

physicians in the news

A compilation of news, significant awards, and accomplishments about Permanente physicians and the Permanente Medical Groups.

Physician News Roundup



Permanente Leader Jay Crosson, MD, Named to Medicare Commission

Jay Crosson, MD, Executive Director of The Permanente Federation, was recently appointed to the federal Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC)

by the Comptroller General of the United States.

MedPAC is an independent federal body whose mandate is to analyze access to care, quality of care; and other issues affecting Medicare; and to advise Congress on payments to health plans participating in the Medicare Advantage program as well as to providers in Medicare's traditional fee-for-service program. MedPAC was established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

The Medicare program is a significant revenue source for Kaiser Permanente (KP), which has more than 800,000 Medicare members across the program, the vast majority of whom are enrolled in the Medicare Advantage (formerly Medicare+Choice) program. KP is the largest health plan participating in the Medicare Advantage program.

MedPAC's 17 members serve three-year terms, and five or six members terms expire each year but are subject to renewal. According to the US General Accounting Office, the law requires MedPAC to include a mix of expertise in the financing and delivery of health care services and broad geographic representation. Commissioners include physicians and other health professionals; employers; third-party payers; researchers with a variety of health-related expertise; and representatives of consumers, organized labor, and the elderly.

Dr Nilda Chong Receives Cultural Competence Award

Nilda Chong, MD, DrPH, MPH, received The National Minority Health Month Cultural Competence Award, sponsored by the National



Minority Health Month Foundation. This award is given annually to recognize an individual or organization that has made outstanding contributions in promoting cultural competency as a critical part of health care delivery systems targeting minority communities.

Dr Chong serves as the director of the KP Institute for Culturally Competent Care. She is a nationally recognized leader in cultural competence and multicultural health care and is an expert in cultural competence with Latino patients and social marketing of health care to Latinos.

Center for Health Research (CHR)

Center for Health Research to Receive \$3.5 Million Grant to Study Low-Carbohydrate/High-Carbohydrate Diet

The Center for Health Research (CHR) has received a \$3.5 million grant from the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, a branch of the National Institutes of Health, to conduct a study to determine the effectiveness and safety of low-carbohydrate versus high-carbohydrate diets.

The study will compare the Atkins and DASH diets in a randomized clinical trial to find out which diet better promotes short-term and long-term weight loss and which diet reduces or increases risk of cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis. The results of the study will help clinicians and nutritionists to give evidence-based advice to patients and will help the general public to make informed choices.

Hawaii Permanente Medical Group (HPMG)

Radiologist Appointed to State Radiologic Technology Board

Congratulations to Stein Rafto, MD, who was recently appointed to the State of Hawaii's Radiologic Technology Board.



Barbara Caruso, BA, is a Communications Consultant for The Permanente Federation. E-mail: barbara.caruso@kp.org.

**Mid-Atlantic Permanente Medical Group (MAPMG)**

**MAPMG Surgeon Performs Innovative Cancer Surgery for KP**

**Jesus Esquivel, MD**, performs an unusual type of cancer surgery at the Washington Hospital Center. He operates on patients with wide-spread appendix and colon cancer in which advanced tumors cannot be treated with chemotherapy alone. The procedure combines surgery and direct chemotherapy to the affected area, where he performs cyto-reductive surgery on the peritoneum and then applies heated chemotherapy to the abdomen. Patients then receive additional chemotherapy five days after surgery and more at their home medical center.



Dr Esquivel learned this procedure from Paul H Sugarbaker, MD, a renowned surgical oncologist working at the Washington Hospital Center.

Success rates for this type of procedure are measured by survival. These patients had no option other than systemic chemotherapy, which is not usually effective. With this procedure, the survival rate for appendix cancer is 80% at five years. The survival rate for colon cancer is about 30% at five years.

KP physicians from Colorado, California, and Hawaii Regions are now referring patients to Dr Esquivel. He has published about 12 articles on this subject in peer-reviewed journals. He has performed 8 of these surgeries in the last 5 months and expects to perform about 20 this year.

**Helping Urology Patients with the daVinci Robot**

KP West End Medical Center physician **Harold Frazier, MD**, is one of a handful of doctors in the country that is using the daVinci robot to perform urologic surgery. The robot has been used to perform prostate and kidney surgery.

