

November 18, 2015

An Open Letter to Physicians - from NYS Health Commissioner Zucker

Dear Colleague,

Greetings, and welcome to my first monthly letter to the state's physicians. As a doctor for over 30 years, I know how challenging it is to stay abreast of new developments. That's why I'm launching this monthly letter. Each letter, which I'll try to keep to one page, will discuss two of today's timely public health issues and what the New York State Department of Health is doing about them. This month, I want to focus on (1) medical marijuana and (2) antimicrobial resistance.

Medical marijuana: Beginning early next year, state providers will be able to prescribe medical marijuana to patients with certain conditions such as multiple sclerosis, ALS, Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and neuropathies. Evidence suggests that medical marijuana may mitigate pain, severe nausea and loss of appetite. The smoking of marijuana is strictly banned. Instead, the drug will be delivered by vaporization, oils, pills, and other consumables. The Health Department has registered five organizations to manufacture and dispense medical marijuana under strict guidelines in various regions of the state.

If you have patients who may benefit from medical marijuana, I urge you to consider taking the online practitioner course. The four-hour state-approved course provides 4.5 hours of CME credit. The course will provide information on the pharmacology of marijuana, contraindications, side effects, adverse reactions; overdose prevention, drug interactions, dosing and routes of administration. It will also discuss the risks and benefits of marijuana as well as warnings and precautions, and abuse and dependence. Once you complete the course, you will need to register for the Medical Marijuana Program if you want to certify eligible patients. For more information, visit:

https://www.health.ny.gov/regulations/medical_marijuana/practitioner/ .

Antimicrobial resistance: When Alexander Fleming accepted the Nobel Prize for discovering penicillin in 1945, he warned that antibiotics could one day lose effectiveness. Today, his prediction is coming true. Overuse of antibiotics for non-bacterial conditions and patients' failure to complete appropriately prescribed courses of antibiotics have led to significant increases in antibiotic resistance of common gram-negative infections, among others.

To address this issue, the Health Department is working with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in its "Get Smart" campaign to educate providers and patients on the appropriate use of antimicrobial agents, targeting regions with high antibiotic use and enlisting physicians to help bring down rates. Though we all know we can't treat viral infections with antibiotics, studies show that providers often succumb to perceived pressure from patients. As the state moves forward on efforts to educate and inform, we hope that you will do your part to educate your patients about proper antibiotic use.

I wish you all a pleasant autumn, and please stay tuned for next month's letter.

Sincerely,
Howard A. Zucker, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner of Health

[To see the PDF of this letter, please click here.](#)

Practice Management

Immunization Season is Upon Us, Prepare Today!

Immunization season is in full swing, and the Chapter is here to help with resources to assist with getting patients immunized.

We have partnered with the Campaign to ImmuNYze all New Yorkers, an initiative of the County Health Officials of New York (NYSACHO). This goal of the campaign is to bring together patients, parents, providers and campaign partners to heighten awareness of the need to immunize throughout life, from infancy through senior years.

The Campaign strives to provide up-to-date, accessible information about immunizations in order to increase vaccination rates throughout the state. The Campaign's positive immunization messages are available to the public, vaccine providers and our partners.

The posters and cards available here are free to download and allow your office to show commitment to immunizing patients and their loved ones. [Click here to see the materials available to download](#)

Other partners may work in other settings, such as colleges, schools and childcare centers, or through outreach and support to specific vulnerable, high-risk populations of adults. [Visit the NYSACHO Partners Page](#) to learn more about other organizations working to ImmuNYze All New Yorkers.

In addition, the ImmuNYze New York campaign offers these resources in immunization:

- [An adult Immunization schedule](#)
- [CDC standards for adult vaccination](#)
- [Provider information from the NYS Department of Health](#)
- [Are your employees up to date on their vaccinations?](#)

Remember to check NYACP's [Patient Care and Education webpage](#) as immunization information is updated frequently, and make sure to visit the [ImmuNYze New York Campaign's website](#) as well.

Make a Change, Have an Impact: Put Your Ideals Into Practice with Doctors Without Borders.

Doctors Without Borders is recruiting qualified **MEDICAL AND NON-MEDICAL professionals** in New York to join a team of dedicated humanitarian aid workers. They will be having a recruitment information session at their New York headquarters. The Chapter is asking you to help Doctors Without Borders in their recruitment efforts by sharing this information with your professional society memberships, communities, and colleagues.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

New York Recruitment Info Session
Thursday, November 19, 2015 at 7:00 PM

Doctors Without Borders
333 Seventh Ave, Second Floor
New York, NY 10011
United States

[Click here to register for the New York session](#)

[Learn more about Doctors Without Borders.](#)

Click [here](#) for a printable flyer.

