



Texas Two Step

Serving ACOG members in Texas

July 2010



Chair's report

John C. Jennings, MD

Ob-gyns in the US are rapidly becoming aware of the challenges our specialty faces with the recent passage of health care reform. One of the very best sources of information to us is the ACOG website (acog.org). The ACOG Government Relations and Outreach department recently launched a Health Care Reform Center on the ACOG website. You can access it at acog.org by clicking on the Health Care Reform Center box on the left side of the webpage. The information is aimed specifically at ACOG members, and I encourage every member of District XI to take advantage of this important resource.

Health care reform began with the concept of reducing costs and increasing accessibility of health care. Provisions in the enacted legislation include increased accessibility for general preventive health care, chronic disease management, and, particularly, pregnancy-related care for women. The bill does not, however, address medical liability concerns with any meaningful action.

Ob-gyns have been criticized by some as providing expensive services with less than favorable outcomes. While cesarean and preterm delivery and teenage pregnancy rates have risen, ob-gyns are being critiqued for excessive utilization of technology and gynecologic surgical procedures. In my opinion, we must address criticisms of our specialty by practicing the finest evidence-based medicine and keeping women informed of the best available options for their health care.

In many states in our country, even in Texas where tort reform has been passed, the threat of liability can impair medical

decision making. Uncertainty of reimbursement issues and increasing requirements for compliance and documentation are challenging the viability of some ob-gyn practices.

I was recently asked what I think is the greatest threat to the practice of ob-gyn. My gut response was simply the “undermining of the sanctity of the physician and patient relationship.” I think this answer encompasses what most of us recognize every day in the practice of ob-gyn as a challenge. It is imperative that we maintain a trusting relationship with patients by minimizing the impact of external influences to that relationship. I believe that ACOG provides the best resources to defend the integrity of the ob-gyn physician and patient relationship.

Unquestionably, we are in the midst of great change in the practice of medicine in the US. How physicians respond to the challenges of change will determine the future practice of medicine and, particularly, the practice of ob-gyn. We are evolving into a much more multi-disciplinary, integrative type of practice to which we must adapt our educational processes and our practice's modalities. ACOG leadership is committed to addressing each issue affecting women's health care and keeping our Fellows informed and actively involved in tackling these challenges. I am optimistic in thinking that where there is change, there is opportunity, and ACOG Fellows are obligated to make certain that opportunity of change is directed in the best interest of women's health care.

District XI will be opening a new office in Austin to be in close proximity to the state government and to enhance our ability to speak for Texas ob-gyns and our patients. We anticipate being able to cover

the expenses of operating this office by working with the Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. We plan to consolidate our meetings into one meeting per year instead of having a spring and a fall meeting. In addition, we have requested authorization for a district dues increase of \$35 per year to help cover our advocacy efforts during this tumultuous time of change. Keep in mind, this dues increase will still leave our district far below other single state districts in terms of dues costs.

I cannot emphasize the importance of advocacy efforts enough. ACOG's federal political action committee, Ob-GynPAC, is dedicated to advocating for ob-gyns' interests in the US Congress. Stopping Medicare payment cuts, ensuring performance measures work for our specialty, preserving in-office ultrasounds, and winning medical liability reform are just a few of the critical issues Ob-GynPAC is addressing on Capitol Hill this year. Please consider how you might be able to contribute to the PAC. You can find more information at obgynpac.org. We have been fortunate in Texas with effective tort reform measures in place, but we cannot afford to become complacent about medical liability concerns or the many other issues in women's health care that we face.

Finally, it is an honor and a pleasure for me to serve as the first chair of District XI. I sincerely believe that ob-gyns in Texas will continue to benefit from the increasing influence of ACOG in our state. I hope to see many of you at the Annual District Meeting in Maui, HI, October 14–16. This will be an opportunity to learn, visit, relax, and exchange ideas with other ob-gyns in a beautiful setting. Visit adm2010maui.com for more information. ♦

New District XI Committee on Patient Safety and Quality Improvement seeks members

National attention has increasingly turned to patient safety and quality improvement since the Institute of Medicine's report to the US Congress in 2000, "To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System." The report stated that up to 98,000 deaths per year are attributable to medical errors. Prevention of these errors has reached state and national political discussion and was a topic of health care reform.

In an effort to spread awareness of patient safety practices to providers of women's health care in the state of Texas and report solutions that improve patient outcomes and/or decrease provider liability, District XI is forming a Committee on Patient Safety and Quality Improvement. The Committee will be chaired by Michael L. Nix, MD, our district patient safety officer, and will consist of each section vice chair, Junior Fellow and young

physician representatives, and a member-at-large.

