



# THE FORUM

March/April 2019 • Volume 18, No. 2 • The Official Magazine of Collier County Medical Society

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Register at [www.ccmsonline.org](http://www.ccmsonline.org)  
or call (239) 435-7727

Wednesday, March 20, 6:00pm  
**CCMS Spring General Membership Meeting**  
Arthrex

Saturday, March 30, 5:30pm  
**CCMS & CCMSA Everblades Hockey**  
**Family Outing**  
Hertz Arena  
*To celebrate National Doctors' Day*

Saturday, April 6, 8:00pm  
**CCMS Member Tickets for School of Rock**  
Artis-Naples

Saturday, April 27, 5:00pm  
**Foundation of CCMS Baseball Outing Fundraiser**  
Ft. Myers Miracle Game

Saturday, May 4, 6:30pm  
**2019 CCMS Annual Meeting & Installation**  
Wyndemere Country Club  
*Support opportunities at [ccmsonline.org](http://ccmsonline.org)*

Wednesday, May 8, 6:00pm  
**CCMS After 5 Social**  
Neighborhood Health Clinic

Friday, August 9 – Sunday, August 11  
**FMA Annual Meeting**  
Hilton Bonnet Creek, Orlando  
[am.celebratemedicine.com](http://am.celebratemedicine.com)  
*featuring CME & House of Delegates*

Saturday, September 28, 8:00am  
**Foundation of CCMS Docs & Duffers**  
**Charity Golf Tournament**  
Bonita Bay Club Naples  
*Support opportunities at [ccmsonline.org](http://ccmsonline.org)*

## Premier Circle of Friends

 **Markham Norton  
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& Company, P.A.**  
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Contact:

Karen Mosteller, CPA, CHBC  
239-261-5554  
[kmosteller@markham-norton.com](mailto:kmosteller@markham-norton.com)  
[markham-norton.com](http://markham-norton.com)



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Wealth Management Officer  
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## CCMS Board of Directors 2018-2019

President

Cesar De Leon, D.O.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Vice President<br>David Wilkinson, M.D. | Secretary<br>Alejandro Perez-Trepichio, M.D.      |
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Views and opinions expressed in *The Forum* are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Collier County Medical Society's Board of Directors, staff or advertisers. Copy deadline for editorial and advertising submission is the 15th of the month preceding publication. The editorial staff of *The Forum* reserves the right to edit or reject any submission.

# MEMBER NEWS

## New Members:



**Gilbert Abou-Lahoud, M.D.**  
Surgical Healing Arts Center  
6150 Diamond Centre Ct. #1300  
Ft Myers, FL 33912  
Phone: (239) 344-9786 Fax: (239) 344-9215  
Specialty: General Surgery



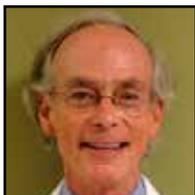
**Doris D. Corey, D.O.**  
Doris DiPrimio Corey, DO, LLC  
8625 Champions Pt Unit 602  
Naples, FL 34113  
Phone: (239) 777-0391 Fax: (239) 236-1272  
Board Certified: Family Medicine



**Margaret A. Forszpaniak, D.O.**  
846 Anchor Rode Dr  
Naples, FL 34103  
Phone: (239) 300-4244  
Fax: (239) 529-6489  
Board Certified: Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatry, Adult Psychiatry



**Bryan T. Hanypsiak, M.D.**  
Physicians Regional Medical Group  
6101 Pine Ridge Rd Desk 12  
Naples, FL 34119  
Phone: (239) 348-4221 Fax: (239) 348-4148  
Board Certified: Orthopaedic Surgery, Sports  
Medicine



**Steven J. Mason, M.D.**  
Naples Heart Rhythm Specialists  
6101 Pine Ridge Rd  
Naples, FL 34119  
Phone: (239) 263-0849 Fax: (239) 263-2376  
Board Certified: Cardiology



**Marta A. Pieczalska, M.D.**  
David Lawrence Mental Health Center  
6075 Bathey Ln  
Naples, FL 34116  
Phone: (239) 455-8500 Fax: (239) 352-5093  
Board Certified: Child & Adolescent  
Psychiatry, Adult Psychiatry



**Bruce G. Roy, M.D.**  
Specialty: Pulmonary Medicine  
Millennium Physician Group  
400 8th St N  
Naples, FL 34102  
Phone: (239) 315-7123 Fax: (239) 315-7122  
Board Certified: Internal Medicine, Critical  
Care Medicine, Sleep Medicine

## New Retired Members:

**James C. Britton, M.D.**, Pathology  
**H. David Greider, M.D.**, Pathology  
**Paul Kardon, M.D.**, OB-GYN

## Reinstated:

**Michael T. Dent, M.D.**, OB-GYN  
**Richard J. Juda, M.D.**, Critical Care, Anesthesiology  
**Douglas B. Paone, M.D.**, Internal Medicine  
**Alina K. Stanciu, M.D.**, Ophthalmology

