CSMS Member Spotlight – Stacy Taylor, MD

CSMS Council Member, Stacy Taylor, MD, is passionate about changing the way women physicians are represented in both the clinical and academic areas. “We may not need a revolution, but we do need a movement to change how we (women physicians) are represented and treated in the workplace.” She added, “Women have very full lives, many of us have children, and this should not be held against us.”

As Chair of the revived Women’s Section of CSMS, Taylor believes that change can only start when women physicians have honest discussions about what they might be doing differently than their male colleagues. “What might (we) be doing that is influencing perceptions and perpetuating stigmas about women physicians?” This is the conversation she hopes to have at the Women’s Section Committee meetings.

“After hearing the speaker at the CSMS Annual Meeting (Julie K. Silver, MD, Associate Professor & Associate Chair, Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Harvard Medical School), I was inspired to do something. Why don’t women ask for pay raises, why don’t we tout our accomplishments, why don’t we promote ourselves like our male colleagues? This is not an easy situation to fix, but if we don’t start to address it, we will never see change, we will never witness equality.”

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Message from the Executive Vice President/CEO

This is an exciting time of year. Snow storms give way to slushy messes, and soon we’ll be seeing signs of life popping through the mud. It’s very similar to the signs of life and change we are seeing up at the Capitol. New legislators seem to be breathing life into long forgotten proposed bills (some good and some bad), and there has already been a flurry of activity and heated testimony provided by CSMS.

This legislative session, CSMS is enthusiastically supporting or aggressively opposing more than 350 pieces of legislation! We believe these proposed bills will directly or indirectly impact you and your ability to practice medicine in Connecticut. On page 3 you’ll can read all about our major initiative this year supporting Proposed SB 28 AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBURSEMENTS UNDER CERTAIN HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS. (Click here to read CSMS Testimony in Support of SB 28). We are also focused on opposing HB 6942, a bill that would expand the scope of practice for Physician Assistants, making the physician/Physician Assistant relationship a collaborative one, not one of a supervisory nature. We are also pushing the state to address the dwindling number of physicians staying in Connecticut after their training. SB 390 has not yet been called for a hearing, but we will be there fighting to increase incentives so that we keep more physicians.

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Member Spotlight – Stacy Taylor, MD
(continued from page 1)

Taylor also cited a 2018 Medscape study about physician compensation that reported the wage gap between male and female physicians is up to 36% in some specialties. These numbers are up from 2017. Read the full study here. Taylor finds this trend troubling and is more determined to start the conversation among physicians right here in Connecticut.

Taylor also has a firm belief that physicians should serve as mentors and supervisors of Physician Assistants. She recently testified on behalf of CSMS in opposition to HB 6942: AN ACT CONCERNING COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND PHYSICIANS. Read the full testimony here. The proposed bill asserts that the relationship between PAs and Physicians should be a collaboration. “I have tremendous respect for PAs, but as physicians we have more than 15,000 hours of clinical training, years of medical school and residency. I believe strongly that it is our duty to ensure the best care for our patients and we can only do that if we provide supervision and leadership.”

Dr. Taylor specializes in Family Practice and has been a member of CSMS since 2012. She was inspired to join CSMS through her work at the Capitol with the Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians. She added, “I believe that if you don’t have a seat at the table then you are on the menu.”

Finally, Taylor encourages CSMS members to get involved in the legislative process and encourages any member who is interested in discussing gender equality to attend the Women’s Section Committee. Their next meeting will be on March 6th.

Message from the Executive Vice President/CEO
(continued from page 1)

I encourage you to join us on March 1st for Physicians’ Advocacy Day (click here for details). This year we are teaming up with specialty societies and county medical associations so that you, the physicians of Connecticut, have a stronger voice. Organized medicine is crucial to our protection, advancement, and defense of the practice of medicine.