District members interested in joining the Committee should have one or more of the following qualifications:

- ▶ Be a known contributor to patient safety and quality improvement activities at the local, state, or national level
- ▶ Be a member of a hospital patient safety committee or a local patient safety officer
- ▶ Be active in the formation of legislation that improves patient safety and/or improves the quality of women's health care

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Committee, please send a letter of interest along with a curriculum vitae to Michael L. Nix, MD, via mail at University of Texas Southwestern—Austin, Ob-Gyn, 1313 Red River, Suite 303B, Austin, TX 78701 or email at mnix@seton.org. ♦

Changes in Texas Medicaid obstetric ultrasound benefit criteria

On July 1, 2010, new benefit limitations and authorization requirements for obstetric ultrasound went into effect for Texas Medicaid fee-for-service and Primary Care Case Management patients.

Patients are now only allowed three ultrasounds per pregnancy. After three ultrasound examinations (even if by another doctor), a prior authorization is required. This change does not apply to obstetric ultrasounds performed or interpreted in hospital emergency departments, hospital obstetric triage areas, during an observation on labor and delivery, or in the course of an inpatient hospitalization. It is very important to use the "U6" modifier when ultrasounds are billed in the emergency department or during a hospital observation so that they will not

be counted toward the limit of three or be denied for lack of prior authorization.

A new Obstetric Ultrasound Prior Authorization Request Form has been created and can be found on the Texas Medicaid and Health Care Partnership (TMHP) website at tmhp.com. Physicians can submit requests for authorization by telephone, mail, or the TMHP website.

More detailed information is available on the on the TMHP website and the District XI website. To get to the information on our district website, go to acog.org, click on "ACOG Districts" under "Quick Links," then "District XI." There, you will see a notice addressed to Texas Medicaid obstetric providers. ♦



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Jill Hindenach, editorial manager

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Send letters to Amy E. Young, MD, at ayoung@bcm.tmc.edu

Attention medical students: Join Future Residents of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Future Residents of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FROGS) is a group designed just for medical students in Texas. Benefits include:

- ▶ Free student membership to ACOG with free access to ACOG educational materials and ob-gyn resources and supplies
- ▶ A quarterly newsletter with advice on how to succeed in your quest for residency
- ▶ A personal mentor who can answer your questions about becoming an ob-gyn

If you are interested in joining FROGS, contact Meadow M. Good, DO, District XI Junior Fellow Medical Student Committee chair, at mmgood@parknet.pmh.org. ♦

81st Annual Joint Meeting of TAOG and District XI report

In April, the 81st Annual Joint Meeting of the Texas Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (TAOG) and District XI was held at the beautiful Moody Gardens Hotel, Spa, and Convention Center in Galveston, TX. We had 252 attendees and 45 exhibitors present.

The Kaufman Lectureship was presented by Thomas Dayspring, MD, and the McGanity Lectureship was presented by Regan N. Theiler, MD. Special guest speakers included Gerald F. Joseph, Jr, MD, then-president of ACOG, and Susan Rudd-Bailey, MD, president-elect of the Texas Medical Association. Forty-four residents and 55 medical students attended, and the Second Annual Medical Student Symposium was held on Saturday, April 17, with a residency fair and hands-on sessions.

Larry C. Gilstrap, MD, executive director of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, was presented the Baden-Gibbs Award for lifetime service to women's health care in Texas. Dr. Joseph was presented a special hand-made gift from Carl A. Dunn, MD, District XI secretary, for his excellent service as ACOG president.

Both the District XI Advisory Council and the TAOG Board held meetings prior to the scientific session. Eugene C. Toy, MD, Section 4 chair, took office as president of the TAOG Board, and Charles E. Brown, MD, Section 3 vice chair, received a big round of thanks for his service as president for the past year. Luella Klein, MD, ACOG vice president of women's health issues, was a special guest of the district.

