

HOT TOPICS STATE NEWS AMA NEWS PRACTICE MANAGEMENT ISSUES POLICY NEWS COMMUNITY HEALTH ISSUES
UPCOMING EVENTS MEMBERSHIP SERVICES & BENEFITS TIPS & TRICKS BREAKING NEWS ACADEMY MEETINGS NEW
MEMBERS THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE OF TOLEDO AND LUCAS COUNTY TORT REFORM

CLASSIFIED ADS

Space for Lease - 4126 Holland-Sylvania Rd. Toledo, Ohio at impressive new 61,000 sq.ft. medical office building. 14,000 sq.ft. available: build to suit with option to buy.

Call **Dr. Stacy Bowen** at 419.473.9210.

Billing Service - Today's Billing Solution is an established and experienced locally owned and operated billing service offering full practice management. Check us out at www.todaysbillingsolution.com or call 419/866.1489.

Academy Annual Golf Tournament June 7

Have you made your reservation for The Academy Golf Tournament at Stone Oak Country Club on Thursday, June 7? There will be an 8:30 shotgun, so please plan to be there by 8. Make your reservation now! If you need a registration form contact Lee Wealton at 419/473.3206 or email lwealton@aol.com.

APPLICATIONS

DAVID J. LEDRICK, MD
Emergency Medicine

ROBERT M. PALMER, MD
General Surgery

KAMALA P. TAMIRISA, MD
Cardiology

PHYSICIAN NEEDED

Community Health Services, a well-established JCAHO accredited Community Health Center located in Fremont, Ohio, is in need of the following physicians to meet the needs of our expanding practice. All physicians will be covered under the federal malpractice insurance which provides unlimited coverage at no cost to the provider or employer. Federal student loan repayment is also available at \$25,000 a year to full-time providers.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR – Full-time

Full-time Family Practice Physician needed for Medical Director opening. Position requires a call schedule along with office based practice. Electronic Medical Records EMR experience is helpful, but not necessary. The Medical Director supervises the medical staff and is part of the management team. Time is allotted for administrative tasks. Qualified candidate should have at least 5 years experience as a physician. Management experience is preferred. Salary is \$180,000 plus benefits including life, health, dental insurance, and a 401K plan with an employer match.

FAMILY PRACTICE / INTERNAL MEDICINE – Full-time

Needed full-time (4.5 days per week) plus participation in a one in four call schedule. All benefits listed above apply.

PART-TIME FILL IN

Family Practice, Internal Medicine, and Pediatrics needed to provide care in an office setting only on a fill-in basis. Flexible hours available. Salary is \$75.00 an hour.

Interested candidates can fax CV to 419/334.8619 or email to jliszak@fremontchs.com or call 419/334.8943 for additional information.

Community Health Services
410 Birchard Ave.
Fremont, Ohio, 43420

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APRIL/MAY 2007

Healthcare Simplification Act

The Academy of Medicine is joining the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) in supporting new legislation, dubbed the Healthcare Simplification Act, which would provide remedies for many of the excessive administrative demands doctors and other healthcare providers face in their interactions with health plans.

The Act was recently introduced as Senate Bill 127 by Senator Kevin Coughlin (R-Cuyahoga Falls), Senator Randy Gardner (R-Bowling Green) and Senator John Bocchieri (D- New Middletown) and House Bill 125 by Rep. Matt Huffman (R-Lima), Rep. Tim DeGeeter (D-Parma) and Rep. Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati).

The Act, which already has bipartisan support, would:

- Establish fairness and full disclosure in health plan contracts that healthcare providers must sign;
- Streamline the redundant credentialing process that health plans impose upon many healthcare providers; and
- Require health plans to develop a web-based system that shows patients' most current information, including their deductibles and medical services covered.

Specifically, the Act calls for a summary disclosure form, along with full disclosure, in plain language, of fee schedules, payment policies, categories of coverage, and terms under which contracts can be changed. The Act would eliminate "all products" clauses and restrict "most favored payer" clauses, while also prohibiting an insurer from "selling" or "renting" its provider network to other third-party payers.

The Act would also designate the national Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare – using a single, free online system for all physicians and healthcare entities – as the sole credentialing agency in Ohio. Finally, the Act calls for the development of a web-based system that provides instant, comprehensive patient information at the time medical services are provided.

"OSMA believes these proposals are common-sense solutions that will bring more balance, uniformity, and clarity to Ohio's healthcare system. Most importantly, they will help doctors and other healthcare providers get back to doing what they do best – providing the best possible care for their patients," said OSMA President James M. Sudimack, MD.

Healthcare providers are encouraged to contact their legislators and urge them to support HB 125 and SB 127. For more information about the Healthcare Simplification Act, go to www.osma.org.

The OSMA is collecting examples of physician/payer contract clauses that place unfair burdens on medical practices. This information will help support the OSMA's legislative campaign to enact an administrative simplification law for plan contracts. In addition, if you have stories about duplicative credentialing processes or the need for real-time patient eligibility verification, please include them also. If you have examples and you are willing to talk to the OSMA, please call Lisa Hackley at 800/766.6762.

