

BACKBONE

Volume 15

A Publication of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society

Fall /Winter 2012

President's Corner *William G. Cimino, M.D. - President*



As we celebrate the holidays with family and friends and look forward to a New Year, I am writing in reflection of all the work the Society has done by its volunteer Board and active members participating in legislative, regulatory and educational events to benefit all orthopaedic surgeons in our State.

Your membership in the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society was vital to our collective success in 2012, including defeating the trial lawyers' attempt to make detrimental changes to the

certificate of merit legislation that would have weakened the standards for expert testimony. This battle was fought to the bitter end of the session with hundreds of physicians calling their Representatives and Senators in opposition.

Your colleagues continue to serve you, your practice and your patients through their active representation on the Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee, which determines local coverage for Medicare reimbursement; serving on work groups on matters that impact Workers' Compensation in our State; presiding on committees that oversee podiatry matters, State and specialty society initiatives; providing testimony on regulatory matters before the Department of Public Health; and testifying at legislative public hearings to oppose bills detrimental to the practice of medicine and support those that promote the practice of medicine and quality care for our patients.

In the upcoming year, your Society will work on legislation to certify out of state witnesses in liability matters and require timely credentialing of physicians by insurers. On a federal level, the fiscal cliff and healthcare reform enactment create significant challenges. The Society will be working with the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons on such matters as repeal of the IPAB panel and a permanent fix to the Medicare SGR, slated to decrease physician reimbursement by 26% beginning in January 2013.

In 2013, your Society will continue to work diligently on your behalf with a focus in the following areas:

Legislative - Working with the Society's lobbyist and members' fundraising efforts has guaranteed the Society a seat at the legislative table with upcoming debates and decisions including protecting the certificate of merit language, seeking meaningful liability reform and working to obtain collective bargaining for physicians. We will continue to safeguard the practice of medicine and assist the Society's members with presentations at public hearings, bill tracking and meetings with key legislators.

Workers' Compensation - We will continue an open dialogue with the Commission and key legislators to discuss matters relevant to reaching the goal of all - returning workers back to work.

Annual Meeting & CMEs - We will provide educational opportunities and CME credits at the Society's Annual Meeting. This year's event will be held on Friday, May 10, 2013, at the Farmington Marriott Hotel and will offer informative clinical sessions from renowned speakers and much more.

Programs for Your Practice - Educational seminars are offered at reduced rates with continuing education credits including the popular Coding Workshop scheduled for March 13, 2013 at the Farmington Marriott. This popular workshop is half the cost of similar programs and includes valuable CME credits.

Communication. We will update members through the Society's website (www.ctortho.org), the online newsletter "Backbone", and email alerts.

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President's Corner

(cont. from front)

Your Society works diligently to be the collective representative for Orthopaedists and their practice and we have been able to do all this while maintaining dues at \$250.00 a year since 2002.

We look forward to your dues renewal in the 2013, as we continue to roll up our sleeves and do the work necessary to protect and promote the practice of Orthopaedics and the care of our patients. Your ongoing support is critical to our mission, and enables the Society to project a strong, unified voice to address state and national issues.

The COS is the ONLY in-state organization that has, as its sole objective, the interests of the Orthopaedic Surgeon.

On behalf of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society, I wish you and your families a wonderful and healthy Holiday Season.

AAOS Reminder: 2013 Annual Meeting March 19-23, Chicago, Illinois

Experience the very best in orthopaedic education, research, and technology. An unparalleled educational program features 217 instructional courses, 28 symposia, 825 paper presentations, 580 posters, more than 850 scientific exhibits, more than 550 technical exhibits, and the opportunity to earn up to 38.5 CME Credits. Specialty Day offered by 14 Specialty Societies covers the latest news and breakthroughs in their respective fields.

Bring your questions, ideas, and toughest cases. Whatever you need to learn now, it's all here with new energy and deeper connections to your colleagues and faculty. AAOS Members: Take advantage of free registration and reduced course fees when you register by the Advance Registration Deadline: February 5. Register at www.aaos.org/register today.

