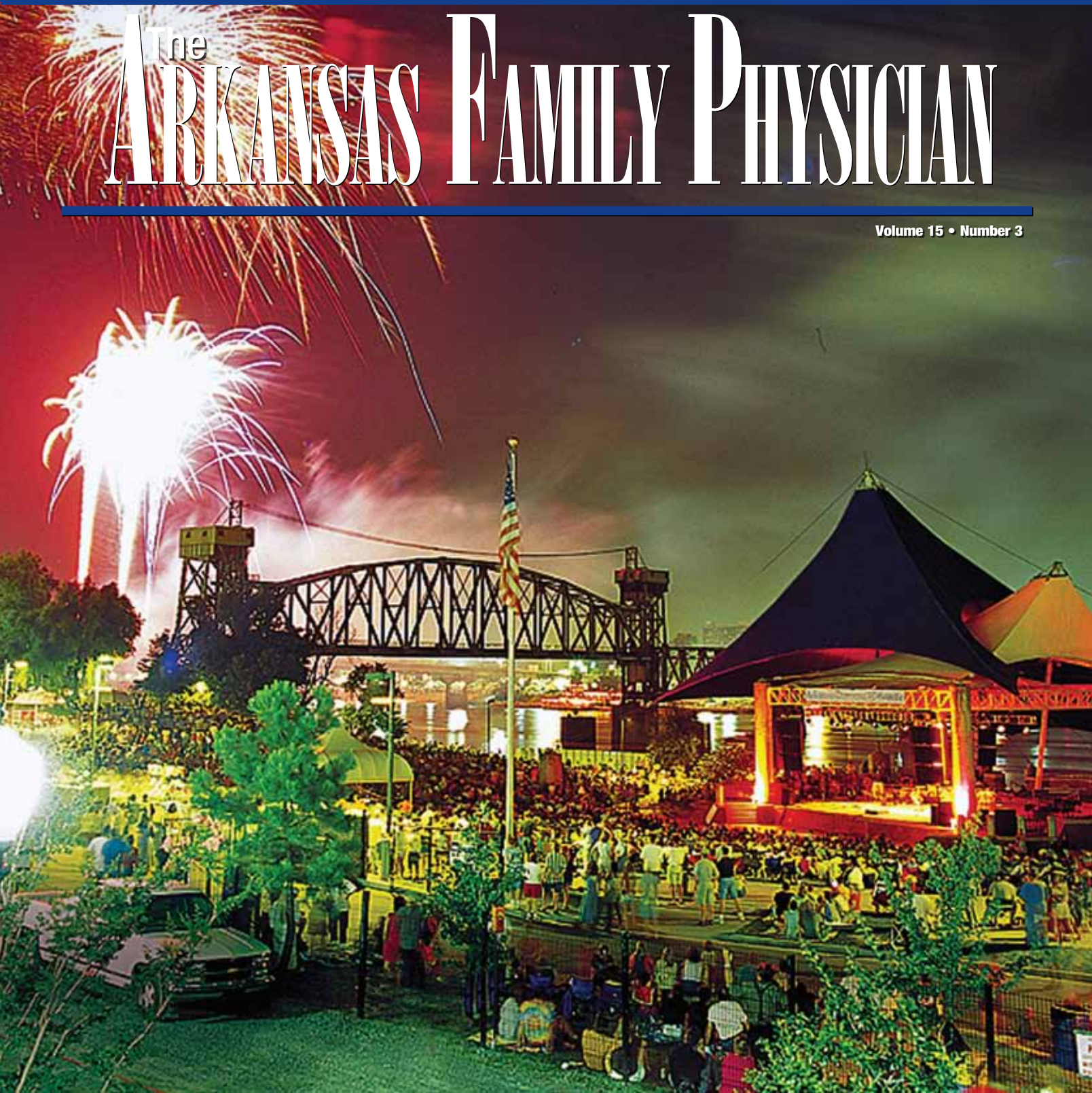


Slate of AR AFP Officers and Directors to be Voted Upon

The ARKANSAS FAMILY PHYSICIAN

Volume 15 • Number 3



AAFP
STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

**64th Annual Scientific Assembly
July 20-22 Little Rock, Arkansas**

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The Arkansas Family Physician is the official magazine of the Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians

Managing Editor
Carla Coleman

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Correspondence, articles, or inquiries should be directed to:
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Edition 56

Dear Academy Member,

It's that time of year again and with the Annual Assembly Program having only been mailed two days ago, we are already receiving registrations! We hope this is an indication that our turnout will be as much or better than last year!

We hope you too will make our Annual Meeting a priority this summer. July 20, 21 and 22 at the Doubletree in downtown Little Rock – a great hotel, excellent meeting facilities and in the RiverMarket District to enjoy all of the restaurants, sightseeing and tours of the historic areas of our city.

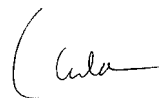
Our outstanding program always draws Family Doctors and other specialties as well to our meeting. The topics are always chosen based on evaluations and suggestions from the previous year. This year's program is no exception. An outstanding program with nationally and state recognized speakers will present topics offering up to 15.50 AAFP Prescribed (or formal course) hours. The meeting will begin on Wednesday, July 20 at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 11:00 a.m. Friday, July 22. The official program is included in this publication along with hotel and registration information.

This Journal also includes information regarding our membership. Again this year we saw a large number of members dropped from the roles for failure to pay 2011 dues. Our membership totals now stand at 863 Active: 82 Life: 108 Resident: 92 Students: and 5 Supporting Members. If your membership was dropped for failure to pay dues, you simply need to remit your dues to the American AAFP for reinstatement. We are your only professional organization that works on your behalf exclusively – monitoring state and national legislation; offering CME at reduced fees: providing information for your practice: assisting with practice opportunities and working for you in any way possible.

Also included in this Journal is an update on our Foundation's Patient Centered Medical Home Project. Recipients of the three grants will be named as soon as contracts are finalized!

We look forward to seeing you July 20-22 in Little Rock for Arkansas' largest medical meeting with CME planned specifically for Family Physicians! Call if you have any questions at 501-223-2272 or 1-800-592-1093.