## New Practice:

**Sadiq Al-Nakeeb, MD FCCP**  
Advanced Critical Care Lung & Sleep, LLC  
6101 Pine Ridge Rd, 3rd Fl Desk 33  
Naples, FL 34119  
Office: (239) 920-4446 Fax: (239) 920-4447  
Athena Fax: (866) 601-2861

## Congrats on Retirement:

**Adam Fueredi, M.D.**, Radiology

## CCMS Physician Directory Notice

Planning is underway for the 2019-20 CCMS Physician Directory. Members with changes to their office information or new photos should email updates to [info@ccmsonline.org](mailto:info@ccmsonline.org) by May 24th.

Reserve advertising space for the Directory by May 15th. Rates start at \$425. The Directory is a great way to reach the community - 10,000 copies are distributed each fall. Visit [ccmsonline.org](http://ccmsonline.org) or call the CCMS office, 239-435-7727 for details.



[ccmsonline.org/physician-wellness](http://ccmsonline.org/physician-wellness)

**CCMS** Physician Wellness Program

Helping You Take Care of You  
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Featuring confidential, convenient, cost-free access to professional psychological services for CCMS members.

## A Message from the President

Cesar De Leon, D.O., President, Collier County Medical Society



Since our last publication we were able to accomplish something that seemed impossible. We as physicians came together to protect the sanctity of the doctor-patient relationship. We were able to stop a policy that could have taken our right to see our patients during a potential admission at NCH hospitals and the same policy could have prevented our patients from choosing us or our team of hospitalists. This policy did not make sense whichever way we looked at it.

In early September I was contacted by Dr. Ron Garry, a CCMS member, asking how CCMS could help stop the proposed admissions policy. His question came as a surprise, as a medical society we had not interfered in the internal management of any of our local hospitals, but on further analysis, this went beyond the internal management. This policy would have affected the independent physicians and the community as a whole. Our CCMS mission is to serve the needs of our physician members so they can better serve the needs of the community, and this issue definitely involved our mission.

As we published our initial statement against the policy, we heard from many of our members requesting for us to help protect the patient's right to choose. We realized that we needed to step up to the plate and materialize the mission for which CCMS had been created. After requests for the opportunity to discuss the policy with hospital leadership and explore compromises were largely ignored, we began an educational campaign based on the true consequences of this poorly planned admissions policy. The reaction from our physicians and patients was incredible. We have heard many times how it is easier to herd cats than bring physicians under one common mission; well this myth has been busted!

Our Collier County physicians were united in educating their patients and soliciting their help. Nobody had ever seen physicians working so cohesively with the community and NCH donors. We gained the unanimous support of the Naples City Council, the County Commissioners, and Naples Daily News editorial board, and of organized medicine such as the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association, Florida Medical Association, Florida Geriatrics Society, and the Florida Chapter of the American College of Physicians.

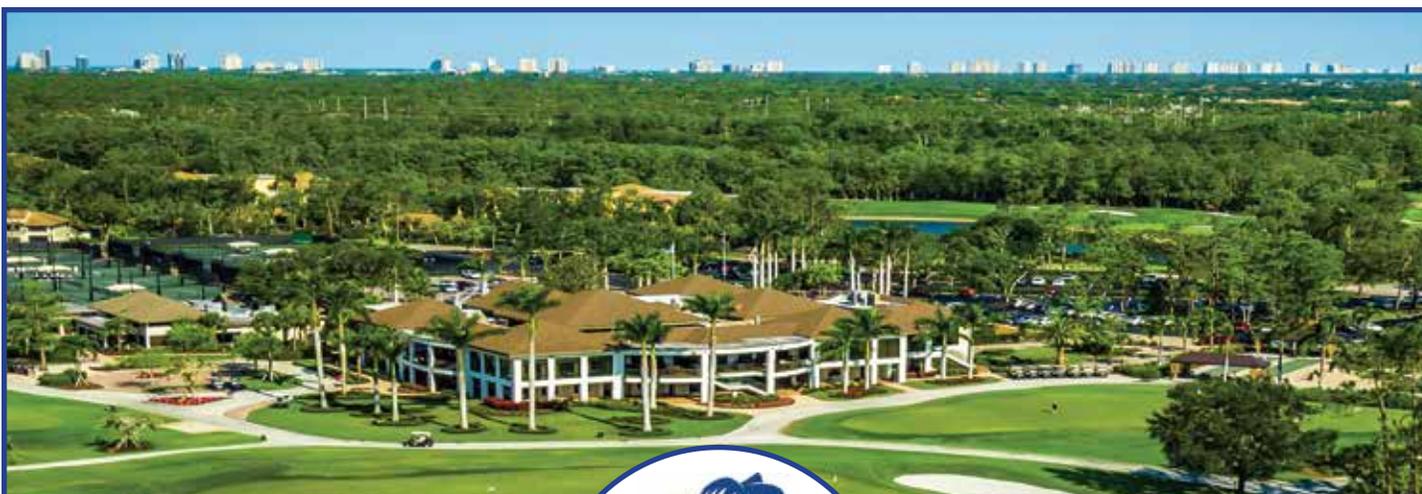
CCMS and our members would not leave a stone unturned. The campaign lasted three months. On January 17th, the biggest assembly of NCH active staff members gave both the NCH CEO and the Chief of Staff an almost unanimous vote of no confidence. On January 23rd, the NCH Board of Trustees unanimously accepted Dr. Weiss' and Mr. Cooper's resignations. From that day forward physicians once again have been allowed to have a voice at the table regarding what happens to our patients during a potential admission to NCH.

