News Briefs

Survey: Physicians cautious about joining medical cannabis program
A survey conducted by the MMA on June 2 shows that a majority of Minnesota physicians do not plan to participate in the state’s medical cannabis registry at this time. Of the more than 500 respondents, 8 percent said they plan to participate, 69 percent said they do not, 17 percent haven’t decided and 6 percent noted that they don’t have patients with a qualifying condition. The survey was sent to more than 14,000 physicians, both members and nonmembers of the MMA. The largest percentage of respondents identified themselves as family medicine physicians (32 percent), followed by internal medicine physicians (11 percent), pediatricians (7 percent) and psychiatrists (6 percent). Of note, specialties that will likely have the most interaction with patients looking to be certified (neurologists, ophthalmologists and oncologists) were at 3 percent each.

Annual Conference continues to take shape
The MMA’s Policy Council has selected the topics for policy forums at this year’s Annual Conference September 25-26 at the Doubletree Park Place Hotel in St. Louis Park. Forums will cover value-based payment and end-of-life care. There will also be an open-issues forum. Stay tuned to MMA News Now and the Annual Conference webpage (www.mnmed.org/AC2015) for details. Registration will open in July.

Healthiest State Summit scheduled for August
In 1992, Minnesota had the No. 1 health ranking. By 2014, it had dropped to No. 6. Why? Find out more about this phenomenon and help find a way to reverse the trend at the Healthiest State Summit. The event takes place August 6 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the University of Minnesota’s Continuing Education and Conference Center. Hosts include the Twin Cities Medical Society and the Minnesota Public Health Association. Additional sponsors include the MMA, UCare, Minnesota Department of Health and HealthPartners. Read more at www.metrodoctors.com.

Members help ban e-cigs in indoor public areas in St. Louis County
Two Duluth-based members testified before the St. Louis County Board in May as it considered further restricting e-cigarette use in indoor public areas. The measure passed by a vote of 5 to 2. The members taking part included Elisabeth Bilden, MD, an emergency medicine physician with Essentia Health, and August Lindmark, a University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth student. One of the MMA’s top public health priorities has been to further restrict e-cigarette use. The ordinance prohibits e-cigarette use in all places in St. Louis County where smoking is prohibited by the state’s Freedom to Breathe Act.

Correction:
The article on “Right to Try” legislation in the June 2015 issue included an inaccurate statement. The bill does require that patients give written informed consent in order to receive a prescription or recommendation from a physician before they are eligible. We regret the error.

On the calendar

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Preconference Hippocrates Cafe</td>
<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>Doubletree Park Place Hotel, St. Louis Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015 Annual Conference</td>
<td>Sept. 25-26</td>
<td>Doubletree Park Place Hotel, St. Louis Park</td>
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Check the MMA’s website (www.mnmed.org/events) for more information and to register.
Foundation’s Physician Volunteer Program now in full operation

The MMA Foundation’s Physician Volunteerism Program has moved from a pilot project to full operation with the listing of several new volunteer opportunities for Minnesota physicians. Focusing on the most critical needs first, the MMA Foundation reached out to community clinics. As of May 26, eight have asked to participate in the program and have expressed a need for physician volunteers at a total of 17 locations in the Twin Cities and greater Minnesota. Volunteer opportunities are now posted online at www.mmafoundation.org/pvp. New opportunities will be posted as they become available.

Member continues work on MNsure board

MMA member Kathryn Duevel, MD, has been selected as vice chair of the MNsure board of directors. Duevel has served as a board member since the group was formed in 2013. A retired OB/GYN in Willmar, Duevel is the lone physician on the board that oversees Minnesota’s health insurance exchange.

Attention: Important Message for MMA Members

On May 21, the MMA launched a new and improved membership database. It allows you to pay your dues online, more easily sign up for events and allows you to better interact with the MMA. Your first interaction with the membership database will occur when you sign up for an MMA event or meeting. When you register for an event or meeting you will be prompted to enter an email address. If you do not have an email address in our system, you will be prompted to provide some general information before you can register. If you do have an email address in our system, you will see a screen that provides you the following option: “If you forgot or do not know your credentials, please click for email instructions.” Click the link. You will then enter your email again and hit the reset password button. An email will be sent to you that will allow you to create a password that you should save and use in the future on the new membership database. If you have questions, please contact Jaime Olson (jolson@mnmed.org).

Channel Your Passion

Join a committee

The MMA is seeking volunteers to serve on its policy committees.

As a committee member you
• influence the MMA’s direction,
• acquire new leadership skills, and
• network with physicians who care about the same issues you do.

It is easy and only includes four evening meetings annually. If you can’t make a meeting in person, you can also call in.

For specific committee assignments, go online to: www.mnmed.org/committee.

If you are interested in volunteering, send an email to mma@mnmed.org and indicate the specific committee. An MMA staff person will follow-up with you.