The Backbone is a publication of the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society. Comments and suggestions should be directed to:

Susan Schaffman, Executive Director
26 Riggs Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06107
(860) 690-1146 phone
email: ctorthoexec@gmail.com

2013 Legislative Session

The close of the 2012 election cycle in Connecticut saw no change in political majority rule in both the House of Representatives and the Senate and on a Federal level, all incumbents won their reelection bids and previous Representative Chris Murphy won his bid for the U.S. Senate.

As we embark on the 2013 session beginning January 9, 2013, COS will be working on legislation that would require out of state witnesses for Certificate of Merit to be registered with the State of Connecticut prior to providing testimony to strengthen the credibility of expert witnesses. In addition, the COS will be working to obtain a standardized time frame for physician credentialing by insurers and we will continue to work with the CSMS and specialty societies to augment efforts on legislation impacting your practice, your profession and your patients.

The Society's lobbying firm, Halloran & Sage and its lobbyists Billy Malitsky and Jim Paolino work diligently on our behalf however, to accomplish these goals we need your involvement. Legislators need to hear from YOU, orthopaedic surgeons, about the impact pending healthcare legislation will have on your practice, your profession and your patients.

Please consider representing the Society at the legislature for key public hearings throughout the session. We need you to testify at hearings and call, email or meet with your legislators on critical issues of concern to medicine.

If you are interested in taking an active role during the Legislative 2013 session, please contact Susan Schaffman (860)690-1146 or email ctorthoexec@gmail.com for details on how to get involved.

In addition, email alerts will be sent to you to keep you posted throughout the session on critical matters facing medicine at the Capitol. These email alerts will include "CALL TO ACTION" requests for you to contact your legislators. Please take the time from your busy schedule to send an email or make a brief phone call. **You Can Make A Difference!**

In Your Practice

Risk Management Reminders Employment Practices Liability

A risk management program for an orthopaedic practice should include strategies to effectively identify, analyze and control the risks related to employment practices. A well developed program should help the practice to protect its assets by reducing the risk of potential claims as well as the disruption and negative publicity they can bring. In addition to a strong insurance product to protect the exposure to a financial loss the practice should have strong employment related policies and procedures.

The following risk management reminders can be used to audit your existing risk management program:

Hiring Policy

·Use standard, legal applications for all applicants including employed physicians. The application will become an important document in any future litigation. The application should include statement of employment at-will, statement that the employer is Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE), Certification by the applicant of the truthfulness of information provided and consequence of misrepresentation, and any company policy regarding drug, alcohol and pre-employment physical exams.

·Use standard procedure for the interview process. All applications and interview notes should be retained for a stated minimum period of time – generally one year.

·When offering an applicant a job, the offer should clearly state the position, compensation, benefits, working hours, starting date and specific conditions of the job like verification and continuation of credentials.

Employee Handbooks and Policies

·Handbooks can help an employer prove compliance with legal requirements and help reduce the EPL exposure but if not used as an active tool, continually updated and implemented, then it can be a source of EPL exposure.

·Handbooks should contain specific information regarding policies and procedures of the practice.

·Current hot topics to update in your handbook include cell phone use during working hours, cell phone policy when using a vehicle during business, appearance during work hours, internet access and use policy, and a social media policy.

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AAOS A Nation in Motion Campaign - Market Your Profession

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons recently launched the A Nation in Motion campaign with the goal of raising awareness and understanding of the value of orthopaedic care among key audiences. To date, almost 600 patient success stories have been submitted to the website, with more added every day. Here are three NEW opportunities to market your practice and help show the value that orthopaedic surgeons bring to their specialty.

(Submit online at www.anationinmotion.org):

Share Orthopaedic Surgeon Stories

Promote your orthopaedic practice and share your story. Create a vivid portrait of orthopaedics and include your practice information. Submit answers to questions like Why did you become an orthopaedic surgeon? What do you do in your free time?

Submit Ortho-pinion

400-1,000 word essays, about various aspects of orthopaedic practice aimed at a patient/public audience, frequently-asked questions you are asked in your practice, life or medicine that reiterates the well-roundedness and the different specialties within orthopaedics.

