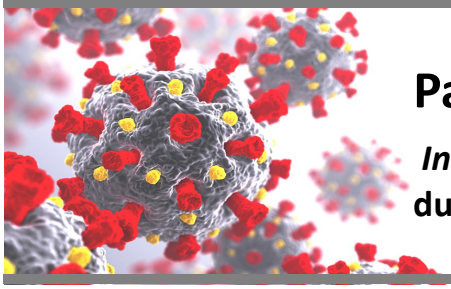
BCMS Baltimore City Medical Society

OCTOBER ~ NOVEMBER 2020

# MESSENGER

Membership Newsletter of the Baltimore City Medical Society, a component of MedChi



## Patients Share…

***In Their Own Words*… patients share their experiences during COVID-19 (read more in our upcoming publications)**

**Patient #1**

"I had a number of routine "make-up" medical appointments, but other than rescheduling challenges, all have gone very smoothly. All the offices strictly followed CDC guidelines and fortunately, outside of my usual co-pays, there have been no additional expenses or inconveniences. I also used telehealth services to refill my prescription, which was also seamless."

**Patient #2**

"I was leery about taking my dad to the doctor's office, but after working on the KYDA (Keep Your Doctor's Appointment) project, I am so glad I did!" If we had waited, there may have been some irreversible damage. Telehealth is good for some issues, but the in-person visit was just what the doctor ordered!"

**Patient #3**

"I was not hesitant about going to the doctor. He was only seeing patients in the office if they needed injections or other procedures that required physical contact. Telehealth was convenient for a follow up visit."

**Patient #4**

"I had an appointment with an orthopedist for treatment of elbow bursitis. The office had a registration desk in the hallway where they took my temperature and insurance information before letting me enter the waiting room. The waiting room had a limited number of patients. The doctors and staff took all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the patients and staff."

**Patient #5**

"COVID-19 has created major challenges for the delivery of primary health care. I have been advocating for a family member's care for several years, and the pandemic has demonstrated the commitment to quality health care by one physician in particular. Never in my life have I had a doctor reach out to me at 10:00 p.m. This doctor apologized profusely for not being able to return my call during normal practice hours, but indicated that the pandemic and the use of telemedicine visits had altered his schedule. It warmed my heart to know that there are still doctors who put the patient's peace of mind first and foremost, in spite of their own inconvenience."

**Patient #6**

"I have a fantastic internist, who did not allow the pandemic to alter my annual wellness visit. Yes, I wore a mask and so did she, along with a face shield; and she wore gloves. The office patient area was arranged with chairs a good distance apart; there were no magazines to thumb through. We very much owe our physicians a great deal for caring for us, especially during these uncertain times."

**Patient #7**

"I went to the doctor because I had a heat rash. He told me what to do… He was wearing a mask; they usually wear them for surgery. But with coronavirus they need to wear them or else humankind will die; well, not all, some will still live. They should wear them when they walk through the hallways where people are standing." – age 7

***(Continued on page 8)***

# SOCIETY/PRACTICE UPDATES

BCMS Baltimore City Medical Society

## Member News ~

**Anuradha Reddy, M.D.,** received the distinguished 2020 Leadership in Healthcare Award from the Washington Academy of Sciences for her "leadership in healthcare and for serving the underprivileged community of Baltimore."

**Richard Bruno, M.D.,** was recently appointed Interim Site Medical Director for the Mt. Vernon Center at Chase Brexton Health Care.

**Tyler Cymet, D.O.,** is the Medical Director for the Field Hospital treating COVID-19 patients at the Baltimore Convention Center.

## Maryland Board of Physicians ~

### CME Requirements

On June 15, 2020, the Maryland Board of Physicians enacted a policy change in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board changed CME requirements, adding important flexibility. The new rule that "license required CMEs will not be due until 30 days after the end of the State of Emergency," will help physicians whose meetings or circumstances have changed due to the pandemic.

***The Board has also posted the following notices on its website:***

**Extension of Physician License Expiration Date**
Under normal circumstances, the online renewal system would close at 11:59 pm (EST) on September 30, 2020; however, pursuant to Governor Hogan's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, the Board will extend the expiration date 'to the 30th day after the date by which the state of emergency is terminated and the catastrophic health emergency is rescinded.

### Scam Alert!

The Maryland Board of Physicians has been notified that licensees may receive a telephone call that represents it is from the Board.

This was actual call information reported by a licensee:

*I received a telephone call this morning asking to speak to "Dr. Doe." The person on the other end referred to himself as Mike Moore from the Medical Board. He said he needed to speak to "Dr. Doe" regarding his medical license and that he needed to call him back ASAP at 888.531.3905 and to tell him it was urgent.*

The call did not come from the Board. It is a scam!