Screening for Autism is Easy and Important

April is Autism Awareness Month. A recent report from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) places the incidence of autism as 1 in 150. (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/documents/AutismCommunityReport.pdf>). While there is debate about the cause for the increase in these numbers (better diagnosis, a widening of the diagnostic criteria, reclassification of individuals who were diagnosed with other disorders, or a true increase), the fact remains that there are more and more individuals who currently meet diagnostic criteria. In 2001, the National Academies of Sciences published a report called *Educating Children with Autism*. **The report recommended a minimum of 25 hours a week of intensive, goal-directed, developmentally appropriate, year round services as soon as a child is suspected of having autism.** It is crucial that children receive a diagnosis as soon as possible so they may begin to receive the education and services that will lead to a better outcome later on.

Pediatricians and family physicians can and should make developmental screenings a standard part of a child's regular check-ups. The American Academy of Pediatrics supports the need for monitoring a child's behavior and development in the technical report, *The Pediatrician's Role in the Diagnosis and Management of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Children* (www.pediatrics.org). A variety of screening tools that can be used with parents by nurse practitioners or other trained staff are available. You can download The M-CHAT (Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers) for free from the [website www.firstsigns.org](http://www.firstsigns.org), along with information about other developmental and autism screening tools. First Signs also has a screening kit with video for pediatric practitioners. The CDC also has wonderful materials available for health care providers from their Learn the Signs, Act Early campaign. You may order up to five kits per office or download the materials from the website <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/actearly>. These materials help practitioners and parents monitor the child's development. There are fact sheets about several developmental disabilities including autism, along with information about typical developmental milestones at a variety of ages.

Physicians should act on parental concerns by monitoring a child's development and promptly referring for a comprehensive evaluation. It costs almost nothing and only takes a few minutes. The difference that the resulting referral to early intervention can make is certainly worth it.

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Real Estate as an Investment and Tax Strategy

For most Americans, purchasing their home will be their single biggest investment and loan they have. Many higher income individuals will at some point weigh the option of paying off their mortgage ahead of time with excess cash, given lower investment yields and a general desire to retire personal debt. Is that the best use of your cash? Is that the most tax efficient strategy? For those in higher tax brackets, phase-outs of many types of deductions come into play and the remaining deductions are few. Don't jettison your deductible mortgage interest without consulting your tax professional. Make sure you are taking advantage of favorable rates and that you are in a mortgage product in which you are comfortable.

Many high income individuals will look to real estate for investment opportunities, whether in office buildings, single family rental homes, apartment buildings, or warehouse space. Limited partnerships, formed to hold real estate interests have grown considerably in number and may provide an opportunity for investment growth as well as diversification. On the pyramid of investments, real estate generally carries more risk, and more potential reward than Treasury Bills, money market funds, or traditional savings accounts. This type of investment is much more of a long-term investment.

With the Tax Reform Act of 1986, losses flowing through limited partnership interests to individuals are generally classified as passive activity losses. Such losses cannot be used to offset earned income (dividends, interest income etc.). Passive activity losses can be offset with income from passive sources.

With investment real estate, like any other investment, make sure to do your due diligence before leaping into a project. Make sure this investment fits with your personal goals and time frames and what the tax ramifications will be. Consult your tax professional on your specific situation.

For more information on residential mortgage products and rates, or investment real estate financing options, please contact any of these individuals at Fifth Third Private Bank:

Beth Meridieth	(419) 885-6552
Erika Rizzo	(419) 885-6554
Jane Marie Rahe	(419) 259-7869
Maureen Brown	(419) 885-6555

To ensure compliance with requirements imposed by the IRS, we inform you that any U.S. tax advice contained in this communication (including any attachments) is not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used, for the purpose of (i) avoiding penalties under the Internal Revenue Code or (ii) promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any transaction or matter addressed herein.

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Community Health Commission Notes

Obesity – The problem of increasing endemic obesity in our community and the country as a whole was discussed. The recent Framingham study report (Amer. J. Med., Mar., 2007) indicated that the prevalence of obesity has been steadily increasing for the past 50 years. The CDC reported that obesity (BMI >30) in adults in Ohio increased by 25% to over 20% of the population in the past 10 years. Obesity affects 34% of African American women in the United States. 60.5% of the U.S. adult population is overweight. Recent articles in the medical literature and media cite increasing childhood obesity, increasing consequences of obesity (diabetes mellitus and metabolic syndrome), lack of adequate fruit and vegetable consumption by over 70% of the population, and the impact of advertising on adult and children eating behavior. Previous studies have shown that most adults and children do not get enough exercise or have access to means of physical exercise in their communities or schools.

The Commission previously supported the Surgeon General's report calling for more access to physical education in schools. We wish to reiterate the call for the regional public, charter, parochial and private schools to include universal physical activities for all students able to participate, including warm-up calisthenics twice a day, recess walking for 1/2 hour or other light exercise, and sports that allow participation by as many students as possible.