Respectfully,



Carla Coleman
Executive Vice President



COVER IMAGE:

64TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC
ASSEMBLY

JULY 20-22 LITTLE ROCK,
ARKANSAS

Dr. Jeff Mayfield to be Installed AR AFP President July 21



Dr. Jeff Mayfield

Dr. Jeffrey Mayfield of Bryant will be installed as the 64th President of the Arkansas AFP on Thursday evening, July 21 in the Doubletree Hotel Ballroom during the Annual Scientific Assembly.

Dr. Mayfield joined the AR AFP Board of Directors in 1993 and has served as an officer for four years.

A native of Sheridan, he completed his B.S. degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and his M.D.

degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 1993 followed by a residency in Family Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Department of Family and Preventive Medicine where he served as Chief Resident. He practices at Baptist Health Family Clinic in Bryant where he just completed his fifteenth year in practice.

Dr. Mayfield serves as a Preceptor for medical students: is a member of

First Baptist Church in Bryant where he serves as a Deacon and also serves on the Executive Committee of Southwest Christian Academy Booster Club.

He and his wife, Susan are the parents of three children, Madison, Mallory and Matthew.

AR AFP Annual Membership Meeting Slate of Officers and Directors to be Voted Upon

At the annual membership meeting of the AR AFP to be held at approximately Noon on Wednesday, July 20 the following slate of officers and directors will be voted upon as presented by the Nominating Committee.

President Elect - Lonnie Robinson, M.D., Mountain Home
Vice President Barry Pierce, M.D., Mountain View
Secretary Dan Knight, M.D., Little Rock

Treasurer Bryan McDonnell, M.D., Arkadelphia
Delegate - John Alexander, Jr., M.D., Magnolia
Alternate Delegate Rodney Mark Dixon, M.D., El Dorado
Directors: James Chambliss, M.D., Magnolia
Jason Lofton, M.D., DeQueen
Edward Andy Gresham, M.D., Crossett

The Resident and Student Representatives will be announced at a later date.



Julie was diagnosed with cancer 89 masterpieces ago.

With 5 locations in Arkansas, Arkansas Oncology is committed to helping patients in The Natural State win the battle against cancer. Together, our physicians have over 35 years experience treating cancer and are united with US Oncology, combining the knowledge of America's largest cancer fighting organization with expert local cancer care.

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Thomas Sneed, M.D.
Neeraj Bharany, M.D.
Omer Khalil, M.D.
Ayub Mazher, M.D.



www.ArkansasCancerCenters.com

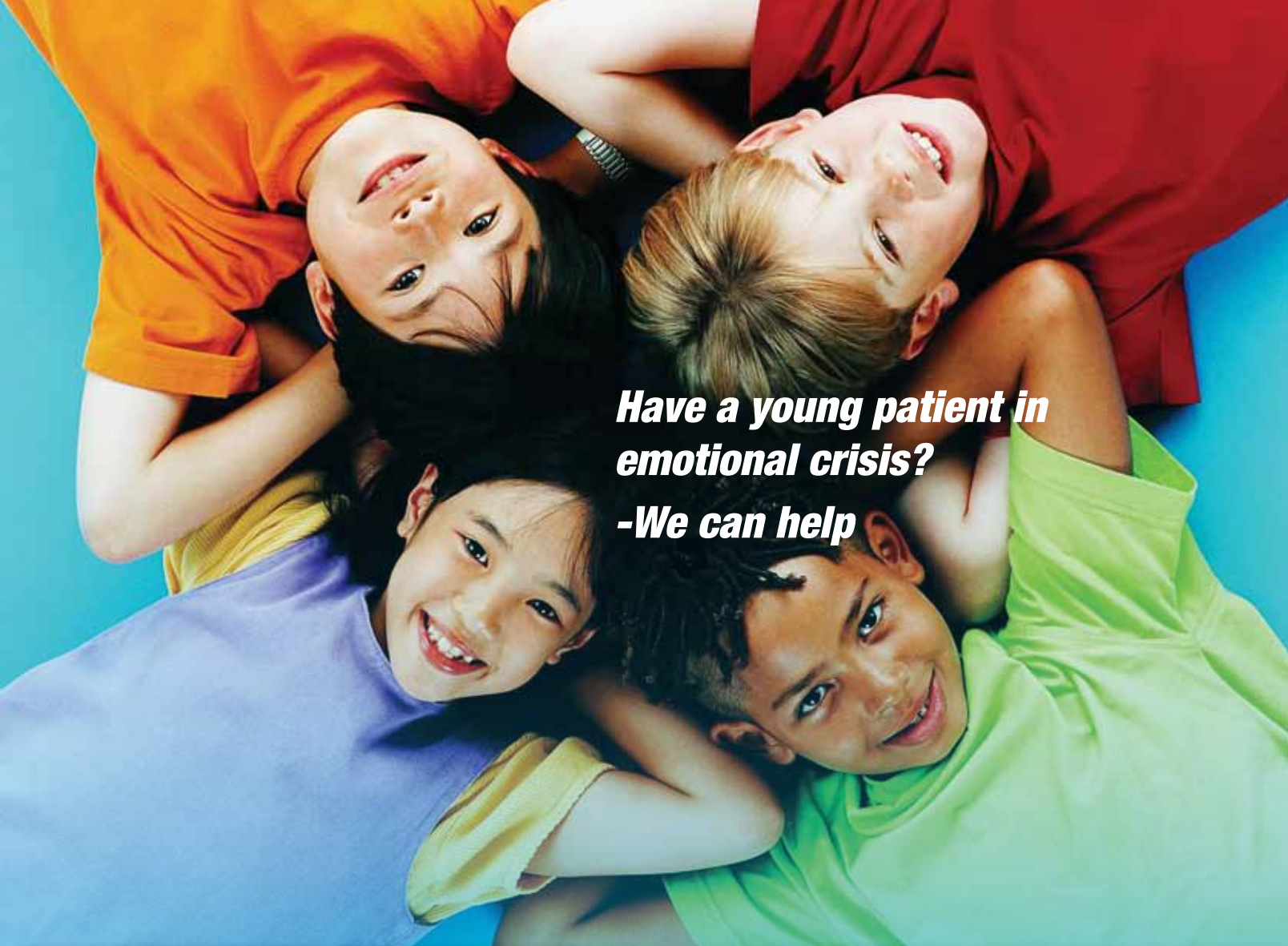
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Membership News

Over 70 Arkansas Chapter members lost their membership in the AAFP and AR AFP May 6 due to non payment of 2011 dues.