The 18th Annual Texas Junior Fellow Research Symposium was held on Friday, April 16, where 55 attendees heard 21 excellent papers presented by Junior Fellows. Jennifer F. Knudtson, MD, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, won the Pritchard Prize; Monica L. Mendiola, MD, Baylor College of Medicine at Houston, won first place; and Heather L. Straub, MD, University of Texas—Houston Medical School, Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital, won second place. ♦

District XI award winners at the 2010 ACOG ACM

Several awards were presented to members of District XI at the ACOG Annual Clinical Meeting this year. The winners were:

- ▶ Norman F. Gant, Jr, MD, Dallas, who received an ACOG Distinguished Service Award
- ▶ William L. Rayburn, MD, College Station, who received our first ACOG Outstanding District Service Award
- ▶ Judy Levison, MD, Bellaire, who received an ACOG Community Service Award
- ▶ R. Cullen Hopkins, MD, Amarillo, who received an ACOG Mentor Award, presented to ACOG Fellows who have mentored a young physician or Junior Fellow in practice ♦

2010 Annual District Meeting

Plan to attend our Annual District Meeting, October 14–16, at the Grand Wailea Resort on the island of Maui, HI. The combined meeting with Districts VII, VIII, and IX will be one you don't want to miss!

Tod C. Aeby, MD, District VIII program chair, has recruited an impressive array of faculty to present an updated edition of the widely acclaimed CME program "Reawakening the Excitement of Obstetrics and Gynecology." In addition to sessions on personal and financial planning and balance and burnout, there will be several scientific sessions that promise to appeal to every practice's style and interests.

For more information on the program, hotel, and meeting registration, visit adm2010maui.com.

Second Annual Section 1 Meeting

The Second Annual Section 1 Meeting will be held on September 25 at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine in Lubbock.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided for this one-day meeting. Watch for a brochure coming to you soon via mail or email.

Speakers will include:

- ▶ David L. Olive, MD, Wisconsin Fertility Institute, Middleton, WI
- ▶ Tristi W. Muir, MD, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, TX
- ▶ Mark C. Maberry, MD, Hendrick Health System, Abilene, TX
- ▶ Leslie E. Chupp, MD, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine at the Permian Basin, Odessa, TX

Topics will include:

- ▶ Fibroids and infertility
- ▶ Endometriosis
- ▶ Urinary incontinence
- ▶ Diabetes and pregnancy
- ▶ Gynecologic ultrasound ♦

Inaugural Section 5 Meeting

The inaugural meeting of Section 5 will be held on September 18 at The Lighthouse Inn in Rockport. Social events, such as charter fishing and golfing, are planned for September 17. Everyone is encouraged to attend and meet other section members for fellowship, networking, and continuing medical education. Watch your email inbox and mailbox for more information. ♦

Ask Dr. Kenneth L. Noller about maintenance of certification

Do you have questions about the maintenance of certification process? The District XI *Texas Two Step* is here to help. Kenneth L. Noller, MD, MS, former ACOG president and current director of evaluation for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, has agreed to respond to your questions about the maintenance of certification process through our newsletter. If there are any questions you'd like answered, please direct them to distxi@hotmail.com. We may feature them in upcoming issues. ♦

Applications for ACOG Committee service now being accepted

ACOG needs your expertise and willingness to serve! Applications for ACOG Committee service are now being accepted through September 10. If you are interested, go to acog.org, and click on "Application for Committee Service." ACOG President Elect James N. Martin, Jr, MD, will make these appointments in November 2010.

District XI young physician applicants needed

District XI is seeking applicants for the position of young physician. ACOG young physicians are Fellows who are younger than 40 years of age or within their first eight years of practice. The District XI young physician represents and expresses the interests of young physicians to the District XI Advisory Council (DAC) and is a voting member of the DAC. For more information on the position and how to apply, contact our current young physician, Kimberly A. Pilkinton, MD, at kpilkinton@swmail.sw.org or contact the District XI office at distxi@hotmail.com.

Calendar of events

2010

September

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| 18 | Inaugural Section 5 Meeting
The Lighthouse Inn
Rockport |
| 25 | Second Annual Section 1 Meeting
Texas Tech University Health Sciences
Center School of Medicine
Lubbock |

October

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| 14–16 | Annual District Meeting
(Districts VII, VIII, IX, and XI)
Grand Wailea Resort
Maui, HI
adm2010maui.com |
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Contact us

Contact information for all district and section officers and Junior Fellows can be found on the District XI websites:

- ▶ Current news and information on women's health care in Texas can be found on the District XI website at acog.org/acog_districts. Click on "District XI"
- ▶ Junior Fellow website: acog.org/acog_districts. Click on "District XI Junior Fellows"
- ▶ Further news and information can also be found on the Texas Association of Ob-Gyns website at txobgyn.org

Please remember to use electronic correspondence to help your district save on postage costs. Email us at distxi@hotmail.com or taog@hotmail.com. ♦