Tobacco Prevention – The final draft enforcement rules from the Ohio Department of Health were formulated at the end of March. The Commission applauds the County's decision to make Mud Hens Stadium (Fifth Third Field) smoke free starting May 1.

Immunizations – Questions were raised regarding the propriety of making human papilloma virus vaccine a requirement for junior high school entrance since it is spread only by sexual contact. The vaccine is currently offered through the Ohio Department of Health under the Vaccine for Children Act. For the general public, issues still remain because of its high cost (\$360) for the series of 3, unpredictable insurance reimbursement and the unwillingness of physicians to pay for and stock the vaccine if reimbursement cannot be assured.

Infectious Diseases – The CDC has alerted physicians to the increasing prevalence of tuberculosis and the emergence of multiple drug resistant strains (there has been 1 case in Ohio). The increase is notable in the oriental populations in California and New York. The CDC continues to warn of Salmonella infections from exotic pets (lizards and turtles) and, more recently, from chicks and ducklings sold for Easter. The Ohio Department of Health reminds physicians of a steady but significant incidence of Clostridium difficile infections in the elderly in nursing homes and hospitals in Ohio. A rapid test is available if an infection is suspected.

School Health – A recent paper in the Journal of Adolescent Health reviewed 83 articles on the effectiveness of education programs worldwide in reducing the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Programs were effective across a wide variety of countries, cultures, and groups of youth. There is concern across a wide variety of education and health professionals regarding Gov. Strickland's proposed budget cuts for health education in the schools. The Commission encourages the Council to write to the governor and local legislators to not cut back on health education at a time when nutrition, lifestyle and sexuality remain major problems amenable to education.

Important Up-date Regarding The Academy of Medicine Retired Fellows Health Insurance Plan

We recently received up-dated information from Medical Mutual of Ohio regarding The Academy of Medicine Retired Fellows Health Insurance Plan. Effective immediately, a newly retired physician has 30 days from the date of retirement in which to join The Academy's health insurance plan. If the physician does not do so within 30 days, they are ineligible to do so at a later date. When planning for your retirement, remember to check into The Academy Retired Fellow Health Insurance Plan. If you have any questions regarding the plan, please contact Jan Schutt by phone at 419/471.3131 or via e-mail at jm.schutt@gmail.com.

Physician As Artist Exhibition

The Toledo Museum of Art is completely booked for 2007, so The Academy of Medicine Physician As Artist Exhibition will not be held in 2007. The Physician As Artist Exhibition is already booked for September 5 through October 12, 2008. Please mark your calendar now and plan to exhibit your artwork in the Physician As Artist Exhibition at the Toledo Museum of Art in 2008. It's not too early to get started on new works!

CMS Announces NPI Deadline Extension to 2008

Apparently in response to growing concern in the medical community about whether all parties were prepared to meet the upcoming National Provider Identifier (NPI) deadline, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that it has initiated a contingency plan that extends the compliance date for the NPI from May 23, 2007 to May 23, 2008. However, healthcare experts are already warning medical practices that regardless of the delay, it is extremely important that they continue to move forward as quickly as possible in obtaining their NPI numbers.

This contingency plan applies to covered entities (other than small health plans which already had a May 2008 deadline) that will not meet the May 2007 NPI deadline. Under the contingency plan covered entities would be protected from enforcement action if they continue to act in good faith to come into compliance. According to CMS, the enforcement process is complaint driven and will allow covered entities to demonstrate their good faith efforts. Contingency plans may not extend beyond May 23, 2008, but entities may elect to end their contingency plans sooner. Medicare will announce its own contingency plan shortly.

Medical Claims, Trends and Avoidance Since Tort Reform

Lucas County, Ohio Claims Data 2001-2006 has been added to the agenda for the Medical/Legal program on Thursday, May 31, 2007, from 5:30 pm until 9:00 pm in the St. Lukes' Hospital Auditorium. If you have not yet made a reservation, call Cam Thomas at 419-891-8019. If you need a program flyer, call Lee Wealton at 419-473-3206 or email him at lwealton@aol.com.

SAVE THESE DATES!

Academy of Medicine & Flower Hospital Joint Meeting
Monday, May 14, 2007
Franciscan Center
Guest Speaker:
Ronald M. Davis, MD
President-Elect, AMA



Academy of Medicine/Toledo Bar Association/St. Luke's Hospital CME/CLE Seminar
Thursday, May 31, 2007
5:30 pm
St. Luke's Hospital Auditorium



Academy Annual Golf Tournament
Thursday, June 7, 2007
8:30 am Shotgun
Stone Oak Country Club



Academy Night at the Mud Hens
Tuesday, August 7, 2007
The Roost at Fifth Third Field
Dinner at 5:30 pm,
first pitch at 7:00 pm



Academy of Medicine & The University of Toledo Medical Center Joint Meeting
Fall, 2007
Date and Location TBA