We physicians have been victims for too long of powerful groups interfering in the care we provide to our patients. These groups include the payers, the pharmaceutical companies, the government, the manufacturers, the regulatory agencies, and the hospitals. It is up to us if we would allow these institutions to have the power to dictate how we care for our patients. We had remained quiet for too long, but now we recognize that we do have a voice, we do have a say in healthcare. United, and with the help of our patients, we can keep the care in healthcare and prevent others from exploiting it for financial benefit. We are and should always be the gatekeepers of healthcare.

I thank you for your support on this challenging campaign to stand up for what we believed was the right thing to do. CCMS has become an example to the rest of nation and our accomplishment has reached trusted websites such as Medscape and Becker's Hospital Review. My strongest belief is that it was possible mainly because we have a strong and united Medical Society that has a well-grounded mission statement to help its doctors provide the best care possible.



*Congratulations to Dr. De Leon for receiving the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association's 2019 Presidential Recognition Award. FOMA President Dr. Joshua Lenchus (shown, left) presented the award to Dr. De Leon "In Recognition and Appreciation of Dedication and Commitment to the FOMA Board of Trustees through Advocacy in the District Society, Community and Hospital System and to Delivering Quality Healthcare to the Citizens of Florida."*



SATURDAY, MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>

# CCMS 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting

## Wyndemere Country Club

700 Wyndemere Way, Naples, FL 34105

6:30pm Cocktail Reception | 7:30pm Dinner & Program

Featuring: Installation of the 2019-20 CCMS President & Officers,  
CCMS Physician of the Year Award Presentation,  
and guest speaker Dr. Corey Howard, FMA President

Complimentary for CCMS physician members  
First CCMS member guest \$25; Additional seats \$125 each

*Semi-formal attire • Valet parking included*

KINDLY RSVP BY APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup>:

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# The FMA's Prescription for a Healthy Florida: Protect the Patient/Physician Relationship - 2019 State Legislative Agenda

FMA Legislative Team

*Editor's Note: each year the FMA publishes an agenda detailing the legislative goals for the state legislative session. Here are some of the major issues in healthcare that the FMA is pursuing this year on our behalf. These highlights can be a helpful tool for CCMS members when you are speaking with your local legislators.*



Few issues are more important to Floridians than their health. Access to primary care physicians and highly skilled medical specialists is essential to achieving the goal of making Florida the healthiest state in the nation.

This begins with advocating for a bold public policy agenda that will make Florida the best state for physicians to practice medicine.

With more than 25,000 members, the Florida Medical Association represents physicians who care for 21 million people in the Sunshine State. We are dedicated to improving the health of all Floridians and creating a model environment for physicians to practice medicine.

The FMA believes in promoting the highest standards of medical care, maintaining patient choice in our healthcare system, and preserving the trusted relationship between patients and their physicians. We can achieve these ideals by ensuring fair and transparent insurance markets, eliminating onerous regulations, and reducing unnecessary, costly, counterproductive measures that make it even harder for physicians to deliver patient care.

The FMA is committed to working with our Governor and legislators from both political parties to advance a patient-centered healthcare agenda that will make Florida the best state in the country to live and work. The following is the FMA's Prescription for a Healthy Florida.

## **Empower Patients and Physicians by Eliminating Unnecessary Barriers to Care**

A major burden for physicians and patients is the industrywide practice of requiring prior authorization for standard and necessary medical services. Prior authorization – sometimes called precertification or prior approval – is a health insurance cost-control process by which physicians and other healthcare providers must obtain advance approval from health plans before specific services are delivered to patients in order to qualify for payment coverage. These authorizations can apply to medications, tests recommended by a physician, referrals to specialists, and other treatments.

Numerous studies have found that the amount of time physicians spend obtaining authorizations from health insurers has increased substantially in recent years. A report from the *Annals of Internal Medicine* revealed that for every hour a physician spent seeing patients, another two hours were spent on paperwork and dealing with red tape.