As a CSMS member, you also have access to innovative programs that address banking fraud, HIE technology, social events, CME programs (the one on April 24 will focus on the unique issues facing employed physicians), and a regional forum with ABMS. We are truly excited about what we have coming up this spring. See page 8 for details.

Finally, thank you for being a loyal member of CSMS! Remember to reach out if you have any questions or concerns you think we could address to better serve the physicians of this state. We are here for you and we are stronger together.

CSMS’ Top Priority Bill on High Deductible Health Plans is the Highlight of a Recent Insurance Committee Hearing

CSMS has been heavily advocating for the legislature to address the issue of High Deductible Health Plans (HDHPs) and the impact they have on physicians and their patients. The proposed bill, introduced by Senate President Martin Looney, would require health insurers that issue certain high deductible plans to directly reimburse participating providers for the cost of covered benefits.

At the hearing on February 7th, CSMS Vice President Gregory Shangold, MD, provided powerful testimony in support of SB 28. Dr. Shangold explained the strain HDHPs have on patients and physician practices, causing many physicians to consolidate and/or close their practices.

In addition to Dr. Shangold, several other CSMS members testified, including Bryan Jordan, MD, President of the Connecticut College of Emergency Physicians; Marc Eisen, MD; and F. Scott Gray, MD.

Senate Majority Leader Martin Looney and Senator Heather Somers also spoke out in support of SB 28.

Priority Issues for CSMS:
• Targeting High Deductible Health Plans and the impact they have on the patient-physician relationship (Supporting SB 28)
• Addressing the physician recruitment and retention crisis (Supporting SB 390)
• Protecting MDs’ scope of practice (Opposing HB 6942)

Learn more about these key issues:
SB 28 AN ACT CONCERNING REIMBURSEMENTS UNDER CERTAIN HIGH DEDUCTIBLE HEALTH PLANS. CSMS Testimony in Support of SB 28.
SB 390 AN ACT REQUIRING A STUDY CONCERNING INCENTIVES TO INDUCE PHYSICIANS TO RELOCATE TO CONNECTICUT. No hearing has been called yet, testimony has not been written to date.
HB 6942 AN ACT CONCERNING A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS AND PHYSICIANS. CSMS testimony in opposition to HB 6942.

For the latest information and complete transcripts of CSMS physician testimony, go to https://csms.org/2019-legislative-session/
CSMS Medical Aid-In-Dying Policy Statement
This policy issue has been discussed for several years among our members. CSMS does not take this issue or policy lightly, nor do we wish to impugn those who have opposing views on this important matter. We believe that this statement reflects our strong commitment to the Hippocratic Oath, while adjusting to changing times and individual physician's beliefs. Please read the statement here. CSMS President Claudia Gruss, MD, will have a detailed column in the next edition of Connecticut Medicine. If you would like a copy, please email us.

CSMS Says ENOUGH to ONC – Time to Address Regulatory Burdens on Physicians!
CSMS, a partner of the Physician Advocacy Institute (PAI), joined forces with other state medical societies to respond to the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) regarding the Draft Strategy on Reducing Regulatory and Administrative Burden Relating to the Use of Health IT and EHRs. Click here to read the letter.

CSMS Forcefully Defends Pain Management Practices
CSMS sent a letter addressing key concerns and recommendations to the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health regarding Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force Draft Report. The letter highlighted CSMS pain medicine specialists' evaluation of the draft report and reflected the letter provided by the Connecticut Pain Society. Read the submitted letter here.

CSMS Introduces New Affinity Partner: Thrive at Home
CSMS members have a unique opportunity to be part of Thrive at Home, a health and wellness program provided by the award winning Whitney Center of Hamden, that gives healthy, independent adults the resources they need to continue living in the comfort of home.

Participants in Thrive at Home receive personalized coordination and coverage of long-term care and personal care when needed. All costs for those services are included in the Thrive at Home membership, protecting assets from the rising costs of long-term care. Also, participants receive 24/7 personalized support from a dedicated team of Personal Service Partners who help to navigate all of life’s obstacles.