If you receive any calls asking to contact the Board immediately, please ignore them. The Board would reach out by e-mail or paper notice if there was a need to discuss your license status.

***(Society/Practice Updates continued on page 7)***

**Prevent Diabetes**
**STAT**
Screen, Test, Act—Today

**Visit PreventDiabetesStat.org to learn more about prediabetes and download this free toolkit that helps physicians and care teams:**

* Screen and test patients for prediabetes
* Refer eligible patients to CDC-recognized diabetes prevention programs
* Follow patient's progress in the program

**Baltimore City Medical Society &**
**Baltimore City Medical Society Foundation**

# *Dr. Maurice B. Furlong, Jr. Memorial Lecture*

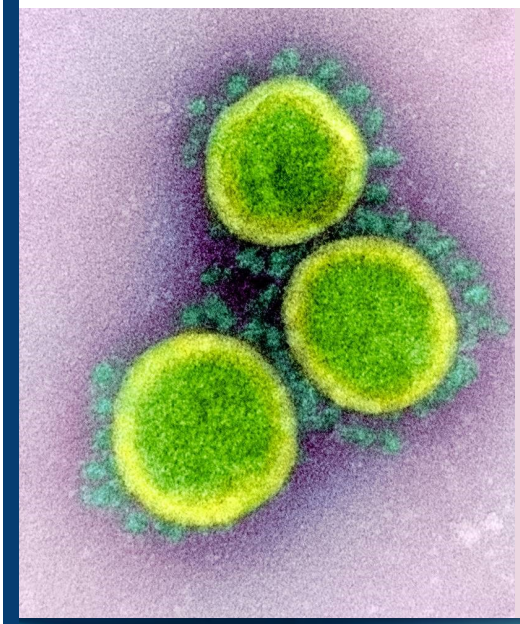
***Hosted by Baltimore City Medical Society***
***And Baltimore County Medical Association***

## Wednesday, November 18, 2020

6:00 pm ~ 8:00 pm

*(Hosted via Zoom)*

***Register via info@bcmsdocs.org or call 410-625-0022***



## "Current Status in the Development of SARS-CoV2 Vaccine"

Speaker:

**Kathleen Neuzil, MD, MPH, FIDSA**

*Director, Center for Vaccine Development and Global Health*
*University of Maryland School of Medicine*

# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

## Be a BCMS Legislative Liaison!

All BCMS members are encouraged to get involved in our ongoing advocacy initiatives. We need additional BCMS members to participate in our State Legislature and City Council liaison program. By maintaining contact with our elected officials throughout the year, we serve as an ongoing resource and permanent bridge to improving public health. We want to hear from you!

_____ ***Count me in! I will serve as a Liaison with our State Legislative and City Council members.***

**Name:** _____

**Email:** _____

**Phone:** _____

***(Send to info@bcmsdocs.org or call 410-625-0022)***

## 2020 MedChi House of Delegates and Pre-Meetings – ALL VIRTUAL

**REFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING**
Monday, November 2 ~ 7:00 p.m.

**BCMS CAUCUS MEETING**
Wednesday, November 4 ~ 6:30 p.m.

**Join us ~ Saturday, November 7, 2020**

Schedule of Events ~ Updates
Check the MedChi website for registration, updated schedules, reports, resolutions, and related details - www.medchi.org and check for future e-mails.

## BALTIMORE CITY MEDICAL POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (BCMPAC)

1211 Cathedral Street, 3rd Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201-5516
410-625-0022

BCMPAC

**2020 BCMPAC DUES** ___ **$75.00** ___**$100.00** ___ **$150.00** ___**Other: $**_____

Supporting candidates who hold views favorable to the medical profession is important to your practice and to your community.

**Name:** _____

**Email:** _____

**Please send your check payable to "BCMPAC."**

***BCMPAC dues are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal Income Tax purposes.***

## Election 2020 ~ Important Dates to Remember!

**If you plan to vote by mail:**

- Mid-October – Ballots should have been received
- As soon as you receive it, complete, sign and return; must be postmarked November 3, 2020 Election Day

**If you plan to vote in person:**

- October 26 to November 2 – Vote early at any vote center in your home City/County
- November 3 – Vote on Election Day at any vote center in your home City/County

**Further Information:**

Maryland Board of Elections – https://elections.maryland.gov

League of Women Voters - www.lwmd.org/2020_voters_guides

## Vote Health 2020 ~ votehealth2020.com

VoteHealth 2020 is a nonpartisan group encouraging physicians and other health care professionals to make sure they are registered to vote and do so in the 2020 elections. Historically, physicians have voted at a lower rate than the rest of the population, so the American Medical Association is promoting the work of this group to increase physician voting.