We are working with the American Academy to see that each member is reinstated. If you are a member that failed to pay your 2011 dues and your membership lapsed, please contact the AAFP at 1-800-274-2237 to make your payment which can be paid by credit card. If you do not know what is due, please call either the AAFP at the number above or the Arkansas Chapter at 1-800-592-1093 or 501-223-2272 or email us at arafp@sbcglobal.net and we can provide you with the information needed to be reinstated.

REMINDER: For Family Medicine Residents completing programs in

2011, 50% of the 2012 AAFP Active membership dues and 50% of the Arkansas AFP dues will be discounted for the first full year of membership in the AAFP. Residents who graduate between January 1 and July 31, 2011 received an invoice from the AAFP in April. Resident members who graduate between August 1 and December 31, 2011 will receive an invoice in October, 2011.

Why send an invoice early??? To encourage transitioning residents to continue membership in the AAFP by paying dues early before completing the residency. Research data suggests that their decision regarding continued membership in the AAFP is influenced significantly while still in residency with the support of their residency directors and faculty.

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Welcome

OrthoArkansas is excited to welcome Jason E. Tullis, M.D. to our staff.



Jason E. Tullis, M.D.

Born and raised on the central and southern coasts of California, Dr. Jason Tullis moved around before finding his home in Arkansas. After graduating from Santa Clara University with a degree in English, he enrolled in the Creighton School of Medicine in Omaha, Nebraska. His combined interests in neurologic sciences and surgery brought him to the University of Mississippi Medical Center for his neurosurgery residency. It was there that he developed interests in brain tumors, pituitary tumors, complex spinal surgery, neuro trauma, peripheral nerve injury, hydrocephalus, implantation of spinal devices.

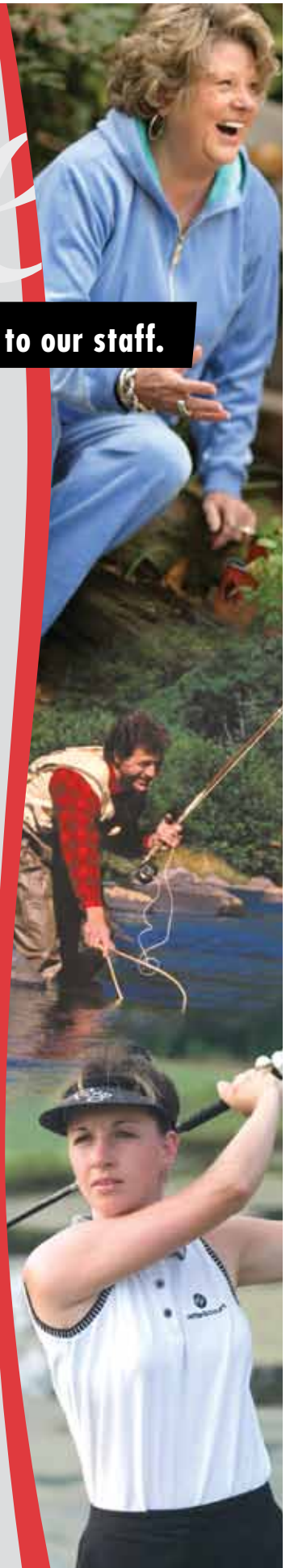
After practicing for four years in a neurosurgery practice, Dr. Tullis joined OrthoArkansas. He looks forward to continuing the long history of compassionate care that this practice has been known for. Dr. Tullis strives to make his patients' lives better through either surgical or non-surgical treatment of conditions of the spine and nervous system.

Dr. Tullis spends time reviewing recent neurosurgical literature and contributes to many publications himself. In his off time, Dr. Tullis enjoys spending time with his family and enjoying the outdoors.

**10301 Kanis Road
Little Rock, AR 72205
501.604.6900**

**4104 Richards Road
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www.OrthoArkansas.com



E Prescribing Alert!!

Be Aware of eRX Program criteria to avoid penalties

Providers enrolled in CMS's electronic prescribing, or eRx, incentive program will start being penalized for not e-prescribing if codes are not submitted by June 30 of this year!

There is also a bonus for physicians who do meet the deadline. According

to an article in MLN Matters, physicians must:

- Submit 10 Medicare claims to avoid a 2012 e-prescribing penalty and
- Submit 25 Medicare claims to earn a 2011 incentive and avoid a penalty in 2013.

Additionally, physicians may use a qualified electronic health record or EHR or a registry to submit data to qualify for the 2011 incentive payment and avoid the 2013 penalty.

The agency must receive the information from physicians by June 30, 2011 to determine which physicians will incur the penalty beginning January 1, 2012.

CMS will penalize physicians who are not deemed e-prescribers by reducing Medicare payments by:

- 1 percent in 2012
- 1.5 percent in 2013
- 2 percent in 2014

Physicians who successfully participate in the eRx program by submitting 25 claims within the calendar year via a registry or HER – but who do not submit 10 claims with the G8553 code before June 30 – will be subject to a penalty in 2012 but may still be eligible for the 2012 eRx incentive.

You may find these links helpful to guide you and answer any questions about the e-prescribing program:

- E-Prescribing Program: How to get started : http://www.cms.gov/ERxIncentive/03_How_To_Get_Started.asp#topofpage
- Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Payment Adjustment Information http://www.cms.gov/ERxIncentive/20_Payment_Adjustment_Information.asp#topofpage
- 2011 Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Incentive Program Update – Future Payment Adjustments <http://www.cms.gov/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/SE1107.pdf>
- Medicare's Practical Guide to the Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Incentive Program <http://www.cms.gov/partnerships/downloads/111399-P.pdf>
- E-Prescribing Readiness <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/membership/initiatives/pcmh/healthit/connect/erx0.html>



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THE ARKANSAS NEUROSCIENCE INSTITUTE - EXPERT CARE FOR FUNCTIONAL/MOVEMENT DISORDERS



Kathy T. Chenault, M.D.
Ali F. Krisht, M.D., FACS
Ali I. Raja, M.D.

