

February 2012

## UPCOMING EVENTS



BENTON FRANKLIN COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

# The Society Pages

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

6:30-7:00 pm Social Hour, 7:00-8:30 Membership Business Presentation

Spring Membership Meetings will continue to be held at Meadow Springs Country Club.

Mark your calendars for March 20th , April 17th and May 15th.

## 28th Annual CME Seminar

(February 24/25)

early registration ends on  
February 10th!!

The registration form is available on the website at [www.bentonfranklincms.com](http://www.bentonfranklincms.com). We can also accept phone registrations with a credit card payment for your convenience.

### **UW Family Medicine's Rural Opioid Addiction Management Project: Buprenorphine in the Treatment of Opioid Dependence**

March 13, 2012 (7:30 AM to 5:00 PM)

Red Lion Hotel at the Park, 303 W North River Drive, Spokane, WA 99201

Please see full information posted on our website at [bentonfranklincms.com](http://bentonfranklincms.com)

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

The legislative session entered its third week with several of our local physicians traveling to Olympia to participate in the WSMA Legislative Summit on January 23rd. These physicians also had an opportunity to meet with our local legislators and discuss several bills that are currently under consideration.

**Licensure Integrity (SB 6270):** The bill specifies that health care professionals may not be required to participate in third-party reimbursement programs (private and public) as a condition of licensure. This law will ensure that physicians maintain individual choice over which third parties they wish to contract. SB 6270 will establish Washington as a positive environment for physicians to practice, making it easier to retain and attract physicians to the state. The WSMA Supports this bill.

**Tanning Legislation:** The WSMA testified in January in support of legislation to limit access to tanning facilities by minors.

**POLST Immunity:** The WSMA testified in January in support of legislation to grant to physicians, other health care providers, and certain health care facilities immunity from civil liability for good faith actions taken in accordance with the orders in a POLST (Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) form. Emergency medical personnel currently have such immunity. Hope for passage of the bill, HB 2462, was diminished, however, when amendments were proposed by the attorney for the state long term care ombudsman. Those amendments go beyond what the WSMA had hoped to accomplish with this bill. The WSMA is working with stakeholders to see if there is a way forward all parties can agree upon.

### This week in Olympia:

The Senate health committee will take testimony on **SB 6394** which would require transparency for patients regarding training and qualifications of health care professionals. WSMA President Dr. Doug Myers will speak in support of the bill.

Medical Assistants licensure (HB 2227) – has passed out of the House health care committee and is a work very much in progress. WSMA is working with stakeholders on a handful of amendments to the bill to clarify and maintain its original intent to rationalize MA licensure and scope issues.

Peer Review Attorney Fees (HB 2308/SB 6301) has passed out of the House health care committee without a dissenting vote. It is now in the House Rules committee. The Senate bill is to have a hearing this week. This is joint WSMA/WSHA legislation that restores fairness and balance to peer review hearings regarding the awarding of attorney fees to the loser of such proceedings.

The Health Insurance Exchange bills – **SB 6178 and HB 2319** – are generating increasing comment as amendments are now being prepared. Senate and House amendments are expected to be acted upon this week. Some of the speculation we are hearing and hope to evaluate more formally today comes from the Senate amendments to SB 6178. The work of the WSMA with legislators and their staff continues to focus on preventing exchange rules that would force physician payment levels down to Medicaid rates, and to advocate for policies that promote a healthy marketplace. States that form their own Essential Benefits Package with benefits that exceed the federal definition will pay the cost differential, exerting more downward pressure on payment levels. Meanwhile, the Healthy Washington Coalition is lobbying for support of the governor's proposal on market participation rules that go beyond the federal floor and include: *A carrier may not offer any individual health benefit or small group plan outside the Exchange unless it also offers a silver-level and gold-level qualified health plan through the Exchange. A carrier may not offer a bronze-level qualified health plan outside the Exchange unless it offers the same plan through the Exchange.*

Says the HWC, without these strong market participation rules the Exchange will become a high-risk pool: insurers will use practices to direct the sickest individuals into the Exchange so as to maximize their interests outside the Exchange. This will drive up risk, costs, and premiums, forcing healthier individuals and small groups to drop out of the Exchange until rapidly escalating costs eventually cause conditions which would threaten the insurance market as a whole.

Thank you to the WSMA for their hard work in Olympia and for much of the information provided in this update. If you have further questions about the legislative agenda, contact Tim Layton, senior director of legislative, regulatory and legal affairs, at [tim@wsma.org](mailto:tim@wsma.org).

# Applications for Membership

**Second notice dues statements**  
**were sent out in mid-January.**  
**We are happy to accept check**  
**or credit card payments. We**  
**thank you for your continued**  
**support of our society and look**  
**forward to serving you in 2012!**

**First Notice:**

**Dawn Swanson MD**

**Board Certified Family Practice**

Medical School: Medical Univ. of the Americas (2003)  
Internship: Spokane Family Practice  
Residency: Spokane Family Practice  
Practice: Kennewick General Hospital (Hospitalist),  
900 S. Auburn St., Kennewick, Phone: 586-6111

## Proposed By-Laws Change

The Board of Trustees has reviewed and approved the following proposed By-Laws change which would create an Ex-Officio category of membership.

“Any member of the Society who is serving as an officer of the Washington State Medical Association or the American Medical Association shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Board of Trustees for the duration of time as such office is held. The County Health Officer is also an Ex-Officio member for the duration of his/her office. Ex-Officio members of the Board of Trustees shall be non-voting members.”

This amendment will be voted on at the March General Membership meeting, scheduled for March 20, 2012.

**Welcome New Members!!**

**Gary Belcaster MD**

**Board Certified Gastroenterology**

Medical School: Univ. of Illinois (1990)  
Internship: University of Wisconsin  
Residency: University of Wisconsin  
Practice: 4403 W. Court St. Ste. B, Pasco  
Phone: 545-6220 Fax: 547-0894

**Tania Matta MD**

**Board Certified Pediatrics**

Medical School: St. Joseph School, Beirut (1990)  
Internship: Hotel Dieu de France, Beirut  
Residency: Sophia Antipolis Nice, France, Woodhul  
Hospital, NY  
Practice: 3950 Keene Rd., West Richland  
Phone: 942-3627

**Michael Myers MD**

**Radiation Oncology**

Medical School: The Chicago Medical School (2005)  
Internship: Alameda County Medical Center  
Residency: Virginia Commonwealth University  
Practice: 7350 W. Deschutes Ave., Kennewick  
Phone: 737-3371 Fax: 736-0958

**Janmeet (Rocky) Sahota DO**

**Board Certified Spinal Surgery**

Medical School: University of Medicine and Dentistry of  
NJ, Stratford, NJ (2002)  
Internship: Northshore University Hospital, NY  
Residency: Northshore University Hospital, NY  
Practice: 6703 W, Rio Grande Ave., Kennewick  
Ph: 946-6144, Fx: 946-7253