## AMA's Virtual Campaign School

Recognized as one of the top training programs in the country, this comprehensive program will mold you into a winning political strategist and help you elect friends of medicine. The Campaign School is renowned for its use of a simulated campaign for the U.S. House of Representatives, complete with demographics, voting statistics and candidate biographies and much more.

In order to provide the same high-quality content the in-person program, the Virtual Campaign School will be conducted over the course of two consecutive weekends: January 15-17 and 23-24, 2021. Both weekends are part of the full program and all sessions must be attended by participants. This includes a 90-minute virtual welcome reception on Friday, January 15 and each Saturday and Sunday session will run approximately four hours (11:00am – 3:00pm EST).

To help participants prepare for the virtual program in January, AMPAC has developed a set of online tools, to be completed before the main program begins. These include the Campaign School simulation and workbooks which you will receive shortly after you register.

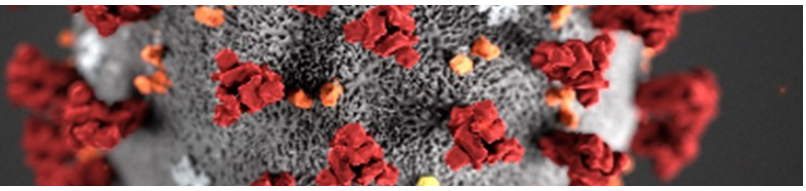
Virtual attendees may include physicians, spouses of physicians, residents, medical students and state medical society staff interested in becoming more involved in politics. Past participants ranged from those attracted to grassroots efforts to those considering becoming a candidate for public office. No matter where you are in the process, you will develop a new understanding of how campaigns are run. As a graduate of the AMPAC program, candidates will rely on you to give them advice on strategy, message and campaign plans.

Note: Registration fee is $350 for AMA Members/ $1000 for non-AMA members. This fee is waived for AMA residents and students; however, space is limited and the AMPAC Board will review and select four participants from the pool of qualified resident and student applicants.

Registration for the Virtual Campaign School is now open. Space is limited and deadline to register is November 10, 2020.

For questions or more information please contact: politicaleducation@ama-assn.org

# COVID-19 UPDATES



## City Health Department COVID-19 Testing

Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is offering support to local providers for COVID-19 testing. Through BCHD you can request COVID test kits and test processing. This program is open to practices in Baltimore City.

If you're interested in learning more about how to obtain test kits, please contact the COVID-19 test kit distribution program at COVIDTesting.BDCLab@baltimorecity.gov

More information, including the guidance and request form can be found here https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/covid-19-test-kit-distribution-program

## Additional CARES Act Relief Funds – Application Deadline - November 6

The Department of Health and Human Services will disburse another $20 billion in CARES Act Provider Relief Funds from October 5--November 6. Physicians that have already received Provider Relief Fund payments may apply for additional funding for pandemic-related financial losses. Apply online on the Relief Fund webpage.

## CMS Announces Additional Year to Repay Medicare Loans Made During COVID-19

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced amended terms for payments issued under the Accelerated and Advance Payment (AAP) Program. This Medicare loan program allows CMS to make advance payments to practitioners and are typically used in emergency situations. Under the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act, repayment will now begin one year from the issuance date of each practice's accelerated or advance payment. CMS issued $106 billion in payments to practitioners in order to alleviate the financial burden healthcare providers faced while experiencing cash flow issues in the early stages of combating the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Public Health Emergency (PHE).

MedChi is asking for additional economic support from the State of Maryland and Washington, DC to help beleaguered physicians. That aid would include complete forgiveness of the Medicare advance payment loans.

CMS expanded the AAP Program on March 28, 2020 and gave these loans to healthcare practitioners and suppliers in order to combat the financial burden of the pandemic. CMS successfully paid more than 22,000 Part A providers, totaling more than $98 billion in accelerated payments. This included payments to Part A providers for Part B items and services they furnished. In addition, more than 28,000 Part B suppliers, including doctors, non-physician practitioners, and Durable Medical Equipment (DME) suppliers, received advance payments totaling more than $8.5 billion.