Only a couple of dozen hospitals in the country are using the daVinci robot. Dr Frazier received his



initial training on the robot at the Johns Hopkins surgical laboratory. He is working with the Chair of the urology department at George Washington Univer-

sity and another physician there to perfect the use of this new technology in urologic surgery. Dr Frazier also operates at the Center for Robotic Surgery at George Washington Hospital.

A story appeared recently in *The Washington Post* about the daVinci robot.

([http://kpnet.kp.org/mas/index\\_files/spotlight/daVinci\\_042604/The\\_da\\_Vinci\\_Mode.doc](http://kpnet.kp.org/mas/index_files/spotlight/daVinci_042604/The_da_Vinci_Mode.doc))

**Physician Named Associate Medical Director of Professional Development**

**Ann Hellerstein, MD**, was recently named Associate Medical Director of Professional Development for MAPMG. Dr Hellerstein has been with the MAPMG for 15 years and has held many positions at KP medical centers and in professional development.



In her new role, Dr Hellerstein will be a resource for physician-managers regarding recruitment and performance management issues. She will continue to manage Provider Relationships Improve Medical Outcomes (PRIMO) and Continuing Medical Education (CME) but will have the assistance of another physician-leader for these programs. She will also oversee the physician performance evaluation process as well as physician recruitment, orientation, and retention efforts. Her top priority for 2004 is to revise the physician performance evaluation process on the basis of feedback from many frontline physicians and managers. She also plans to revise the MAPMG physician orientation program. One of her other goals is to help physician-managers improve their leadership skills.

**Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG)**

**Physician Receives First Annual David M Lawrence, MD, Community Service Sabbatical Award**

**Jimmy Hara, MD, FAFAP**, Program Director, Family Practice Residency Training Program, and Regional Director, Graduate Medical Education, Los Angeles, received the first annual David M Lawrence, MD, Community Service Sabbatical Award. Dr Hara is recognized for his long history of community service in the city of Los Angeles. He has volunteered continuously for the last 30 years in community health centers as a board member and as a volunteer physician. (See related story, page 56.)



### Physician Named to US Preventive Services Task Force

**Diana Petitti, MD, MPH**, Director, Research and Evaluation, has been named a member of the US Preventive Services Task Force. The task force, sponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality of the US Department of Health and Human Services, is the leading independent panel of private sector experts in prevention and primary care and conducts rigorous, impartial assessments of the scientific evidence for a broad range of preventive services.

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### SCPMG Honors 12 Physicians with Physicians' Exceptional Contribution Award

At a recent ceremony, SCPMG honored 12 physicians with the Physicians' Exceptional Contribution Award. This annual award is the highest form of recognition bestowed on SCPMG physicians. It recognizes those physicians who, in their daily activities and responsibilities as members of the Medical Group, go beyond what is expected of them and have made a significant contribution in one or more of the following areas: expertise within their profession that is broadly recognized in the Medical Group and in the medical community; contribution to their community in a civic, health care, cultural, or general economic sense; or other humanitarian activities.

Following are this year's awardees:

- Ruby Bayan, MD, Psychiatry
- Cheryl Browne, MD, Internal Medicine
- Richard Dell, MD, Surgery
- Emil Dionysian, MD, Orthopedic Surgery
- Robert M Itami, MD, Pediatrics
- Nathan D Le, MD, Anesthesiology
- Paul M Minardi, MD, Family Medicine
- Brian Saunders, MD, Pediatrics
- Norman Sogioka, MD, Surgery
- Jan Takasugi, MD, Surgery
- Thomas Tom, MD, Internal Medicine
- Frederick H Ziel, MD, Endocrinology

### SCPMG Physician Elected President of the AAAAI

**Michael Schatz, MD, MS**, was elected president of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI) at its recent annual meeting in San Francisco. He will serve a one-year term.

Dr Schatz is the Chief of the Allergy Department

at KP San Diego. He also provides expertise and leadership with KP's Care Management Institute and is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine.

The AAAAI is the largest professional medical specialty organization in the United States, representing allergists, asthma specialists, clinical immunologists, allied health professionals, and others with a special interest in the research and treatment of allergic disease.