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The Functional/
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Clinic treats:

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- Dyskinesia
- Essential Tremor
Disorder
- Parkinson's Disease
- Seizures

Functional and movement disorders – such as Parkinson's and Essential Tremor Disorder – can take a toll on a person's everyday life and make routine activities difficult. Fortunately, the **Functional/Movement Disorders Clinic** at the **Arkansas Neuroscience Institute at St. Vincent** offers innovative treatment plans that can help improve your patients' quality of life.

Our **functional/movement specialists** evaluate each patient's gait, balance and coordination to develop an individualized treatment plan to meet his or her unique needs. With the state's leading specialists available in a single location, we make it possible for patients to receive well-rounded treatment in one convenient setting.

The Arkansas Neuroscience Institute is a resource dedicated to serving you *and* your patients. For referrals, call 501-552-6400 today.

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ARKANSAS
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Arkansas News

The Arkansas Primary Care Association will hold a summit on Integrated Health Care Delivery June 14-15 at the Embassy Suites in Little Rock. Topics included will be:

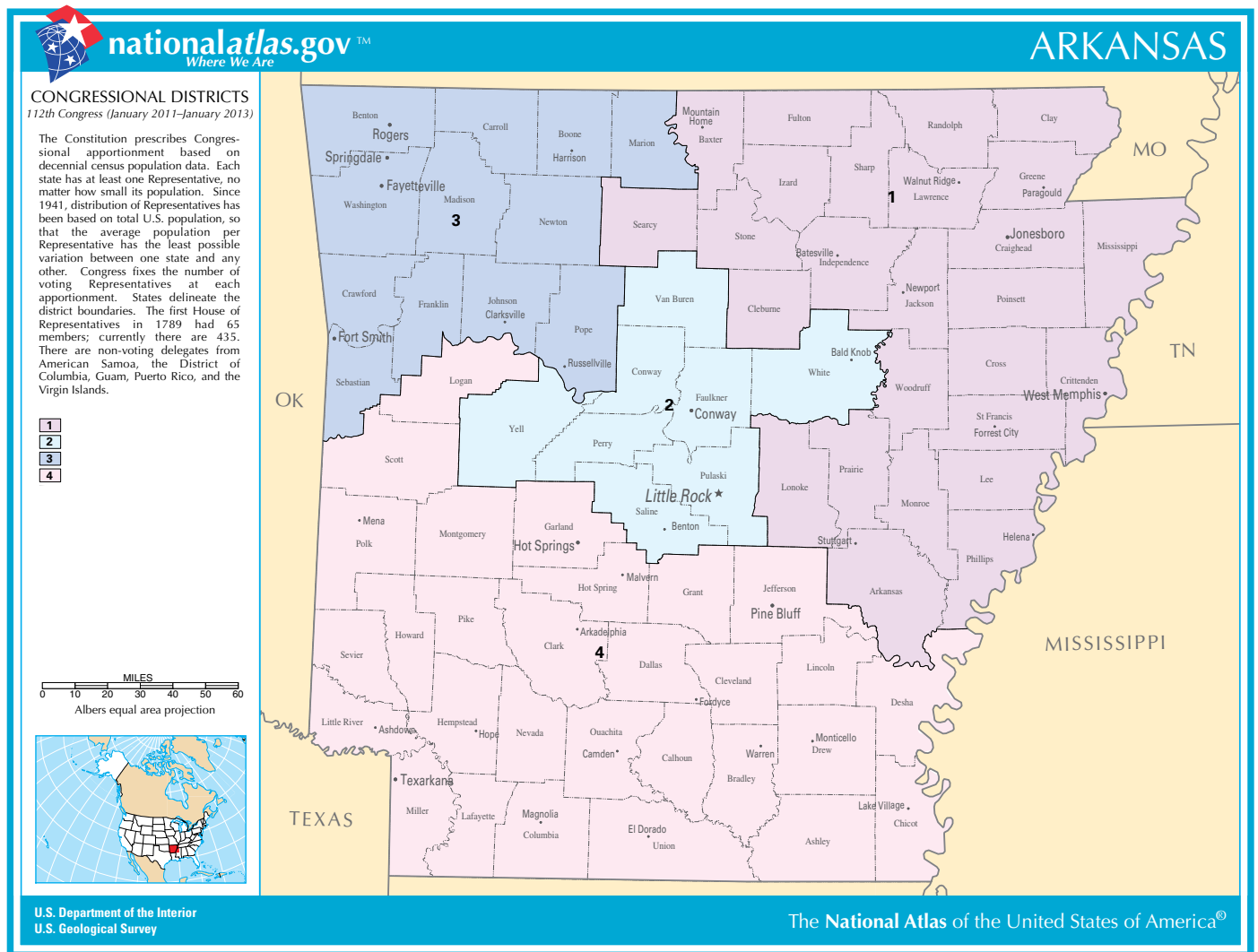
- Medicaid Transformation/ Payment Reform
- Integrated Health Care Delivery and Workforce
- Health Literacy/Cultural Diversity
- Partnerships /Medical Homes/ ACOs
- Health Information Technology/ Health Information Exchange
- Insurance Expansion/Insurance Exchange

For more information on registration, contact 501-374-9734.

Arkansas First State to Adopt New Congressional Districts

As a result of the 2010 Federal Census, all fifty states were required to redraw the boundaries of their congressional districts to correspond with new population numbers. During the legislative session, there were several maps showing different potential lines of Arkansas' four congressional districts with several long meetings at which each of these were vetted. Although there were many maps proposed, the one that was eventually chosen was HB1836 by Representative Clark Hall of Marvell. By the Governor signing this bill into law on April 14 as Act 1242, Arkansas became the first state in the country to have finalized its congressional redistricting.