Practitioners were required to make payments starting in August of this year, but with this action, repayment will be delayed until one year after payment was issued. After that first year, Medicare will automatically recoup 25 percent of Medicare payments otherwise owed to the provider or supplier for eleven months. At the end of the eleven -month period, recoupment will increase to 50 percent for another six months. If the provider or supplier is unable to repay the total amount of the AAP during this time-period (a total of 29 months), CMS will issue letters requiring repayment of any outstanding balance, subject to an interest rate of four percent. CMS will be ***(continued on page 7)***

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communicating with each practice in the coming weeks as to the repayment terms and amounts owed as applicable for any accelerated or advance payment issued.

## Additional State Funding

Governor Hogan announced a doubling of Maryland's economic relief and recovery for small businesses. With regard to economic recovery, in addition to the relief already provided by the federal Payroll Protection Payroll and over State grants and funds, the State will invest another $250 million from the State's Rainy-Day Fund through the Maryland Strong Economic Recovery Initiative. This will fund a combination of existing and new relief programs. It will include:

- $50 million for Small Business Relief Grant Funds, which will allow the full backlog to be processed
- $50 million for Maryland restaurants to expand outdoor dining, purchase tents, upgrade HVAC systems and technology. This funding will be provided to local jurisdictions to be dispersed immediately but no later than December 31st
- $20 million for Main Street MD and Baltimore Main Street
- $20 million COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund
- $5 million for Small and Business Minority Low-Interest Loans
- $2 million for the State's hometown tourism program
- $3 million for an arts program
- $100 million Dedicated Emergency Rapid Response Fund (this is reserved for future needs).

Governor Hogan said that local jurisdictions need to focus on moving into Stage 3 and needs to ensure funding from the CARES Act is being fully disbursed by the counties. For some counties, only about a 1/3 of the funds has been spent. The $250 million is above and beyond the requirement for maintaining funds in the Rainy-Day Fund. Governor Hogan said that businesses can get help from multiple programs depending on their need and qualifications.

*(Society/Practice Updates continued)*

## Medical Records Retention Guidelines

**Pediatric Records:** For Pediatric patients the law requires retention until the patient reaches the age of 18 years plus 3 years or 5 years from the last date of records whichever is later.

**Adult Records:** Maryland law requires retention of medical records on adult patients for 5 years from the last date of record.

Federal HIPAA regulations require documentation of records being released or disclosed for 6 years from the date of the disclosure.

Insurance plans under federal jurisdiction may request documentation of service for up to 7 years from the date of payment. Insurance carrier contracts may have additional retention requirements.

Always check with your medical liability carrier for additional retention requirements based on your patient population and medical practices.

## Did you know that your 2020 BCMS/MedChi dues are 60% tax deductible?

Save time and money and renew your BCMS/MedChi dues today online at www.medchi.org. Please call our membership team if you forget your login details at 410-539-0872, or email us at members@medchi.org. Timely payment frees Us up so we can fulfill our mission to advocate on behalf of you, your patients, and the public health, especially during this pandemic!

BCMS
Baltimore City Medical Society
1211 Cathedral Street, 3rd Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-5516

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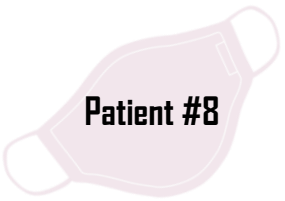
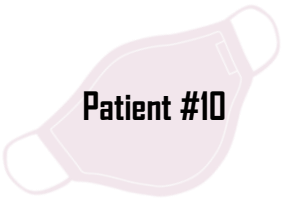



"I felt safer due to being in my home environment without being subject to public places and possible exposure to COVID-19. My doctor was able to diagnose the problem, refer for additional testing as well as prescribe medications for me to pick up from my pharmacy the same day of the appointment. I was extremely satisfied with the visit overall. Excellent experience!'

"I have had no problems. My dentist, ophthalmologist, and internist, had on their masks and I had on mine. They all practiced CDC guidelines. I was the only one in the patient area, so they scheduled sufficient time between appointments to clean."




"Doctors are doing a good job of keeping patients safe, while still providing necessary health services. They're an essential part of our modern day society and they put their lives on the line for our sake."

## Share your reflections on COVID-19!

Send to info@bcmsdocs.org. See below for mailing address.

**Also, consider contributing to these COVID-19 repositories:**

- **Center for a Healthy Maryland** (MedChi's Foundation) ~ "COVID-19 Memories" – events@medchi.org or 410-539-0872, ext.3336
- **Maryland Historical Society** ~ "Collecting in Quarantine" – lettersfromthehomefront@mdhs.org – 410-685-3750
- **University of Maryland Baltimore County** ~ "Coronavirus Chronicles: Sharing Stories Through Isolation" and "Coronavirus Lost and Found" archives – magazine@umbc.edu or 410-455-1711