### Colorado Permanente Medical Group (CPMG)

#### CPMG Honors Physicians with Permanente Awards

Seven physicians were recently honored with the Permanente Award for their collegiality and exceptional clinical skills. The Colorado Permanente Medical Group received an unprecedented 42 nominations for this prestigious award. Following are this year's honorees:

- Lillian M Coppola, MD, Internal Medicine
- Bruce C Doenecke, MD, Pediatrics
- Royal K Gerow, MD, Plastic Surgery
- Charles J Holt, MD, Orthopedics
- Jill Jamison, MD, Family Practice
- Christopher Lang, MD, Cardiology
- Donald L Nicolay, MD, General Surgery

### The Permanente Medical Group (TPMG)

#### TPMG Exceptional Contribution Award Winners

The TPMG Board of Directors established the "Exceptional Contribution Award" in 2000 to honor physicians who have been instrumental in the development and dissemination of new ideas that have had a significant impact on patients, colleagues, and the broader community. The recipients featured below recently received their awards in recognition of their exceptional contributions to service and access, quality, or professional satisfaction:

- John Chuck, MD, Medicine—New Physician Orientation and Mentoring Programs
- Scott Gee, MD, Pediatrics—Preventive Health Prompt
- Pat Hybarger, MD, Head and Neck Surgery—Mohs Micrographic Surgery & Reconstruction Program
- Tim Tsang, MD, Urology—E-Consult System

Following are the TPMG Research and Teaching Awards:

**Morris F Collen Research Award**

- Arthur Klatsky, MD, Cardiology (retired)
- Daniel Klein, MD, Infectious Diseases

**Teaching Excellence Award in Continuing Medical Education**

- David Witt, MD, Infectious Diseases

**Teaching Excellence Award in Graduate Medical Education**

- Gus Garmel, MD, Emergency

**Physician Named President-Elect of California Medical Association**

**Michael Sexton, MD**, Emergency, was recently named President-Elect of the California Medical Association, a position that puts him in line to become the first Permanente physician to head the statewide organization.



**Breast Cancer Stamp Created by KP Surgeon Lands Top Spot for Postage Stamp Sales**

The Breast Cancer Research Stamp, created by KP surgeon Ernie Bodai, MD, Sacramento, has overtaken Elvis Presley for the top spot on the all-time sales charts—for postage stamps.



In 1998, The Breast Cancer Research Stamp was launched through the efforts of Dr Bodai. More than 518 million of the stamps have been sold, raising \$37 million for research. The commemorative stamp honoring Elvis, which is no longer available, sold 517 million copies.

Congress recently extended the stamp sales through 2005.

**The Southeast Permanente Medical Group (TSPMG)**

**Bruce Perry, MD, Named Chairman of Permanente Federation Executive Committee**

TSPMG Medical Director Bruce Perry, MD, was recently named Chairman of the five-member Permanente Federation Executive Committee. He will serve a two-year term. Dr Perry succeeds Ronald Copeland, MD, Executive Medical Director for the Ohio Permanente Medical Group.



The Executive Committee is made up of four Regional Executive Directors—two from the California Permanente Medical Groups (PMG) and two elected Executive Medical Directors from the non-California PMGs—and an appointed Executive Director, who is responsible for day-to-day activities. In addition to Drs Perry and Copeland, the five-member group includes Jay Crosson, MD, Executive Director of The Permanente Federation; Robert Pearl, MD, Executive Medical Director and CEO, TPMG; and Jeffrey Weisz, MD, Medical Director of SCPMG.

In his new role as Chairman of the Permanente Federation Executive Committee, Dr Perry will be involved in setting agendas for the Executive Committee and for other national governing groups.

**Lee Jacobs, MD, Carries Olympic Torch**

In recognition of his extensive humanitarian work, Lee Jacobs, MD, Associate Medical Director of TSPMG, had the honor of carrying the Olympic torch in June as it traveled through Atlanta, GA, as part of the Athens 2004 Olympic International Torch Relay. The torch crossed six continents, 27 countries, and 34 cities, including Los Angeles, St Louis, and New York. Dr Jacobs was nominated because of his community service work in the inner city of Atlanta and in Kyrgyzstan. He carried the torch for 1/4 mile through Atlanta. ❖



Barbara Caruso compiled this material from *California Wire*, *Partner News*, and other PMG newsletters and sources. To submit news of physician or PMG awards and recognitions, contact Ms Caruso at [barbara.caruso@kp.org](mailto:barbara.caruso@kp.org).