Share Patient Stories

Invite patients whose stories embody A Nation in Motion to submit their stories on the campaign website. Or, ask them for permission to use their stories and you or someone on your staff can submit them on their behalf.

In an era of healthcare change, now more than ever is a time when orthopaedic surgeons need to stand out to policymakers and the public as THE specialists who provide value.

Orthopaedic Surgeon Stories, Orthopinions, and sharing patient stories from AAOS members will help do just that.

Save the Date

Connecticut Orthopaedic Society Annual Meeting

Friday, May 10, 2013

8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

***Farmington Marriott Hotel
15 Farm Springs Road
Farmington, Connecticut***

You won't want to miss this event which will provide you with important new clinical information, updates in treatments and an opportunity to earn AMA Category 1 CME Credits.

Details and registration information will be emailed and made available on our site, www.ctortho.org in the New Year or contact the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society's Executive Director, Susan Schaffman at (860) 690-1146.

Ortho Foundation Contribute Today

Since its inception, the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society and its Foundation have contributed over \$90,000.00 to the future training of the next generations of orthopaedic surgeons. As the end of the year approaches, please join your colleagues in making a tax-deductible contribution and help make a difference.

Enclosed is my contribution, made payable to the "Connecticut Orthopaedic Foundation, Inc." *(Please Print)*

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I am pleased to support the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society Foundation with a gift of *(check one)*

___ \$500.00 ___ \$250.00 ___ \$125.00 ___ \$(other)

Please send your contribution to c/o 26 Riggs Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06107. Your cancelled check is your receipt. **Thank you!**

Your Contribution Makes a Difference and is tax-deductible!

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In Your Practice

Risk Management Reminders Employment Practices Liability

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Evaluations/Discipline

·Conduct evaluations at scheduled intervals and be consistent. All employees should be evaluated on an annual basis.

·Document the evaluation process, result and interaction with the employee.

·Address any disciplinary or corrective actions during the evaluation with the employee and note on the evaluation form. Be sure to have the employee sign the form.

Terminations

·Terminations must be supported by clear documentation in the employment file.

·Use progressive discipline and documentation when possible.

·Have a termination plan ready prior to communicating to the employee. Consider if the employee has access codes, pin numbers, remote computer log in access, remote voice mail access, laptop computers, cell phones, swipe cards, keys to the office building and/or any patient record information. Action should be coordinated before the termination process to ensure protection of the practice's sensitive information and equipment.

Insurance Policy

·Evaluate the risk management program and be aware of what coverage exists, what deductibles apply, applicable limits of liability and policy reporting procedures.

Article Provided by:

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COS Member News

Welcome New COS Members

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society welcomes the following new members to the Society in 2012 and looks forward to their participation and involvement:

Randall Risinger, MD - Hartford Orthopedic Surgery, Hartford, CT

Mitchell Garden, MD - Litchfield County Orthopedic & Spine, Bantam, CT

Ross Richer, MD - Orthopaedic Specialty Group, Fairfield, CT

David Hergan, MD - Middlesex Orthopedic Surgeons, Middletown, CT

John Mullen, MD - New Milford Orthopedic Associates, New Milford, CT

Please consider recruiting a colleague or two who are new to the community. Simply forward their names to the COS via email : torthoexec@gmail.com and COS will contact them. Thank you.

Congratulations COS Members

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society proudly acknowledges members who are making a difference in the community and for their patients and the profession.

Andrew E. Caputo, MD, John J. Mara, MD and Kristan A, Pierz, MD received the prestigious 2012 Mind, Body and Spirit Physicians' Award from the Arthritis Foundation of Connecticut. They were honored for their dedication and commitment to their patients.