First district includes the counties of Searcy, Baxter, Fulton, Izard, Stone, Cleburne, Sharp, Independence, Randolph, Lawrence, Jackson, Clay, Greene, Craighead, Poinsett, Mississippi, Cross, Woodruff, Crittenden, St. Francis, Lee, Phillips, Desha, Chicot, Lincoln, Arkansas, Lonoke, Prairie, Monroe: the Second District consists of the counties of: Van Buren, Conway, Faulkner, White, Perry, Saline, Pulaski, Garland, Hot Spring, Grant, Jefferson, Clark, Dallas, Cleveland, Ouachita, Calhoun, Bradley, Drew, Union, Ashley, Columbia, Lafayette, Miller, Little River, Sevier, Howard, Pike, Nevada, Hempstead, Polk, Montgomery, Scott, Logan, Sebastian, Franklin, part of Crawford, Johnson, Newton, Madison and Yell: the Third District consists of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Boone, Marion, Pope and part of Crawford.



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The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is giving incentive payments to eligible professionals, hospitals, and critical access hospitals that demonstrate meaningful use of certified electronic health record (EHR) technology.

Incentive payments will include:

- Up to \$44,000 for eligible professionals in the Medicare EHR Incentive Program
- Up to \$63,750 for eligible professionals in the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program
- A base payment of \$2 million for eligible hospitals and critical access hospitals, depending on certain factors

Get started early! To maximize your Medicare EHR incentive payment you need to begin participating in 2011 or 2012; Medicaid EHR incentive payments are also highest in the first year of participation.

Registration for the EHR Incentive Programs is open now, so register TODAY to receive your maximum incentive.

For more information and to register, visit:

www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/

For additional resources and support in adopting certified EHR technology, visit the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC):

www.HealthIT.gov



ARKANSAS ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS 64th ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY JULY 20-22, 2011

DOUBLETREE HOTEL, LITTLE ROCK

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM AND EVENTS

Wednesday, July 20

Doubletree Hotel Grand Ballroom

7:30 a.m. **Registration – Ballroom Foyer
Exhibits Open**

8:30 a.m. **Presentation of the Colors
and Welcoming Remarks**

8:40 a.m. ***“Health Care Reform”*
Greg Martin**
State Government Affairs Manager
American Academy of Family Physicians
Washington, D.C.



9:30 a.m. ***“The Abnormal CBC”*
Brad Patrick Baltz, M.D.**
Hematologist/Oncologist
Hematology Oncology Services of AR
Little Rock, Arkansas



10:15 a.m. **Break / Visit Exhibits**

10:45 a.m. ***“Supporting Appropriate Immunizations
Against the Age Spectrum”*
Amy Middleman, M.D.**
Director, Adolescent/Young Adult Immunization
Center for Vaccine Awareness & Research,
Associate Professor of Pediatrics
Baylor College of Medicine
Houston, Texas



11:45 a.m. **Election of Officers**

12:00 p.m. **Physician Lunch**
Palisades Room, Riverside E & W

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM AND EVENTS

Wednesday, July 20

Doubletree Hotel Grand Ballroom

1:15 p.m.

“HIV Update 2011”

Robert Bradsher, M.D.

Richard V. Ebert Professor of Medicine
Division Director, Infectious Diseases
Department of Infectious Disease
UAMS, Little Rock, Arkansas



1:45 p.m.

“Cervical Cancer”

Pamela JB Stone, M.D., FACOG

Assistant Professor
Division of Gynecologic Oncology
UAMS, Little Rock, Arkansas



2:30 p.m.

Break - Visit Exhibits

3:00 p.m.

“GI for the Family Doctor”

Angelo Coppola, M.D.

Gastroenterologist
Little Rock Diagnostic Clinic
Little Rock, Arkansas



3:45 p.m.

***“Nothing to Sneeze About –
Allergies in the 21st Century”***

Jim Mark Ingram, M.D.

Private Practice,
Little Rock Allergy & Asthma Clinic
Clinical Instructor in Pediatrics, UAMS
Little Rock, Arkansas



ARKANSAS ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS 64th ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY JULY 20-22, 2010

DOUBLETREE HOTEL, LITTLE ROCK

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM AND EVENTS

Thursday, July 21

Doubletree Hotel Grand Ballroom

7:30 a.m. **Registration, Snacks & Coffee, Exhibits Open**
Ballroom/Exhibit Area

7:45 a.m. **Breakfast with the Exhibitors**

8:30 a.m. ***“Adolescent Psychiatric Issues”***
Juan Castro Cordoba, M.D.
Assistant Professor
Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist
Div. of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
Department of Psychiatry, UAMS
Little Rock, Arkansas



9:15 a.m. ***“Common Infections in Pediatrics”***
James S. Magee, M.D.
Associate Professor of Pediatrics
UAMS & AR Children's Hospital
Little Rock, Arkansas



9:30 a.m. **Break - Visit Exhibits**

10:30 a.m. ***“Ocular Emergencies”***
Tracy Clement Baltz, M.D.
Private Practice, Ophthalmology
Little Rock Eye Clinic
Little Rock, Arkansas



11:15 a.m. ***“Eyelid Lesions and Rashes”***
Hayden Franks, M.D.
Dermatology Group of Arkansas
Assistant Clinical Professor
Department of Dermatology, UAMS
Little Rock, Arkansas



12:00 noon **Buffet Lunch – Palisades & Riverside**

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM AND EVENTS

Thursday, July 21

Doubletree Hotel Grand Ballroom

1:15 p.m.

“Hot Summer Topics: Drug Therapy Updates”

Dosha Cummins, PharmD, BCPS

Associate Professor, Pharmacy Practice &
Family and Community Medicine

UAMS, AHEC NE
Jonesboro, Arkansas



2:00 p.m.

Final Break with Exhibitors

2:30 p.m.

AAFP CHAPTER LECTURE SERIES –

“Cardiac Testing”

Speaker To be Announced

This activity is supported by an educational grant
to the AAFP from Astellas.

3:30 p.m.

“10 Things I Learned from FP Audio This Year”

Rick Kellerman, M.D.