Click here or call 203.848.2626 to learn more.
March 1 – Physicians’ Advocacy Day
7:30 am, Officers’ Club, 360 Broad Street, Hartford
Don’t miss your chance to share your voice at the Capitol with your fellow physicians. Many influential speakers have been invited to join us to discuss the ongoing legislative session. We encourage you to attend and invite your legislators to join you at the breakfast or make an appointment to meet with them that day. Click here to find your legislators or contact CSMS—we’re happy to help you make arrangements.

This year we are proud to be partnering with the Connecticut Chapter of the American College of Surgeons; the Connecticut Society of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery; the Connecticut ENP Society; the Connecticut Pain Society; the Connecticut Orthopaedic Society; the Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians; the Connecticut Urology Society. Supporting partners include Hartford County Medical Association, Litchfield County Medical Association, Middlesex County Medical Association, New Haven County Medical Association, New London County Medical Association, Tolland County Medical Association, and Windham County Medical Association.

March 7 – Get Informed: Dinner & Live Demo to Discover the Benefits of CTHealthLink
6:00 pm (dinner provided)
CSMS Offices, 127 Washington Ave, East Building, 3rd Floor, North Haven
Discover who is using CTHealthLink and how it is benefiting them. Plus, learn how the CSMS sponsored and supported technology can help you achieve success with MACRA/MIPS and in contracts with health insurers.

March 13 – Exclusive Program for CSMS Members: Protect Yourself from Fraud!
6:30 – 8:00 pm (dinner provided)
CSMS Offices, 127 Washington Ave., East Building, 3rd Floor, North Haven
CSMS members are invited to a beneficial program that will provide tips and tools to help you protect yourself and your practice from banking fraud. This informative program will feature Filipe Silva of Webster Bank, the affinity banking partner of CSMS.

April 4 – CSMS Special Regional Event: The Future of MOC
5:30 – 8:00 pm (dinner provided)
Norwalk Hospital
CSMS member open forum with leaders from the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), focusing on the proposed transformation of the Maintenance of Certification (MOC).

April 10 – CSMS Physician Happy Hour
6:00 – 8:00 pm
On the Waterfront, New London
All Connecticut physicians are invited to attend to learn more about CSMS membership: advocacy, education, discounts/benefits, and networking opportunities. Share Ideas • Get Support • Have a Voice

April 24 – Employed Physicians: Rights and Responsibilities
5:30 – 8:30 pm
New Haven Lawn Club (193 Whitney Avenue)
Special discounted rate for CSMS members (only $25, non-members $125)
Featuring Elizabeth A. (“Libby”) Snelson who will discuss opportunities and restrictions unique to employed physicians, including: opportunities and restrictions on representation, voting, and leadership; protecting professionalism and clinical decision-making; fair peer review, including notice, hearing and appeal rights; reportability, liability, and legal exposure; and coalescing employed and independent physicians.

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint sponsorship of Bridgeport Hospital and the Connecticut State Medical Society. Bridgeport Hospital is accredited by the Connecticut State Medical Society to provide continuing medical education for physicians. Bridgeport Hospital designates this live activity for a maximum of 2 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only credits commensurate with the extent of their participation in the various activities.

September 27 – CSMS Member Gala
SAVE THE DATE – DETAILS COMING SOON!
Tax Tips to Prepare for Tax Time

Brian H. Vendig, CPA
President & Managing Executive
MJP Wealth Advisors

As tax season approaches, follow these tax tips to save time and money.

1. Contribute to retirement accounts
If you have not already funded your retirement account for 2018, do so by April 15, 2019, which is the deadline for contributions to a traditional IRA, deductible or not, and to a Roth IRA. For the 2018 tax year, the maximum IRA contribution is $5,500 ($6,500 if you are age 50 or older). For self-employed individuals, the maximum annual addition to SEPs and Keoghs is $55,000 ($61,500 if you are age 50 or older). Making a deductible contribution will help lower your tax bill this year and your contributions will grow tax-deferred.

