

## 2009 Meetings and Events

### LCMS General Meeting

**"Medical Expeditions to the Russian Tundra and Siberia"**  
**William Becknell, MD**

**Thurs, November 19, 2009**  
**6:30 p.m. Social Time**  
**7:00 p.m. Dinner**

**FineMark Bank Community Room**  
**12681 Creekside Lane**  
**Fort Myers, FL 33919**

RSVP Medical Society Office  
 LCMS, PO Box 60041, Ft Myers 33906  
 Tel: 936-1645 Fax: 936-0533

## SAVE THE DATE DECEMBER 7, 2009

**Lee County Medical Society &  
 Alliance Holiday Party**

**Gulf Harbour  
 Golf and Country Club**

## Inserts

- Hill, Barth & King  
 Advertisement
- November Meeting Notice

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## President's Message

### ...and the Survey Says...

Larry Hobbs, M.D.



Your Lee County Medical Society sent out a brief survey via mail and email to get your opinion of the health care reform debate. Approximately 8% of the membership responded with some interesting results and comments. I would like to briefly present those results.

Three questions were asked pertaining to building onto the current healthcare system. When asked if members would support preserving the current healthcare delivery via competing private health plans, 78% supported preserving private health care plans. While 84% feel that having a government-operated health care program, like those in Great Britain and Canada, would not be a solution they would support. Several members proposed additional solutions such as; "...government can offer catastrophic insurance (\$10,000 out-of-pocket coverage)," another member stated, "I would support addressing the legal monopoly that the insurance companies hold, (96-100% - AMA's data)," and, "implementing a high deductible catastrophic insurance with HSAs."

Expanding coverage is a topic that has been heavily debated. When asked about mandating individuals to purchase coverage, 48% believed this was a good idea however 50% did not support an employer "pay or play" mandate, and only 18% agreed expanding eligibility for Medicaid was the answer. Creation of a health insurance exchange for small business and uninsured was an idea that 48% agreed would be worth pursuing. Member's solutions for expanded coverage were; "...I believe a co-op to include small businesses is necessary," "replace Medicare/Medicaid with HSAs and high catastrophic insurance," and "allow small groups to band together to increase their risk pools but not in the exchange program as proposed by the government."

Your solutions to regulate the health insurance industry were; "profit should be allocated in this fashion: 50% returned to premium payers, 25% to stockholders, 25% to salaries and bonuses for highly paid insurance workers," "sell across state lines - increased competition," and one member felt that providing "Medicare for all," would be a solution.

82% of surveyors participate in the Medicare Program while 56% participate in the Medicaid Program. When asked what impact an increase in reimbursement would have on your participation in Medicare; 48% felt it would have no impact and 28% would increase their participation in the

program. For those who participate in Medicaid, 34% felt payment reform would have no impact in their participation and 28% would increase their participation with Medicaid payment reform.

Currently 48% of you do not participate in Medicare's PQRI (Physician Quality Reporting Improvement) program however, 30% would be inclined to participate if it established appeals mechanisms to challenge Medicare determinations about entitlement to bonuses for participation. 68% support a process for identifying performance improvement, quality measures and comparative effectiveness research if such processes were based on recognized medical standards and promulgated by qualified physicians and other appropriate medical professionals.

When asked if taxing top income earners to support health care reform was an option to gain revenue, 82% of surveyors disagreed with that statement and 72% disagreed with taxing health care benefits. The following comments are your ideas for funding health care reform; "...tax tobacco, alcohol, guns and fast food," "...increase the Medicare age to 70," and "raising all tax levels to help government costs; healthcare is a personal responsibility." One member stated, "We have plenty of taxes and money for healthcare, we just need reform to spend it on patients and not government bureaucracy, hospitals and insurance companies."

The 'Public Plan' was not something you could support, 56% of you disagreed with this option. When asked if you could support the 'Public Plan' with certain modifications, 36% said no, they could not support the plan and 32% were unsure. The 32% that were unsure if they could support the plan listed their desired modifications: "tort reform," "medical savings accounts," "get the government out," and "I prefer Medicare for all." Those who opposed the 'Public Plan' did so because; "a public option if mandated fails to address basic economic principles," "the public option will not be able to cover its costs from premiums alone since private companies will shift the sick patients to public plan and keep healthy patients in private plans," others felt that, "government run 'anything' does not work."

Support for preserving the right of physicians to own health care facilities was overwhelming at 80%. One reason given for their support was, "Competition is good - markets are good; privately owned facilities consistently provide higher quality and more efficient care."

Two questions were asked around the ideas of promotion, wellness and physician workforce.