Chair, Department of Family Medicine
University of Kansas School of Medicine
Past President, American Academy of
Family Physicians, Wichita, Kansas



**6:30 p.m. – Installation of Officers Banquet & Dance
& Silent Auction**

Special AAFP Guest: Rick Kellerman, M.D., FAAFP
American Academy of Family Physicians

Entertainment by: *Paradox*
featuring guest vocalist *Mary Kai*

Compliments of:
Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield and Baptist Health

ARKANSAS ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS 64th ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY JULY 20-22, 2011

DOUBLETREE HOTEL, LITTLE ROCK

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM AND EVENTS

Friday, July 22

Doubletree Hotel Grand Ballroom

7:30 a.m.

**Breakfast Meeting –
Courtesy of Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care
“Arkansas Medical Legislation”**

Scott Smith, J.D.
Director, Governmental Affairs
Arkansas Medical Society
Little Rock, Arkansas



8:45 a.m.

“American AFP Issues of Interest”

Rick Kellerman, M.D.
Chair, Department of Family Medicine
University of Kansas School of Medicine
Past President, American Academy of
Family Physicians, Wichita, Kansas



9:30 a.m.

“Venous Stasis Ulcers”

Jason Lofton, M.D.
Family Physician
Private Practice
DeQueen, Arkansas



10:15 a.m.

“Snakes, Spiders, and Tick Bites”

Angela Driskill, M.D.
Family Physician, Baptist Health Wound &
Hyperbaric Center
North Little Rock, Arkansas



11:00 a.m.

ADJOURN

An Organizational Meeting of the Board will follow in the Palisades Room at the conclusion of the Scientific Assembly. All Members of the Board should attend!

REGISTRATION & GENERAL INFORMATION

SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY FEES

Prior to July 8

(Registration includes all events & meals)

Academy Active & Affiliate Members.....	\$425.00
Non-Members (including Other Health Professionals).....	\$475.00
Inactive/Life Members.....	\$125.00
Resident Physician Members.....	\$75.00
Spouse/Guest Fee (Installation Banquet included).....	\$75.00
Additional Installation Banquet Ticket.....	\$45.00
Student Members.....	No Charge
Optional Foundation Contribution (suggested).....	\$25.00

Add \$100.00 to each fee if registering after July 8

VISA & MASTERCARD are accepted for Registration. You may register by phone if using a Credit Card. Please remember our instate toll free number: 1-800-592-1093.

Registration Fee includes admittance to all functions and social events. Please wear your name tag at all times for admittance.

Spouse/Guest Registration & Activities Fees The registration fee of \$75.00 includes admission to all lectures, exhibits, the PreConference Reception Tuesday evening, Exhibitor's Luncheon Thursday, the Installation of Officers Banquet on Thursday evening and the Breakfast Meeting on Friday. ***Pre-registration is necessary.***

Cancellations prior to July 15, 2011 will be refunded less \$50.00 by written request.

IRS Tax Information Registration fees for this meeting may count as a business deduction, not as a charitable contribution.

Registration & General Information (Cont'd):

Special Needs For The Disabled

If you have a disability and require special accommodations (special meals included) in order to fully participate in this activity, please contact the Arkansas Academy of Family Physicians office prior to the convention so that appropriate accommodations may be made.

Telephone Service

The convention telephone service will be established at the Academy's registration desk at the Doubletree Hotel. Registration will be inside the Ballrooms beginning Tuesday, July 19 and will be available through Friday, July 22. The number is 501-690-2250 for these days only!!!!

Room Reservations

The Doubletree's special rate is \$131.00 Single: Double: King or King Sofa. Suites are available for \$151.00 and rooms are also available on the Concierge/Executive Level. To make your reservation, call the Doubletree at 501-372-4371 and specify you are with the Ar. Academy of Family Physicians Group, Group Code: ARP, for our special block rate or go to our web page at: http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/L/LITMBDT-ARP-20110718/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG and make your room reservation online. The deadline for making reservations for our block is the earlier of June 27 or when the room block is filled. You are urged to obtain your room as soon as possible.

Convention Site Information

All Scientific programs, exhibits and social events will be held at the Doubletree Hotel Ballroom Level located at 424 W. Markham Street, Little Rock, AR.

Parking

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Welcome Reception

A welcome reception will be held Tuesday evening, July 19 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Join us in the Palisades Room when you arrive, bring your family and meet your colleagues.

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All milk contains a unique combination of nutrients important for growth and development - including three of the five "nutrients of concern" for which children have inadequate intakes. And, flavored milk accounts for less than 3.5% of added sugar intake in children ages 6-12 and less than 2% in teens.

5 Reasons Why Flavored Milk Matters

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Children who drink flavored milk meet more of their nutrient needs; do not consume more added sugar, fat or calories; and are not heavier than non-milk drinkers.

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Low-fat chocolate milk is the most popular milk choice in schools and kids drink less milk (and get fewer nutrients) if it's taken away.

These health and nutrition organizations support 3-Every-Day™ of Dairy, a science-based nutrition education program encouraging Americans to consume the recommended three daily servings of nutrient-rich low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products to improve overall health.



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* DAILY RECOMMENDATIONS - 3 cups of low-fat or fat-free milk or equivalent milk products for those 9 years of age and older and 2 cups of low-fat and fat-free milk or equivalent milk products for children 2-8 years old.

Using Reminder/Recall to Improve Immunization Rates in Arkansas

By Dennis Z. Kuo, MD, MHS, and J. Gary Wheeler, MD, MPS

Immunizations are one of the top ten public health achievements of the 20th century identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and one of the most cost-effective. Vaccine-preventable diseases result in increased numbers of doctor visits, hospitalizations and lost parental work time. Every \$1 spent on childhood immunization saves \$16.50, and for the basic vaccine series, society saves \$9.9 billion in direct health care costs; 33,000 lives are saved; and 14 million cases of disease are prevented.¹ Healthy People (HP) 2010 sets 80% as the goal for overall immunization rates and 90% for individual vaccines. However, according to the 2010 National Immunization Survey, in 2008-09 just 66% of 2-year-olds in Arkansas completed their routinely recommended childhood vaccinations, with individual vaccine rates ranging between 73% and 91%. Under-immunized children lead to outbreaks of disease that have been well documented in the U.S. Additionally, immunization rates currently fall below the HP 2010 goals for racial/ethnic minorities, people with limited education, the impoverished and the uninsured, preschoolers, and residents of inner-city urban, rural and border areas.

