

## AAPHP E-News, May 9, 2009

This is an electronic update for members and friends of the American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP). We issue this from time to time, whenever several items of interest come to our attention.

Please send items of interest for the E-News -- and any other feedback -- to E-News editor <u>Kevin Sherin, MD, MPH.</u> . Thanks!

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- 1. MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The AAPHP annual meeting will be held Saturday evening, June 13 at the AMA annual meeting in Chicago. The
- AMA meeting runs from the 13-15th, and is always held in Chicago. Our AAPHP meeting will be Saturday evening, June 13 at 5:30PM in the
- Chicago Hilton and Towers, Room Columbus C and D .I want as many AMA members who are AAPHP members as possible to attend this meeting. Our speaker will be Rodney G. Hood, MD, Past President of the National Medical Association. His topic will be Health Equity and National Health Reform. There is a possibility that our forum may also include a speaker from AARP.
- 2. AMA will be allowing medical specialty groups to each have a display table at the June meeting in Chicago. This will be an opportunity to educate the 600+ medical students expected to be in attendance at this AMA meeting. The tables are to show what each specialty has to offer. AAPHP plans to have a table, and currently has one confirmed and one probable volunteer to man this table. If you will be at the Chicago meeting and will be able to help man our table, please advise Arvind Goyal at <a href="mailto:arvindgoyal@aol.com">arvindgoyal@aol.com</a> today or tomorrow.
- 3. AAPHP resolutions for consideration by the AMA House of Delegates should be submitted to Arvind Goyal at <a href="mailto:Arvindkgoyal@aol.com">Arvindkgoyal@aol.com</a>. Deadline for resolutions for the June meeting is May 12.
- 4. Swine Flu Informational resources: The following informational resources are recommended to stay up to date on the Swine Flu:
- 4a. <a href="www.cdc.org">www.cdc.org</a> is the best single resource. There is a Swine Flu link on the home page with current data, links, policy guidelines, etc.
- 4b. <a href="www.aafp.org">www.aafp.org</a> (American Academy of Family Physicians) has free articles dealing with "Basic Rules of Influenza: How to Combat the H1N1 Swine Flu Virus," "Telephone Triage of Patients with Influenza," and "Preparing your Office for an Infectious Disease Epidemic."
- 4c. <a href="www.promed.org">www.promed.org</a> This international organization dealing with infectious diseases offers e-mail subscriptions by which one can secure e-mail notification of infectious and communicable diseases free of charge. This will often result in multiple e-mail messages per day covering the full range of infectious diseases on a global basis.
- 4d. www.hsph.harvard.edu (Harvard School of Public Health web site) has daily policy and research

updates, a page devoted to H1N1 news, and an e-mail update service with subscriptions available at <a href="mailto:update@hsph.harvard.edu">update@hsph.harvard.edu</a>.

## 5. AAPHP Listserve Survey results

Several weeks ago an e-mail message with link to a survey-monkey questionnaire was sent to the 600+ individuals on our AAPHP Listserve. Fifty nine responded, with 56 of the 59 completing the questionnaire. 29 (50.9%) were current active members. 9 (15.8%) were current or past Board Members. There were 4 residents, 2 medical students and 7 retirees. 3 were lifetime members and 7 were friends of the organization. All or almost all respondents were also members of other national organizations. About half were members of AMA, ACPM and APHA, with about a third members of other medical specialty organizations. Many were members of five or more national organizations.

Among these respondents, overall experience with AAPHP was strongly positive (but this is sure to be biased by those who cared enough to respond). The strongest positive ratings were with e-news, AMA resolutions and AAPHP as a source for professional networking. More than half of these respondents had attended one or more AAPHP General Membership meetings. About 40% had some contact with the Preventive Services ToolKit seminars.

40 of the 59 respondents provided comments relative to what attracted them to AAPHP. Most did so because of the focus on public health and the ability to network with like minded physicians. Several felt that, more than other national organizations, we "got it right" on national policy issues, including tobacco control.

26 of the 50 had considered dis-affiliation with AAPHP, with some referencing small size, lack of political clout, too many other organizations and personal inability to be active in any organization at this time. One Disagreed with our approach to tobacco control. One expressed frustration at our inability to successfully develop our proposed "teaching health department" initiative. One referenced poor fiscal record keeping by AAPHP.

24 responded to the question of policy issues AAPHP should consider. Health care reform/single payer/universal coverage was most commonly sited, with public health training, rebuilding public health infrastructure, tobacco, obesity and 'bettering the lot of the public health physician" also referenced.

26 responded to the question of what AAPHP can do to help. Here there seemed to be a common theme, with all respondents favoring our goals and policy stances and recommending that we "survive" "become larger" and generally get our act together in a more functional manner.

The 13 comments in response to our request for other comments reflected the themes noted above, and added the need for us to become more welcoming of non-PH physicians.

19 of the respondents voluntarily provided contact information.

If anyone is interested in yet more detail, or the ability to review all the comments provided, please contact Dr. Joel Nitzkin at jln-md@mindspring.com.