While prior authorizations are annoying to physicians, it is the patients who suffer the most. In many cases, prior authorizations lead to unnecessary and harmful delays in treatment, patients

having to take less effective medications, and time lost waiting for insurance company bureaucrats to approve services that a physician has deemed medically necessary. When used, prior authorization should adhere to a standardized, automated process in order to minimize the burden placed upon physicians and their patients.

The health insurance industry is enjoying record profits at the expense of patients and physicians. The FMA believes that the overall volume of medical services and drugs requiring prior authorization should be greatly reduced. Insurance companies and health plans should not be allowed to interfere in the patient/physician relationship. The state of Florida should no longer tolerate health plans making medical decisions that negatively affect patients' lives. We must eliminate roadblocks that keep patients from getting the care they need, when they need it.

## **Ensure Health Insurance Transparency and Network Adequacy**

Even when someone has health insurance, inadequate coverage and a limited choice of physicians compromise access to care. Many consumers purchase health insurance products without understanding their provider networks. Increasingly, health plans are developing "narrow networks" that restrict access and result in out-of-network costs to patients who often are not aware of their insurance plan limitations. The FMA supports legislation to ensure that health plans maintain more comprehensive physician networks and requires insurers to offer coverage options for out-of-network care. Insurance companies should also be required to fairly compensate physicians who provide patient care when they are not part of an insurer's health plan network.

In addition, health plans should provide up-to-date information, in real time, about their provider networks. Legislation is needed to prohibit bait-and-switch tactics whereby health plans publish inaccurate information about their provider networks in order to attract premium dollars. Health plans that continue abusing the system should pay fines and face severe penalties, including being banned from operating in Florida. It's time to hold insurance companies and health plans accountable for adequate, transparent networks and accurate consumer information.

## **Preserve the Economic Stability of Physicians**

Florida physicians constantly encounter the problem of unfair payment policies within the health insurance industry. Underpayment, lack of payment, and denial of payment for services that were prior-approved by insurance companies not only jeopardize the economic sustainability of medical practices in Florida, but also undermine access to care.

Physician practices, many of which are small businesses that provide jobs in our communities, must be protected from pervasive abuses by out-of-state insurance behemoths that are making record profits at the expense of clinicians and the patients they serve. One of the FMA's top priorities is the passage of legislation to prohibit health plans from retroactively denying payment for medical services that were prior-approved. It is not unreasonable for physicians to expect payment for providing care that insurance companies approved in advance.

*continued on page 7*

## **Address the Major Cost Driver in Health Care: The Obesity Epidemic**

Obesity is a public health epidemic that reduces quality of life while significantly increasing healthcare costs. In fact, obesity-related chronic diseases – many of which are preventable – are among the major cost drivers in health care.

Such chronic diseases – diabetes, hypertension, muscle and joint problems, and some forms of cancer – account for an estimated 400,000 deaths nationwide each year and \$190 billion in healthcare costs. At the current rate, by 2030, over half of Florida's population will be obese, resulting in an estimated \$18 billion per year in additional costs.

Physicians helping patients take responsibility for their own health is key to reversing this trend and improving the well-being of all Floridians.

The FMA is uniquely positioned to help address the obesity epidemic. The FMA Foundation's Healthy Living Initiative aims to reduce chronic disease and lower healthcare costs by providing primary care physicians with specific resources to educate patients about good nutrition and adopting healthier lifestyle habits.

We seek to partner with the state of Florida in this important endeavor to end the obesity epidemic in our state.

## **Promote Quality by Requiring Medical School Training and Licensure to Practice Medicine in Florida**

The practice of medicine is reserved for those who have completed medical school, undertaken years of training in a certified residency program, and passed arduous licensing exams. Other members of the healthcare team – nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, therapists, and psychologists – have important skills that complement physicians' unique expertise in caring for patients. However, lowering standards for medical training and reducing physician oversight are not in the best interest of Floridians. The Legislature should not provide shortcuts to non-physicians who want to practice medicine. The FMA believes that if someone wants to be a medical doctor, he or she should go to medical school and complete a residency program.

## **Support Graduate Medical Education Programs that Keep Florida-trained Doctors in Our State**

Doctors tend to stay in the states where they receive their specialized medical residency training. Therefore, Florida needs to invest appropriately in graduate medical education (GME) – not just build more medical schools – to train our next generation of physicians. As our physician workforce ages and our population grows, the State of Florida must be prepared to meet this challenge.

Currently, almost half of the students who graduate from Florida's outstanding medical schools are leaving the state to do their residency training. Essentially, we are using state taxpayer dollars to export Florida-educated doctors to other states.