NYACP Presents Career Link - Serving as the Bridge Between Physicians and Career Opportunities

NYACP recently re-launched its Career Link page, a fantastic opportunity for employers to post open positions to prospective job seekers, and for those looking for employment to post their contact information.

Job listings and contacts for those seeking jobs will be posted on a monthly basis.

In placing a job listing, \$100 per month includes:

- A listing up to 200 words
- Featured in 2 issues of Chapter eNewsletter
- Exposure to over 12,000 NYACP Members
- Logos included

Opportunity of the Month

[Upstate New York Physician Recruiters](#)

The Upstate New York Physician Recruiters was formed with you—the physician—in mind. Our goal is to empower you to make direct contact with our in-house hospital physician recruiters who are united to get our message out. We can provide you with all the physician career information, support and resources you need to make the right career choice for you and your family.

You can find the Career Link page [here](#).
[Download the flyer](#) | [Complete the online form](#)

Education

NYACP Poster Competition and Dr.'s Dilemma Results

On November 14, Residents and Medical Students from all over New York State competed in a poster competition across a variety of categories - over 130 posters were on display. There were also two wonderful plenary sessions; one from Stephanie Caffera, Esq, of Nixon-Peabody LLP that addressed "Ten Things to Look for in a Contract," and another from Jonah Feldman, MD, FACP, on High Value Care. Both sessions were seated to capacity and well-received.

Many posters from the competition were truly noteworthy, but only a few were selected as winners. Here are the winners for each category:

Resident/Fellow Clinical Vignette Category

1st Place: Tarek Ashour, MD, Rochester Regional Health System, Unity Hospital

2nd Place (tie): Narmadha Panneerselvam, MBBS, Bassett Medical Center

2nd Place (tie): Matthew Clarke, MD, Richmond University Medical Center

Resident/Fellow Research Category

1st Place: Hassan Alkhawam, MD, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

2nd Place: Yusaman Eslaamizaad, MD, NYU Lutheran Medical Center

3rd Place: Zerelda Esquer, MD, Jacobi Medical Center



Resident Winners

Medical Student Clinical Vignette Category

1st Place: Ian Kratzke, SUNY Upstate Medical University
2nd Place: John Kim, SUNY Upstate Medical University
3rd Place: Jacienta Paily, MS, SUNY Buffalo

Medical Student Research Category

1st Place: Lindsay Wahl, University of Rochester School of Medicine
2nd Place: Polina Pinkhasova, OMS-III, NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine
3rd Place: Sonika Raj, Albany Medical College



Medical Student Winners

Resident Patient Safety & Outcomes Measurement Category

1st Place: Christine Garcia, MD, MPH, SUNY Stony Brook
2nd Place: Narasa Madam, MBBS, University at Buffalo

Medical Student Patient Safety & Outcomes Measurement Category

1st Place: Renee Barlev, MSIV, Winthrop University Hospital

Doctor's Dilemma Results

Following the Poster Competition, Doctor's Dilemma was held between 12 Resident Programs from around New York.

After three contentious rounds, three teams competed in a final round, and Maimonides Medical Center Hospital was the runaway victor!

Congratulations to Suchit Khanijao, MD, Vivek Kumar, MD, and Saipriya Vasudevan, MD on this tremendous accomplishment!



The Maimonides Medical Center Hospital Dr's Dilemma Team!

November & December Dates to Remember

Webinars

- E-Prescribing Preparedness

Wednesday, November 18, 2015, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm EST: [Register Here](#)
Wednesday, December 9, 2015, 8:00 am - 9:00 am EST: [Register Here](#)

District Meetings

- NYACP Hudson Valley South District Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2015 • 6:00pm Registration / 6:30pm Dinner and Educational Program
(1) Treatment for Hepatitis C: New Tests, New Drugs & New Recommendations
(2) Addiction Medicine Basics with a Focus on Opioid Dependence
1-Hour CME Category I Credits™
Lusardi's Restaurant • 1885 Palmer Avenue, Larchmont NY 10538
1-Hour CME Category I Credits™
[Event Flyer](#)

NYS Health Commissioner's Medical Grand Rounds

- **Marijuana as Medicine: New York's Compassionate Care Act**
Wednesday, December 16, 2015 • 5:45pm - 7:00pm
University at Albany, School of Public Health Auditorium
1 University Place, Rensselaer NY
Guest Speaker: Howard A Zucker, MD, JD - Commissioner, NYS Department of Health
No Registration Required

 - **Ending The Epidemic**
End the HIV Epidemic by the End of 2020
This course is available online at any time and worth 1.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™
[Event Flyer](#) • [Online Registration](#)
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