2. Check your deductions
A big change for 2018 was a significant increase of the standard deduction to taxable income taken by individuals who do not itemize deductions. For 2018, it is $12,000 for single filers, up from $6,360 in 2017, and $24,000 for couples filing a joint return, up from $12,700. Even if you take the standard deduction this year, you should look to see how much in itemized deductions you would have had. Your tax software or tax advisor can run your return both ways to determine which method produces a lower tax bill.

3. Take advantage of a home office tax deduction
Individuals who have no fixed location for their businesses can claim a home office deduction if they use the space for administrative or management activities, even if they do not meet clients there. Doctors, for example, who consult at various hospitals, can now qualify. As always, you must use the space exclusively for business. You are permitted to write off expenses that are associated with the portion of your home where you exclusively conduct business (such as rent, utilities, insurance and housekeeping).

4. Open a donor-advised fund
Putting your money or other assets, such as stocks or personal property, in a donor-advised fund allows you to deduct the entire contribution in the year you make it and decide later how you want to distribute grants to charities of your choice. Contributing one lump sum this year may help lift your deductions above the amount of the new standard deduction and allow you to itemize.

5. Take advantage of the Child Tax Credit
One of the most notable changes to the Child Tax Credit in 2018 is that it doubled from $1,000 to $2,000 per child. The Child Tax Credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in your tax bill rather than a reduction in your taxable income. In addition to the credit increase, the income limits that determine whether those with qualifying children can claim the credit have risen substantially. For 2018, the phase-out doesn’t start until single filers hit $200,000 MAGI and joint filers hit $400,000.

If you have questions or would like us to help you with your wealth planning needs, please contact MJP Wealth Advisors at (860) 677-7755. Please contact your tax advisor to discuss your personal tax objectives and needs.

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New Research Shows Hospitals Continuing to Acquire Physician Practices

New data compiled by CSMS partner, Physicians Advocacy Institute (PAI) and Avalere Health show hospital acquisition trends continued nationwide between July 2016 and January 2018. Over that 18-month period, hospitals acquired 8,000 medical practices, and an additional 14,000 physicians left private practice and entered into employment arrangements with hospitals. Read the full report here.

Young Physician Leadership Programs

With support from the Physicians Foundation, the Young Physician Leadership Program is finishing up its fourth year. The program is being held for the first time at the UCONN Health School of Medicine, under the direction of M. Natalie Achong, MD. Twenty residents and fellows and 10 junior faculty comprise the first cohort. Participants are working on independent project concept papers to address an issue in health care that is important and will tap into leadership skills, with a focus on developing and strengthening leadership in the years ahead. The projects will be presented on April 11th and one will be selected by a panel to receive $1000 toward its implementation.

With the success of the Young Physician Leadership Program for Yale University’s residents and fellows over the past three years, Yale New Haven Health funded the continuation of the program. Dr. David Hass spearheads the program’s development and success, introducing speakers and fostering interactive sessions that require pre-reading assignments and preparation (eg, flip classroom). Subject matter for the Young Physician Leadership Program includes: Effective Leadership & Impactful Networking, The Art of Negotiation, The Reciprocal Impact of Powerful Feedback, and The Capitol: Process, Advocacy and Issues. For more information contact: Catherine Wagner, EdD cwagner@csms.org

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Charitable Giving Spotlight
Highlighting Recipients of CSMS Charitable Trust Grants

Starting with this publication of Action News, CSMS will highlight the nonprofit organizations that received funding from the CSMS Charitable Trust in 2018. Your donations have made an impact throughout Connecticut. We thank you for your generosity and look forward to your involvement throughout 2019.

The CSMS Charitable Trust donated $500 to BHcare, which provides services for victims of domestic violence and their children at two sites located in Ansonia and East Haven. All services offered are confidential and provided free of charge. Their services support 170 different languages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The donation will be used to purchase new locks and locksmith services for families relocating to safe houses.