## **Support Effective and Proven Public Health Initiatives**

In 2016, state lawmakers passed the Infectious Disease Elimination Act (IDEA), authorizing a five-year pilot syringe exchange program at the University of Miami.

The success of the IDEA Exchange in Miami-Dade leaves no doubt about the importance of expanding this harm reduction program to other Florida counties. The IDEA Exchange has tested hundreds of people for HIV and Hepatitis C, helping them get treatment while also providing access to medications that halt disease transmission. These services are essential in Florida, which has one of the nation's highest rates of new HIV infections.

A critical part of the IDEA Exchanges' mission is making sure that naloxone is available to people who use drugs, their family members, and others who are likely to witness an overdose. Naloxone is a safe, easily administered medication that can almost instantly reverse the effects of opioid overdose.

Via a mobile van, the IDEA Exchange has been able to do extensive street outreach, offering naloxone kits and other health services without judgement and always with a kind word. This process gives people who are using drugs an opportunity to ask for help getting into treatment – when they are ready. Because participants must bring a dirty needle to receive a clean one, the IDEA Exchange has removed more than 100,000 dirty needles and syringes from Miami's streets. This has been accomplished without increasing crime or drug use, and without state funds.

But in many of Florida's other 66 counties, the opioid epidemic is even worse. Fentanyl-related deaths in the state increased by 97% between 2015 and 2016. The State Medical Examiner's report for 2016 showed that in 24 counties, death rates from fentanyl were equal to or higher than in Miami-Dade, with the most in Duval County. In Manatee County, deaths from fentanyl analogues or derivatives in 2016 were double the number in Miami-Dade. In the same year, Palm Beach County had the highest number of heroin-related overdose deaths.

Florida's overdose epidemic is claiming an estimated 15 lives each day. The Legislature can ensure that every county in our state has the tools to address this public health crisis and save lives.

## **Improve Vaccination Rates to Control Infectious Diseases**

Vaccination is one of the safest and most cost-effective ways to prevent infectious diseases. While Florida has worked to vaccinate more young children, coverage rates for this age group are not improving in our state or the U.S. In fact, overall rates may be declining. Much of this stems from parental decisions against having their children vaccinated, exposing entire communities to potential outbreaks. Properly vaccinating all children born in the U.S. would prevent an estimated 20 million cases of disease during their lifetime and 42,000 premature deaths. For every dollar spent on childhood vaccination, we save a minimum of \$10 in direct and indirect costs by reducing hospitalizations, lost work time, disability, and disease outbreak investigations.

But vaccinating our children is not enough. Adult immunization also prevents infectious diseases, and vaccination rates for this population are significantly lower than rates for children. Routine vaccination of older and high-risk adults against bacterial pneumonia has been shown to decrease preventable hospitalizations. Adult vaccinations also protect infants and people who cannot be vaccinated. Recent outbreaks of pertussis, measles, and influenza underscore the importance of improving Florida's adult vaccination rates.

## Your CCMS Membership Dues at Work

Collier County Medical Society

As a CCMS member, you support our mission to “serve the needs of our members so they can better serve the needs of the community.” CCMS provides you and the medical community strong and effective representation, focusing on supporting you as a physician, your practice, and maintaining the high standard of medicine we are accustomed to in Collier County.

The following benefits are designed to help you help your patients. The activities and programs are based on the CCMS core values: Collegiality, Professionalism, Leadership, Advocacy, Education, Communication, and Physician Wellness. For details, visit [ccmsonline.org/membership](http://ccmsonline.org/membership).

### **Education**

CCMS provides frequent educational meetings to members and practice administrators at no additional charge. CCMS also offers all members a complimentary professional account with CE Broker CME tracking service.

### **Social Events**

The Society hosts numerous social events each year, included with your membership, such as After 5 Socials, women physician events, the new members welcome reception, our annual banquet, and family outings. These events help you connect, commiserate, and collaborate with your peers.

### **Advocacy**

CCMS sends a delegation to the FMA House of Delegates each year where FMA policy is formed and a legislative agenda is created. CCMS delegates participate on reference committees and draft resolutions that are passed by the HOD.

CCMS officers and legislative committee members meet regularly with legislators to advocate for members and their patients. CCMS also provides critical information on behalf of physicians in multiple practice-related issues, and communicates to the public and to the press as needed. Members can voice concerns to CCMS for action.

### **Political Action Committee**

The CCMS Political Action Committee (PAC) supports the campaigns of physician & patient-friendly candidates at local and state levels. Contributions from members have allowed the PAC to provide thousands of dollars in campaign support. The suggested contribution is \$100 per member.

### **Physician Directory**

Each fall CCMS distributes 10,000 free copies of a Physician Directory to members, medical facilities, and the public. The Directory listings are exclusive to CCMS members, and advertising space is available for purchase. Additionally, our “find-a-doctor” search is at [ccmsonline.org](http://ccmsonline.org), and CCMS provides member information daily to patients calling for physician referrals.