The logistical challenges to immunizations are numerous, including the number of vaccines now recommended, the patchwork financing system in the United States, and sensationalist media coverage of alleged adverse effects of immunizations. The number of childhood diseases protected against by routine immunizations

has risen from seven in 1985 to 16 in 2010, comprising up to 52 vaccine doses.² Combination vaccines do reduce the number of actual injections, but the time and logistical demands on the office staff have risen considerably. Erratic vaccine supplies have led to shortages of at least seven vaccines in the last 10 years that resulted in significant cohorts of children that were not fully immunized.³ Vaccines are often given at well-child visits, yet many children in Arkansas do not receive timely well-child visits. In 2009, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), just 38% of eligible children (ages 0 to 21) received a Medicaid-required Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) screen.

The cost of immunization has become significant for many practices. The total approximate cost of immunizing boys is now \$1,105, and girls \$1,407, which is a six-fold increase since 1995. This is due in part to the newer vaccines being significantly more expensive. Vaccine purchasing costs can now account for 20% of a pediatric practice's expenses.⁴ The cost to a practice includes not only the cost of acquisition, but also the cost of storage, administration and counseling. While the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that immunization reimbursement (excluding administration fee) be 17% to 28% above the purchase price, most vaccines are reimbursed at lower rates, with considerable variation among physicians.⁵ The federally

funded Vaccines For Children (VFC) program, instituted in 1994, now purchases slightly more than half of all pediatric vaccine doses and eliminates cost for eligible children. However, many states, including Arkansas, have different acquisition mechanisms, storage requirements and administration requirements for VFC-sourced vaccines compared to those acquired privately, placing an additional administrative burden on practices. A recent study of 600 physicians found that 49% reported delaying vaccine purchases for financial reasons in the prior three years, and 11% of physicians (including 21% of family physicians) seriously considered discontinuing immunizations to children.⁶ This impact may be acutely felt in rural areas, including many parts of Arkansas, where children are predominantly served by family physicians.

Finally, there have been recent well-publicized incidents of alleged vaccine reactions, including autism, which have also generated numerous legal challenges. Despite overwhelming scientific evidence supporting the safety and efficacy of vaccines, some families are demanding alternate vaccine schedules, selected or complete refusals, and non-medical exemptions from school requirements.⁷ Many physicians now devote significant time and resources to counseling even for families who do accept vaccines. In Arkansas, the introduction of the

continued on page 24



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philosophical exemption in 2003 resulted in the doubling of school immunization exemptions within two years, with 95% of exemptions attributed to non-medical reasons, and geographic clustering of exemptions.⁸ The number is now five times higher than in 2002-2003, according to the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH). This does not include those who are in home school settings and are not required to vaccinate.

Studies support the role of the physician as an enhancing force in increasing rates of vaccination.⁹ The U.S. Task Force on Community Prevention Services, the CDC, the National Vaccine Advisory Committee and the AAP recommend that providers implement reminder/recall (RR) systems to improve childhood vaccination coverage rates. All methods of patient RR increase immunization rates by 5% to 20%, with telephone reminders being more effective than mailed reminders and multiple reminders being more effective than single reminders.¹⁰ However, less than 15% to 20% of private providers currently use RR.¹¹

Cited barriers to the adoption of RR messages include lack of time to learn the system, lack of staff and funding, and incomplete records due to multiple vaccine providers. The latter is a problem readily addressed by immunization registries such as the Arkansas Immunization Network for Children (INC). Once a child is entered into the system at birth, registered users (including physician offices, schools and childcare facilities) can access his/her current age and vaccine status, including both recommended and overdue vaccination dates. Currently, there are few private practice providers using the INC to recall patients. The ADH recently successfully tested

the recall system to send booster reminders to parents during the recent H1N1 outbreak.

Efforts to improve RR as part of vaccination practice in Arkansas are now underway. Arkansas Children's Hospital is beginning to use RR activities to target children between 1 and 2 years old who have the highest rates of undervaccination. The Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care, in collaboration with the ADH, has received funding from the CDC to study recall procedures that will increase vaccination rates for children under 2 years old. The research design will compare office-based recall procedures to a centralized recall center and use multiple communication methods (e.g. telephone, cell phone, texts and Facebook).

As health information technology is utilized by more Arkansas physicians, incorporating INC data can lead to more vaccinated Arkansans. For the highest possible rates to occur, it is necessary for physicians, health care providers and the health insurance industry to adopt systematic initiatives that embrace preventive health within the social context of our patients.

Dennis Z. Kuo, MD, MHS, is a general pediatrician, health services researcher and assistant professor of pediatrics at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

J. Gary Wheeler, MD, MPS, is associate medical director for quality at the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care and professor of pediatrics at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

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PCMH Grant Program Update

The grant process for the Patient Centered Medical Home Project by the AR AFP Foundation through the Blue and You Foundation has been finalized.

In the next few days, letters will be mailed to the five finalists

with a contract to sign regarding responsibilities of receiving one of the three grants being provided. After these contracts are returned by the applicants and reviewed, the three grant recipients will be contacted and will be recognized at the Academy's

Annual Scientific Assembly Installation Banquet on July 21 at the Doubletree Hotel. A series of meetings will be held on or about the same time with the recipients and TransformMED.

We look forward to announcing our recipients!

Arkansas State Medical Board Streamlines Licensure Process

The Arkansas State Medical Board is taking steps to streamline the physician licensure process and reduce the time from receipt of an application to approval of the license.

The Board has adopted several new processes that will allow applicants for licenses to submit their information in a variety of methods not previously qualified as acceptable.

Applicants will continue to be subject to a complete audit but it will be a much

faster review reducing the licensure process by several weeks in most cases.

The licensing staff will continue to review existing internal requirements as well as the physician's responsibilities in the license application process and how each can be tailored toward further eliminating the duplication of effort and reduction of turn around time in the license and Centralized Credentials Verification System (CCVS) process.

