Fredricks, DO
- Christopher Blomberg, DO
- Dragos Banu, MD
- Erich Fogg, PA
- Isaac Benowitz, MD
- Jodge Meserve, MD
- Jordan Maresh, MD
- Justin White, MD
- Khaldoun Bekdache, MD
- Kimberly Perreault, DO
- Lara Walsh, MD
- Lori Towne, FNP-BC
- Matt Buttarazzi, MD
- Maureen Perdue, DO
- Naeem Haider, MD
- Nathan Aranson, MD, RPVI, FACS
- Nicole Cherbuliez, MD
- Rebecca Spear, DO
- Sarah Vito White, DO

These exceptional individuals join a long-standing and supportive network of physicians and advanced practice providers across New England. Once again, congratulations to our newest McAfee Fellows. Your dedication and hard work inspire us all, and we look forward to witnessing the positive changes you will bring to our health care system.

Interested in PELI Advanced 9?

We invite all interested candidates to keep an eye out for more information regarding enrollment in our upcoming PELI Advanced 9 cohort, due to begin in late spring, 2025. This is a unique opportunity to join a distinguished group of health and health care leaders dedicated to transforming the future of health and health care.



Follow us on LinkedIn and stay tuned for further details on how you can become part of this dynamic and influential program.

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Meghan Mamula, DO
Medical Director
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The MMA-CQI, with funding support from the Maine Board of Licensure in Medicine (BOLIM), developed and maintains online on-demand learning modules available for CME credit at:

www.qclearninglab.org

STAY INFORMED!

Update your email address with MMA
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Email: Lisa Martin at lmartin@mainemed.com.

MAINE DHHS UPDATE

By Lisa M. Letourneau, MD, MPH, Senior Advisor for Delivery System Change



Sharing Information About Patients with Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders: What's Allowed?

It's not surprising that many physicians encounter obstacles when trying to communicate with other treating clinicians about shared patients given the myriad of federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules governing the protection of mental health (MH) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) records. However, recent developments in health care confidentiality law may lessen these obstacles while improving the integration of SUD and MH information in patient records and still protecting patient privacy.

For years, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and Maine MH confidentiality law has permitted health care providers to disclose patient information to one another for purposes of care management or coordination of care. But federal 42 CFR Part 2 ("Part 2 Rules") required that SUD treatment records be maintained separately and required a specific patient consent. However, in February 2024, in an effort to reduce the stigma sometimes associated with SUD and to better align with HIPAA rules and other privacy protections, changes were made to the Part 2 Rules. The requirement to keep SUD treatment records covered by the Part 2 Rules separate from other parts of the patient record was eliminated, emphasizing the federal government's focus on improving integration of records for care coordination purposes. Further, and very importantly, this change now also allows providers to obtain a single patient consent for all future uses

and disclosures of SUD information for the purpose of treatment, payment, and health care operations.

Additionally, the updated Part 2 Rules:

- Align with HIPAA for breach notification, enforcement and penalty purposes; and
- Align with HIPAA's Notice of Privacy Practices, requiring, among other things, that the notice include the SUD patient's right to request:
 - an accounting of disclosures and/or
 - restrictions on disclosure to payers when the patient pays out of pocket in full. A similar right to restrict such disclosures has previously existed under HIPAA and Maine's mental health rules.

Given the importance of sharing information to coordinate care, physicians and their staff members are encouraged to become familiar with current MH and SUD confidentiality statutes and rules. Forms, notices and confidentiality policies will need to be updated. Going forward, a best practice may be to seek written consent to disclose all SUD patient information for the purpose of treatment, payment and health care operations at the time of the patient's initial visit. This step will allow for much needed care coordination without impediment, and with the permission and awareness of the patient.

Resources:
Helpful summary "HIPAA Privacy Rule and Sharing Information Related to Mental Health": <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/hipaa-privacy-rule-and-sharing-info-related-to-mental-health.pdf>
Updated 42 CFP Part 2 Final Rule (Feb 2024): <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/02/16/2024-02544/confidentiality-of-substance-use-disorder-sud-patient-records>
HHS Fact Sheet 42 CFR Part 2 (Feb 2024) changes: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/regulatory-initiatives/fact-sheet-42-cfr-part-2-final-rule/index.html>
HHS educational webinar on 42 CFR Part 2 (Feb 2024) changes: www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/hipaa-part-2/index.html

Continued from page 1..New MMA Website to Launch in the Fall

simple and clear for users. Our Center for Quality Improvement (MMA-CQI) is doing incredible work to transform health and health care in Maine through its public health and system initiatives. Their wealth of resources on critical projects like improving care coordination for patients with substance use disorders and quality improvement for perinatal care will be prominent and easy to navigate. Specialty societies are important resources for our members. Those partners who have not had stand-alone websites will now have a home on MMA's site to share their work.

- The new website's member portal boasts the most interactive features of the site. Members can participate in knowledge-sharing to discuss best practices and trends in the Community Forums section. A new classified advertisement board will allow members to list, buy, and sell health care-related items like equipment or even whole

practices! Members can simply update their own profiles with demographics and areas of interest. Those who are looking to network with colleagues or add more patients to their practice can choose to be visible on the member portal and/or public-facing site. MMA envisions colleagues connecting over shared areas of medical interests and building a referral network for their patients.

Our e-newsletter, *Maine Medicine Weekly Update* is also taking on a fresh new look in the fall. The digital newsletter will reflect the website's new style while still delivering the engaging content members have come to depend on weekly! It will be mobile-friendly and integrate high-quality and easy-to-read images.

We look forward to launching our new site with the expressed intention of building a digital community for our members.



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The Perinatal Quality Collaborative for Maine’s (PQC4ME) 2024 Annual Conference “Many Voices, One Team” was a sold-out success!