### **Physician Wellness**

The Physician Wellness Program features confidential, cost-free, convenient psychological services available to all members. A complimentary Employee Assistance Program is available to practices who participate in the CCMS Guardian ancillary store. CCMS events and advocacy efforts are also working hard to address the stressors members are facing.

### **Email Alerts**

A bi-weekly e-newsletter, the “elert” is sent to all members alerting

them to time-sensitive information. Event and member notices are also frequently emailed to members. Upon request, CCMS sends complimentary notices for new CCMS members and relocation of practices. Open house and other practice notices can be emailed for a small fee. Please note: if you do not receive emails about CCMS events and services, please call us at 239-435-7727.

### **Magazine**

*The Forum*, a news and educational magazine, is sent to each member bi-monthly. The publication includes articles about the Society, its members, and issues affecting the practice of medicine. Contact CCMS to contribute articles and/or purchase advertising. Archived issues are available at [ccmsonline.org](http://ccmsonline.org).

### **Group Insurance Plans**

CCMS member private practices can be part of a single, large, fully-insured entity under Florida Blue to benefit from large employer economies and flexibility to better control costs. A portion of the premiums can be returned to the plan in good years and used to further stabilize costs. Additionally, member practices are eligible to enroll in the Guardian ancillary store offering group rates for disability, life, vision, dental, and more.

### **Committees**

CCMS members are welcome to join CCMS committees that help plan Society services and activities, including: Legislative; Membership; Programs; Physician Wellness; Social Media/Website; and Women’s Health Forum. To inquire about joining a committee, contact CCMS.

### **Community Outreach**

To promote good health, each year CCMS holds a Women’s Health Forum open to the public. CCMS physicians speak to approximately 400 women, and vendors exhibit their services. Speaker applications are distributed each fall to CCMS members. Plus, our speakers bureau is a resource for groups looking for physician experts on important medical issues. Contact CCMS to be placed on the list and receive notification of speaking opportunities in the community.

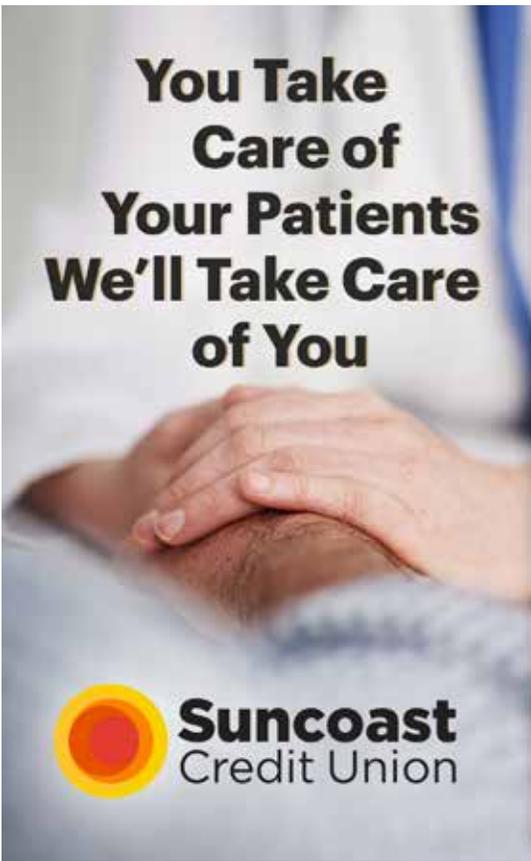
### **Affiliations**

The Foundation of CCMS ([ccmsfoundation.org](http://ccmsfoundation.org)) is a charitable organization promoting medical education and public health, including scholarships for healthcare students. CCMS also partners with the Physician Led Access Network (PLAN, [planc.org](http://planc.org)), helping the underserved receive specialty care. Members are encouraged to volunteer to see PLAN patients in your own offices. The CCMS Alliance ([ccmsalliance.info](http://ccmsalliance.info)) provides an additional network for member spouses.

### **Vendor Discounts**

The CCMS Circle of Friends program is open to businesses that show they can provide outstanding service and exceptional benefits for CCMS members and includes financial, legal, insurance, medical supplies/services, marketing/IT, and more. Members can call the Circle of Friends vendors directly (see [ccmsonline.org/preferred-vendors](http://ccmsonline.org/preferred-vendors)) or contact CCMS.

We invite you to be as involved as you can be in your CCMS, and to take advantage of these benefits included with your membership. As always, your suggestions and input are welcomed. Contact April Donahue, Executive Director, or Nancy Wood, Executive Assistant, at 239-435-7727 or [info@ccmsonline.org](mailto:info@ccmsonline.org).



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CCMS Doctors Day Family Outing!