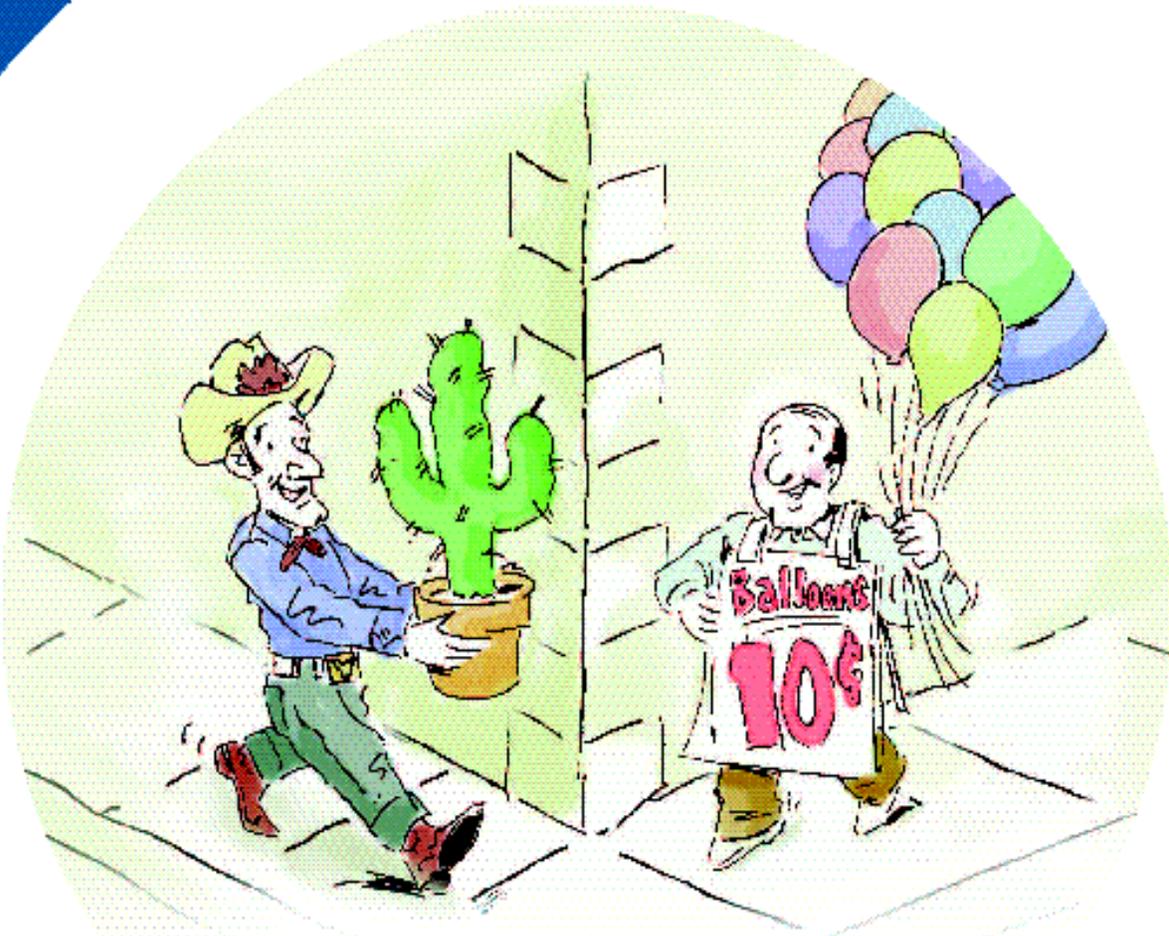
Welcome New Board Member

The Connecticut Orthopaedic Society Board welcomes new Board member, **Augustus Mazzocca, MD**, University of Connecticut, Farmington, CT.

Dr. Mazzocca is the Interim Director of the New England Musculoskeletal Institute and serves as Interim Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at UConn.

Note: We are seeking information from our members on an ongoing basis. Please submit your noteworthy news you would like to share to ctorthoexec@gmail.com

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED.



**TOTAL LIABILITY PROTECTION MEANS
ANTICIPATING WHAT'S AROUND EVERY CORNER**

Surprises can be fun. But not when it comes to professional liability. That's why over 20,000 physicians, dentists, allied healthcare professionals and hundreds of hospitals, health centers and clinics don't leave things to chance. They choose Coverys. Financial strength, innovative products and services, and commitment to your protection make us the company you can depend on. Get more than you expect. Get Coverys.

COVERYS
We understand healthcare

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