Click here to learn more about this nonprofit.

BHcare is holding their 31st annual Bowl-2-Benefit event on March 3. Click here for more details.

We thank all donors for your ongoing generosity and commitment!

Please consider donating today:

Donor Corner –
David Hass, MD

Dr. David Hass has been a loyal donor to the CSMS Charitable Trust and the Physicians’ Health and Education Fund (PHEF) for several years.

“As a member of the CSMS, I feel that it is critical to support both the PHEF and the CSMS Charitable Trust.

“The PHEF allows for our members to have the opportunity to improve themselves and further develop their knowledge base as physician and patient advocates, leaders, and change agents. “In addition, the work of the Charitable Trust allows for support of local organizations that partake in pivotal and impactful action to better our community.”
MORE CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO PRESCRIPTION SAVINGS

Statewide Prescription Assistance Program Offers a Prescription to High Healthcare Costs

The Centers for Disease Control reports that Americans spend more on prescription drugs than people in any other country: some $45 billion in out-of-pocket dollars in the last year alone. With that in mind, the Connecticut Drug Card is reminding physicians that their patients who aren’t insured or who take prescription drugs that aren’t covered by their health insurance plan, can use the Connecticut Drug Card to obtain discounts of up to 75 percent off the retail price for FDA-approved medications.

Connecticut Drug Card has been working closely with Connecticut State Medical Society, as well as numerous clinics and hospitals around the state to distribute free discount prescription cards so that all Connecticut residents will have access to this free program. Connecticut Drug Card was launched to help the uninsured and underinsured residents afford their prescription medications. The program can also be used by people that have health insurance coverage with no prescription benefits, which is common in many health savings accounts (HSA) and high deductible health plans.

Another unique component of the program is their preferred pharmacy option. Connecticut Drug Card has chosen CVS as their preferred pharmacy so that residents who don’t have access to a computer and can’t obtain a hard card, can visit any CVS to have their prescriptions processed through Connecticut Drug Card. Residents can simply reference “Connecticut Drug Card” to have their prescription processed through the program.

Connecticut Drug Card is accepted at over 68,000 participating regional and national pharmacies.

Connecticut Drug Card has helped residents save over $36 million since its inception in 2009. You can help by encouraging your patients to print a free Connecticut Drug Card at the CSMS website or at www.ctdrugcard.com.

Connecticut Drug Card also has an available app for your iPhone and Android phones. You can visit “Free Rx iCard” in the app store and select “Connecticut” in the drop-down box. Any physicians who are interested in ordering free cards for their clinic/hospital can email Chez Ciccone, via email at cc@ctdrugcard.com or by phone at 877-202-2214.

Program Highlights:
• Free Card for Everyone
• Accepted at Over 68,000 Pharmacies Nationwide
• No Personal Information Required to Obtain a Card
• Discounts on Brand and Generic Medications
• No Restrictions on Eligibility
• No Applications

Proud supporter of:
Free statewide prescription Assistance Program
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Thank you to all of you who have already renewed! We are here for you and will do what is needed to protect the practice of medicine and patient care in our state.

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As a CSMS member, you join physicians from all specialties to provide influence over decisions affecting your patients and your practice.

**ADVOCACY** – CSMS advocates for you and your patients at the Capitol, with state agencies, and with local and national health plans.


**RESOURCES** – Members receive personal assistance when challenging issues arise. Plus, we offer members a wide range of discounted services from our vetted affiliate partners, including financial, insurance, and lifestyle and travel.

**CONNECTIONS** – connect with your peers through social events, workshops, social media, and regular publications.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** – Help shape the future of medicine by participating in an issue-specific task force or as part of a standing committee. Your voice matters.

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- Find information about CSMS programs, services, & member benefits.

CSMS continues to make every effort to update our benefits and services to better serve you and the entire membership. If you have comments or questions concerning our site, email news@csms.org or call us at 203-865-0587.

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