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Attorney at Law

25 Years Experience Representing Physicians in Naples  
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*Take it from Linda...*

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# 11th Annual Women's Health Forum Educates over 400 Women

Collier County Medical Society

As part of their ongoing efforts to be a health resource for residents and visitors in Collier County, Collier County Medical Society and the Foundation of CCMS were pleased to host the 11th Annual Women's Health Forum, a free health education event for the public, on Saturday, February 23rd at the Naples United Church of Christ.

From 8:30am-1:00pm, more than 400 women enjoyed breakout sessions with educational talks from 24 CCMS member physicians, an exhibit hall with 24 vendors that provide services for women, and healthy refreshments. Approximately 20 volunteers staffed the event.

The forum, with the theme "Advances in Women's Health" focused on innovations in women's health, new medical technologies, important information on preventive care, and tips that encourage healthy behaviors for a better, longer life.

Topics of discussion included healthy heart, osteoporosis, dermatology, vein disease, dementia, nutrition, diabetes, orthopedics, and more. Each session allowed time for attendees to pose questions to the physician presenters, who volunteered their time to educate attendees.

Each year the Forum also allows CCMS to donate funds to the Foundation of CCMS, to help provide scholarships for future medical professionals and support for local healthcare programs in need. Contributions from event sponsors and exhibitors, and an onsite raffle with attendee donations, make this donation possible. Stay tuned for a final amount of this year's donation.

The Women's Health Forum was made possible with the generosity of presenting sponsors Fisher Eye & Laser Center, Physicians Regional Healthcare System, and Vein Specialists/ Dr. Joseph Magnant. The major sponsor was eBella Magazine.

Photos from the event are available at [facebook.com/ccmsonline](https://www.facebook.com/ccmsonline).

## Thank you to our Presenting Sponsors



*Alison Avila and Brittney Thoman with Physicians Regional*



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## PHYSICIAN ASSET PROTECTION PLANNING SEMINAR

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(Updated and Revised Topics for 2018)

How the new “TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT OF 2017” has changed the landscape (in a positive way) for Asset Protection Planning.

Funding trusts to accomplish asset protection and estate planning has just gotten a lot easier thanks to this new legislation. This change in tax code is not permanent and will sunset in 2025, however it could be subject to change much earlier than this pending the outcome of the Presidential election in 2020.



Adam O. Kirwan, J.D., L.L.M., Attorney and author of the books *The Asset Protection Guide for Florida Physicians* and *The Asset Protection Guide for Florida Residents*, will present on the following topics:

- Learn how the new Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 can help you potentially protect assets from current creditors without violating the Fraudulent Conveyance Statute.
- The negative impact and risks that the 2014 Florida Supreme Court Case ruling of (*Estate of McCall v. United States*) has on Florida Physicians facing lawsuits for medical malpractice.
- How to use trusts and other legal entities to help protect your assets.
- What assets are exempt from your creditors and how to use them to help protect your wealth.
- How to use wage accounts to help protect your earnings from garnishment.
- Why the “P.A.” is the worst legal entity to house your medical practice and what you can do to fix the “P.A. Problem”.
- How Florida’s revised Limited Liability Company Act may impact your asset protection.
- And much more.

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Hosted by Dan Shannon

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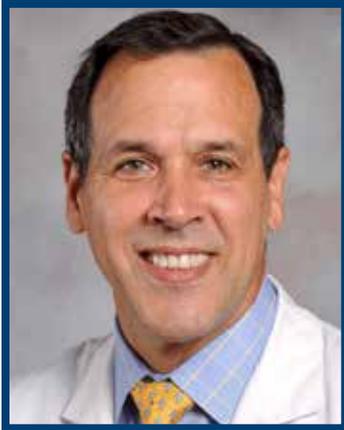
Market update and economic commentary by Dan Shannon  
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Adam O. Kirwan is not affiliated with Meridian Financial Group

## Reefer Madness 2.0

Daniel De La Torre, M.D., President, Lee County Medical Society



The times they are a changing. Regardless of what you think of marijuana, it's clear that the national trend is towards liberalizing its use. Last November, Michigan became the 10th state to legalize recreational marijuana. In Florida, we are still struggling with the recent state amendment legalizing medical marijuana. Our new governor, Ron DeSantis, recently declared that he will

not stand in the way of allowing the smoking of marijuana for legitimate medical purposes. What constitutes a legitimate medical purpose continues to evolve.

Despite what the proponents promoted, a recent survey of marijuana "prescriptions" reveals it is most commonly used for PTSD. Among the patients I treat, interest is high and concern for risk is low. Patients are often more concerned about starting a new blood pressure medicine than taking up medical marijuana. On the flipside, many of my colleagues, while not interested in "prescribing" medical marijuana, wonder what's the right thing to do for their patients. The well-intentioned treatment of pain and anxiety has in recent years been proven to have promoted as much harm as benefit.