Event Attendees

The day-long event was held at the Civic Center in Augusta, on June 14th, and brought together health care professionals, researchers, policymakers, and community members to explore critical topics related to perinatal health. The day aimed to boost collaboration across disciplines to improve outcomes for Maine’s birthing individuals and families. PQC4ME is raising awareness of its initiatives and planning to support Maine birthing hospitals with the Perinatal Mental Health Conditions Bundle.



Nell Tharpe, Awardee

PQC4ME honored Nell Tharpe with the Award of Excellence for her significant contributions through the years. Thank you, Nell!



Diaper & Wipe Donations

The Annual Diaper Drive raised 4,226 diapers and pullups and 82 packs of wipes to be distributed among Trinity Jubilee Center, Greater Portland Health, and Kennebec Valley Community Action Program!

Maine Medical Association Center for Quality Improvement Caring for ME Launched Three New BOLIM Learning Modules To access, visit www.qclearninglab.org



Title: Partnering with Community Health Workers to Strengthen Healthcare Teams

Presenters: Ben Hummel, Marin Johnson, MS, Betty St. Hilaire, Allyson MacMillan, Brendan Prast, Zakiya Sheikh

In this module, six speakers from health care systems, a community-based organization, and Maine’s state health department share their collective experience and best practices with participants on what to consider when partnering with a community health worker (CHW)

1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™] available with this module.

Title: Promoting Mental Health and Improving Care for Suicidality in Veterans

Presenters: Catherine Cooper, MSW, LCSW, Barrett Fisher, Ellen Hurd, Michelle Hansen, LCSW, LICSW, LADC, CCS, Kate Marble, LCSW

This module trains health care professionals on how to improve mental health services for veterans, focusing on risk identification, prevention strategies, and effective interventions for suicidal ideation. It emphasizes a compassionate approach tailored to veterans’ unique psychological challenges, ensuring top-tier care for their mental well-being journey.

2.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™] available with this module.

Title: Cultivating Resilience: Harnessing the Power of Positive Childhood Experiences

Presenter: Delvina Miremadi-Baldino, PhD, CAPP

This module explores the profound impact of Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) on mitigating the adverse effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Participants will learn about the importance of nurturing environments, supportive relationships, and positive interactions in fostering resilience and healthy development in children. This program is designed to empower staff with knowledge and practical strategies to enhance their role in promoting child well-being.

1.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)[™] available with this module.

Funding Statement

Funding for these modules has been provided by the Maine Board of Licensure in Medicine.

Joint Providership

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of the Maine Medical Education Trust and MMA-CQI. The Maine Medical Education Trust is accredited by the Maine Medical Association Committee on Continuing Medical Education and Accreditation to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

For More Information: info@mma-cqi.org



THE HUMAN COMPONENT OF CARE: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

By Michael Genetti, CLU ChFc, Baystate Financial

During these past 10 months I’ve had the opportunity to attend, exhibit, speak at, or help sponsor nearly a dozen meetings hosted by organizations such as:

- The Maine Medical Association;
- The Maine Hospital Association;
- The New Hampshire Medical Society;
- The New England College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine;
- The New Hampshire Osteopathic Association;
- The Maine Osteopathic Association, and
- The New England conference of the American Healthcare Leaders Association.

I can assure you no other Financial Advisor showed this level of dedication to learn about your professional concerns.

This was the “first season” of meetings, where addressing the COVID-19 pandemic itself was left behind, as it was all hands on deck, all eyes looking towards the future. The dimension of the challenge facing health care leaders has revealed itself in that: while in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic the health care community moved into what might be described as a “siege mentality,” focusing most of its attention on the present need for treatment. At the same time, there has been a tremendous growth in technological capabilities and complexity, however, the capabilities of the human being [both patient and caregiver] to interact with these systems deteriorated because of multifactor stresses both from within and outside the patient/caregiver/administrative environment.

As data from the AMA’s Mini Z Burnout survey and from the recent U.S. Surgeon General’s Report: *Addressing Healthcare Worker Burnout* is analyzed, it becomes apparent that moving forward, the health and effectiveness of the entire health care system rests upon the shoulders of a healthy and fully engaged population of clinicians, administrators, and support staff. Never has it been more incumbent upon health care leaders to not only create a working environment which allows the human capability for care to flourish, but also to provide the non-clinical, non-operational, support health care workers need to find meaning, purpose, and the confidence that their well-being [physical, emotional, financial] is a priority at their respective institutions.

Leaders at health care organizations cannot solve these problems alone; therefore, they will need to marshal a wider range of available resources to support their own and their employees “self-care” efforts. Surveys done by both the Society of Human Resource Management and the employee benefit industry point to financial stress as a major stressor brought into the workplace. With system resources already stretched to the limit, leaders need to seek outside resources to complement those available within their systems.

Health care systems are just now allocating personnel and institutional resources to develop employee wellness initiatives. Baystate Financial, with more than a decade long commitment to the financial health of members of the health care community, is one organization which can provide individuals and health care systems access to the financial education, and planning resources to support the financial health of those individuals dedicated to serving the well-being needs of Maine’s diverse population.

The views expressed here are those of Michael Genetti. Michael Genetti views are not necessarily those of Baystate Financial.

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¹Addressing Health Worker Burnout: The U.S. Surgeon General’s Advisory on Building a Thriving Health Workforce. 2022

²Assessment of Clinician Burnout Construct a Process to Measure Burnout and Improve Well-Being. www.AMA.org. June 2024

³Society for Human Resource Management: Optimizing for Employee Well-Being: A Holistic Approach for HR Leader. <https://www.shrm.org>, June 2024 CRN202707-679066

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