## 6. New AAPHP Policy Blogs:

Beginning this next week, on a trial basis, <a href="www.aaphp.org">www.aaphp.org</a> will feature Policy Blogs on healthcare reform/single payer and tobacco control issues. Members are encouraged to check these out, participate in the policy discussions, and, if one has an issue for policy development -- please advise Joel Nitzkin at <a href="mailto:iln-md@mindspring.com">iln-md@mindspring.com</a> to assist in setting up additional policy blogs. These will be used to guide legislative advocacy, AMA policy and other advocacy initiatives. We will be beginning with a Healthcare Reform/Single Payer blog to managed by Jonathan Weisbuch and a Tobacco Control Blog to be managed by Joel L. Nitzkin. Preliminary summaries of the initial blog postings are as follows:

6a. Single Payer: Our national medical care system is broken. Its repair requires universal access to quality care at a reasonable cost. Such a system could be achieved by lowering Medicare eligibility by 15 years annually and covering all children up to 20 years. As each age group is added, insurance premiums will disappear and lower payroll tax will be added to the Trust Fund. Within 5 years after passage, everyone will be covered. AAPHP has previously endorsed in principle the concept of a single-payer system. The new administration and Congress offers the best opportunity we have seen in our professional lifetimes to turn these ideas into reality.

- 6b. Tobacco Control: The AAPHP Tobacco Control Task Force was stimulated into action in February of 2007 with the introduction of the Waxman/Kennedy FDA/Tobacco bill. A summary and promotion of the bill suggesting it would result in effective FDA regulation of the tobacco industry that would, in turn, substantially reduce teen tobacco use and "save millions of lives" attracted large numbers of organizational endorsements and large numbers of congressional sponsors. Rather than sign on in response to this summary of the bill, our Tobacco Control Task Force decided to read the full text of the bill. We were shocked to discover that the bill, negotiated between the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and Altria/Philip Morris would offer the image, but not the substance of effective regulation and would increase, not decrease illness and death due to tobacco products. It would do nothing of substance to decrease teen tobacco use and impose a de-facto ban on the introduction of new lower risk tobacco and alternate nicotine-delivery products. It would give FDA approval to currently formulated cigarettes and, despite hype to the contrary, would perpetuate the myth of the safe cigarette. Our approach has been to develop and encourage consideration of a set of amendments that would take advantage of the political support behind this bill, and amend it to address the issues noted above. Our latest update, for current Senate consideration is posted on the Tobacco Issues page at www.aaphp.org. As always, comments, suggestions and proposed modifications are welcome and should be forwarded to Joel Nitzkin, Chair, AAPHP Tobacco Control Task Force at <u>iln-md@mindspring.com</u>.
- 7. Tobacco Legislation Update: Waxman's FDA/Tobacco bill, H.R.1256 was passed by the House without amendment, and is now scheduled for Senate HELP Committee markup this next week. While Waxman's office insisted on strict discipline and no amendments, Senator Kennedy -- the sole Senate sponsor of this bill is open to the possibility of amendment. The AAPHP proposed amendments have been forwarded to all members of the Senate HELP committee, and have been discussed with key Senate staff. The outcome at this time is uncertain. For additional detail, see item 6b, above.
- 8. Dr. Buttery's public health policy blogs: In his dual capacity as AAPHP Webmaster and as Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, in Richmond, VA, Dr. Buttery has maintained several dozen public health and healthcare policy blogs. These are accessible through the AAPHP web site,
- 9. Membership services: Sandra Magyar for Green Cove Springs FL has been contracted for membership services. We look forward to rapidly getting your 2009 dues notices to you. It helps AAPHP with transaction costs if we can do this electronically. Please send your PREFERRED email address to Sandy at <a href="magyarsf@bellsouth.net">magyarsf@bellsouth.net</a> Remember, renewal of your dues, membership, and updated information for AAPHP is vital as we are re-authorized by the AMA in the next two months! THANKS.
- 10. Please let AAPHP help you AAPHP is the voice of public health physicians and welcomes all physicians who are committed to the public's health.

AAPHP accomplishes its work with a maximum of volunteer labor and a minimum of cash expense. We are proud to make the E-News and other

AAPHP materials available without charge to physicians and medical students interested in public health.

If you haven't done so already, please download AAPHP's 2009 Membership Form right away at <a href="http://www.aaphp.org/Membership/2009MembForm.pdf">http://www.aaphp.org/Membership/2009MembForm.pdf</a> and send it to us by fax or postal mail. Please make your 2008 membership as generous as you can. Consider "Supporting" or "Sustaining" membership for 2009 if you are able to do so.

AAPHP is a 501(c) (6) professional membership organization that informs and represents Public Health Physicians. AAPHP dues may be

deductible as an "ordinary and necessary" business expense under the Internal Revenue Code. Details may differ based on your individual situation.

AAPHP dues can be paid by credit card -- either by faxing the membership form to Sandy Magyar, Our Membership Secretary at (904) 529-7761 or by calling her at (904) 860-4686.

Please also tell your friends and colleagues about AAPHP's representation of Public Health Physicians. E-News subscriptions are still free, on request, to any interested physician or medical student. We welcome new subscribers and members. Thank you for your support! Kevin Sherin, MD, MPH AAPHP President-elect and E-News Editor

11. To contact E-news: On an interim basis (May and June , 2009) Dr. Joel NItzkin will be serving as interim editor of the AAPHP e news, Dr. Nitzkin can be reached at <a href="mailto:jln-md@mindspring.com">jln-md@mindspring.com</a>, or, by phone at 504 606-7043

\*\*\*\*\*\* About AAPHP E-News \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

This message is an electronic update from the American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP) to public health physicians.

More information about AAPHP is at http://www.aaphp.org.

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This electronic newsletter is available to any physician or medical student on request. There is no charge for this E-News. To subscribe, please send a request to AAPHP Membership Director, Sandy Magyar @ Magyarsf@bellsouth.net Fax 904-529-7761. In your request, please confirm that you are a physician (MD, DO, or international equivalent) or a medical student.

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\*\*\*\*\* End of E-News Message \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*