Also an online license renewal

process is in the works as well as license application process utilizing electronic signatures.

These improvements are in the early stages of development and once adopted will further reduce the application process.

The biggest problem encountered by the licensure and CCVS divisions continues to be the submission of incomplete information in the application process.

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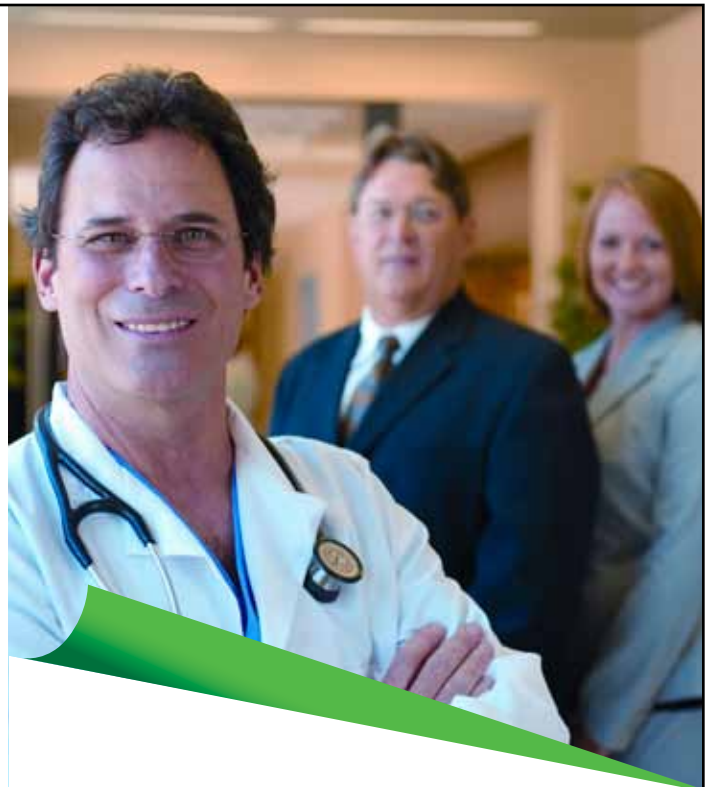
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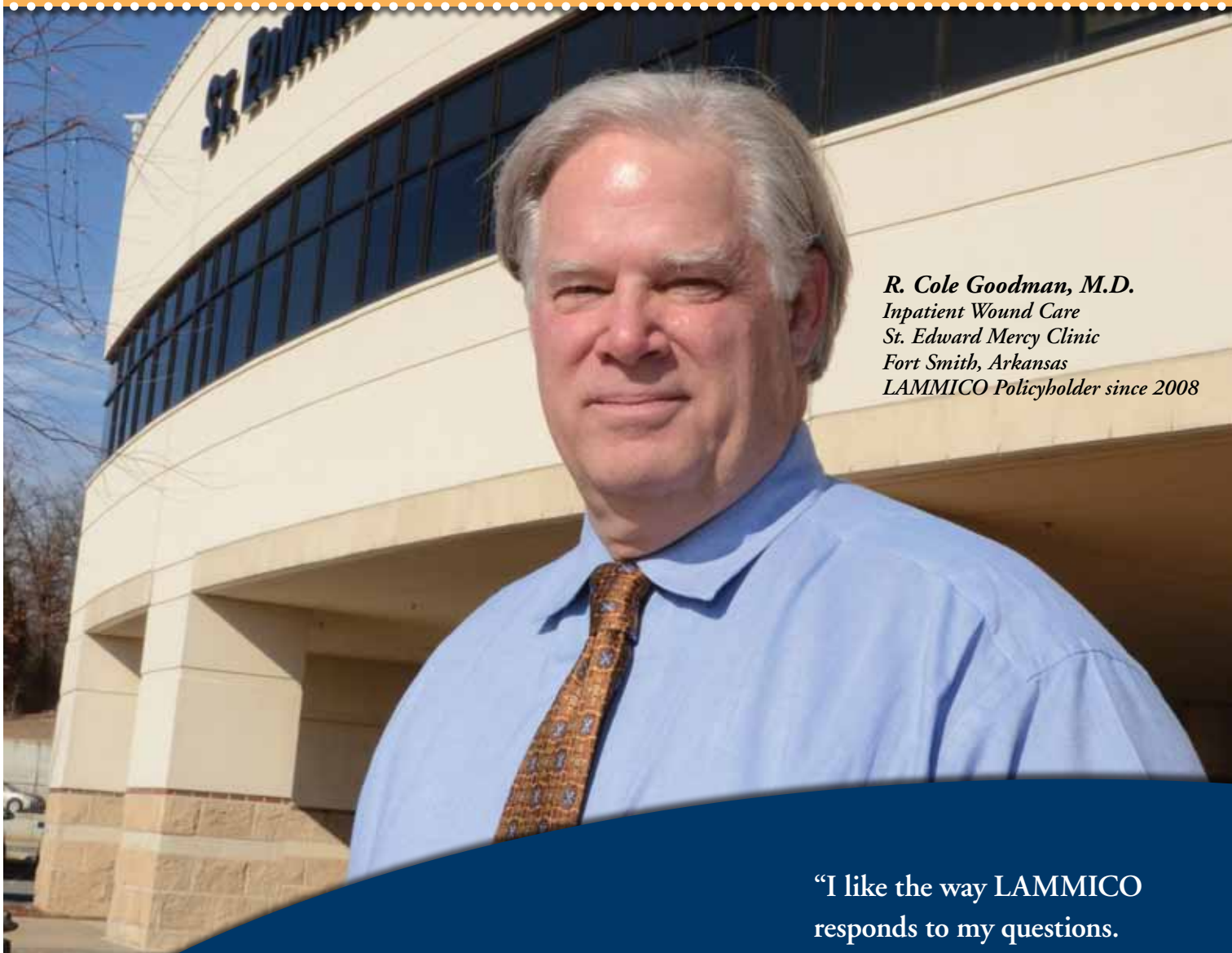
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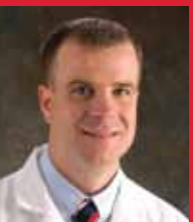
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