Proponents of marijuana are eager to tout the benefits, but rarely discuss the risks. My patients who use marijuana offer anecdotal evidence of its benefits, but when the discussion turns to risk, accuse me of being in bed with the drug companies (to which I reply that marijuana stocks are much more lucrative these days).

In the months leading up to the Florida constitutional amendment, I spoke in opposition to medical marijuana because I felt that doctors were not in a position to discuss benefits and risk for a substance for which they had little evidence about use and dosage is widely varied. In a perfect world, marijuana would have been tested and refined like any of the medicinal alkaloids. Phase 1, 2, and 3 clinical trials would have identified appropriate uses and safe dosing regimens, as well as risks and contraindications. What we have now is a de facto phase IV trial with mounting evidence of greater risk than was widely purported. The available information, although inconclusive, is concerning.

Although legalization has not led to any significant increase in marijuana users, the number of people who use cannabis daily has quadrupled nationally in the past 10 years. Smoking remains the most popular delivery system.

While only population level data and surveys are available regarding psychiatric effects of marijuana, psychiatrists and

epidemiologists have long noted a correlation between cannabis use, psychosis, and violence. The first four states to legalize recreational marijuana (Colorado, Washington, Alaska, and Oregon) have experienced far greater increases in the rates of murder and aggravated assault than the national average in the past five years.

Accidents related to "driving high" remain a growing concern in states that have adopted marijuana use. Although the impairing effects of cannabis are widely acknowledged, meaningful data remains unavailable mostly because no practical method has yet been devised to distinguish marijuana use from marijuana associated impairment. The frequent presence of other substances, most commonly alcohol, further confounds the question.

Nonetheless, proponents respond that it's still better than opioids and benzodiazepines. Twenty years ago, the medical community embraced the liberal treatment of pain with opioids. Encouraged by well-meaning interest groups, government policy, and financial interests, we drove a trend that led us to the opioid crisis of today. Marijuana is neither a panacea nor a poison, but rather a two-edged sword we have not yet learned how to wield. Much research remains to be done. In the meantime, I remain hesitant to recommend anything that is neither tested nor controlled, especially one that involves inhaling combustion products. First do no harm.



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# Social Media Marketing and the Medical Industry: What You're Not Doing May Be Harming Your Business

By Nella DeCesare, Managing Director, WBN Marketing LLC



If you think that Facebook and Instagram are more for keeping up with the Kardashians than they are for marketing, you couldn't be more wrong. Today, consumers are turning to social media to help them with everything from finding an apartment to looking for a surgeon.

Yes, you read that last part correctly. Social media marketing is having an enormous impact on the healthcare industry. If you're

not taking advantage of the reach that social media can provide to your practice, you're missing out on valuable revenue streams.

## Growing your client base

Roughly 70% of people living in the United States are using some form of social media – and it's not just for finding recipes and sharing photos. Facebook, for example, hosts thousands of patient community groups.

These online forums are about more than just raising awareness and providing support; they're places where people can talk about the doctors they're seeing and the care they're receiving.

Data from the Pew Research Center suggests that approximately 80% of internet users are using the web to search for health information; of that population, 40% are using the internet to search for a doctor.

Statistics also show that 60% of people who use social media are more likely to trust posts from healthcare professionals than any other professional group. Ultimately, if you're not using social media to connect with possible clients, you're falling behind on the curve.

## One surgeon's story

One millennial surgeon we spoke with talked about how he's used Facebook and Instagram to grow his plastic surgery practice.

In addition to using the platforms to showcase before and after photos, he posts videos where he discusses various procedures, how anesthesia works and some of the common misconceptions people have about different surgeries.

Not only has this helped him feel more relatable to his patients, it's helped him attract new clients. Nearly 30 percent of his business, he said, can be linked to social media marketing efforts.

## Reasons doctors should use social media

The benefits of using social media platforms are numerous. First and foremost, it gives you the chance to educate your patients.

If you're an oncologist and you have information about a new research study, you can share that link (along with an explanation of what the study has found) with your followers.

If you have ideas or suggestions as to how people could improve their health, or the types of things they can do to help recover from a procedure, video is a great way to share that message.

## How to use social media effectively

To strike the right tone on your social media pages, be authentic, be yourself, and don't try to be someone you're not.

When you use social media, you want to be relatable. Talk about what you know. Be compassionate. Share the types of information that you feel your patients would find valuable.

Don't try to be Dr. Oz (unless you are, in fact, Dr. Oz). Be you. Let your patients know why you're passionate about your field of practice and how current research findings are helping to advance patient care.

In closing, if you're not currently using social media to promote your business, you're bound to fall behind. When your patients can find you, connect with you and feel as if you're invested in their care and treatment, everyone wins.

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