President's Message

Hello TCACC Members:

My name is Matt Phillips. I am a cardiologist and currently the new President of The Texas Chapter of the ACC. I am also the President of Austin Heart. We are an integrated group with 50 physicians in Austin, Texas.

I am writing my first presidential newsletter to you, a member of the Texas Chapter of the American College of Cardiology. Membership in the Texas Chapter of the ACC does have benefits, however I fear the value may be lost in the maze of sub-specialty societies, boards, employment models and the daily "can you do just more thing" regulation we all experience.

The hard truth is that our profession is under assault and we need your help. Just recently, the Wall Street Journal highlighted a physician company that sets up second opinions and charges a fee. In the article it was discussed (and it came across to me as a fact) that up to 75% of all tests they see other doctors order are unnecessary.

The fantasy is that patients and the payers want the same gains in outcomes that we have achieved over the last 10 years but with no increase in personal responsibility by the patients or greater liability risk for the payers. It’s like the cartoon of the ER doctor calling for a consult based on an increased troponin and telling the cardiologist to “fix it.” We have just shrugged, "fixed it" and moved on.

The Congress wants to eliminate physician ownership of all equipment. Some believe that physicians cannot possibly own equipment without doing unnecessary testing. If this occurs, the resulting shift of all cardiologists to integrated groups will alter the working dynamics of every cardiologist, in every practice location.

Furthermore, when CV disease care (the most common illness) contributes the same contribution margins to the hospital system as podiatrists do (no emails please), the resources allocated for us to care for our patients (staff, equipment and space) will follow.

Not one of us comes to work and leaves satisfied with giving just adequate care. We need accurate data to help us understand our practice and we will do things better, faster and cheaper. At the same time, metrics of raw mortality are still too crude (as in some states sicker patients are sent to another state for procedures). Our most vocal critics say it would be great if you could rate a doctor’s care the same way you can rate the MPG on a new car.
I tell our critics that is just fine. First, let’s establish the rules of the gradings (hopefully that are meaningful and measurable). We all should remember that we were the folks who did very well with grades; that is why we were the ones that were able to get into medical school in the first place.

I agree with the grading concept, pay for quality etc., but we better make sure we choose our process wisely. Cardiologists will get good grades in the new system, but let’s make sure our patients actually get some benefit as well.

Like it or not, we are the in the transition group of cardiologists. The pendulum will swing (like a guillotine) and eventually the system will stabilize. Cardiologists will get jobs and we will be able to take care of patients. Patients will understand there is no free lunch and they have to take care of themselves to get the best outcomes.

This will take at least 5 years, but who really knows?

In the meantime it is up to us to manage the change. We are divided now by corporate employers, private vs. integrated, and academic vs. practice, types and locations of physicians. We share the same fate despite the name on our doors.

I am asking (pleading) for your help. The TCACC is a large group. We can have an impact on the way cardiovascular care is delivered in our state.

The first step is for us to talk. I have reached out to the Councilors and asked for their help. In turn they are going to reach out to you as well.

We need to leverage our collective brainpower to help manage the current disruption in care delivery. It is up to us to speak in one voice to protect our patients and the care they will get. We need to educate all of the public about the amazing advances in cardiovascular care and our commitment to be sure that they get the most appropriate, most current and highest quality when they need it.

Like it or not, our Chapter is the only option out there that can unify us and give us a voice for change.

Please Help.

More to follow...

Matt Phillips, MD, FACC
MattPhillips1@me.com
April Conference Call

All Member Monthly Conference Call/Webinar

April 17, 5pm (CST)
Dial-In: (866) 740-1260
ID Number: 1701531#

Please note: This is a webinar/conference call

Current Challenges in Lipid Management: Statin Intolerance, Familial Hypercholesterolemia, and Familial Chylomicronemia Syndrome

Zahid Ahmad, MD
Assistant Professor, UT Southwestern Medical Center
Dallas, Texas

CME: This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint sponsorship of Scott & White and The Texas Chapter of the American College of Cardiology. Scott & White designates this live activity for a maximum of 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™.

Presented by

The Texas Chapter of the American College of Cardiology

Through a joint sponsorship with

Scott & White
Division of Cardiology

*This session is one in a series of webinars held monthly by the Texas Chapter of the American College of Cardiology.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of this activity, the participant should be able to:
Describe the scope of statin myopathy
Explain familial hypercholesterolemia and treatment challenges
Explain familial chylomicronemia syndrome and treatment challenges

Instructions for logging into the Call and Webinar:
Go to www.readytalk.com
Enter in the participant number 1701531
Fill out the participant information form (Name/Email/Phone/Company)
Click “Submit”
You are logged in and ready to listen. Be sure to dial (866) 740-1260 and key in 1701531# to join the call-in portion of the webinar as well.
ACCREDITATION: This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint sponsorship of Scott & White and The Texas Chapter of the American College of Cardiology. Scott & White is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.” Scott & White designates this live activity for a maximum of 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

FACULTY DISCLOSURES: Aegerion Pharmaceuticals (consulting)

PLANNERS DISCLOSURES
The planners do not have a financial interest or affiliation with any entity producing, marketing, reselling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients.

About Zahid Ahmad  Dr. Zahid Ahmad, MD, is an Assistant Professor at UT Southwestern Medical Center. His clinical duties are at 3 lipid clinics in the Dallas area: Parkland Health and Hospital Systems (serving the indigent population), UT Southwestern (for insured patients), and the North Texas VA (serving veterans). Dr. Ahmad is heavily involved with research focused on familial lipid disorders such as familial hypercholesterolemia and hypertriglyceridemia.

Upcoming Events
TCACC Annual Meeting 2013
Click Here to Register!
May 17-18, 2013
Grand Hyatt Hotel
San Antonio, TX
The TCACC Annual Meeting represents your best opportunity to network with cardiologists throughout Texas. We offer an exceptional lineup of lectures and discussions as well as cutting edge research work at our poster presentations.

Hotel Accommodations
Grand Hyatt Hotel
600 East Market Street
San Antonio, Texas 78205

$199 single/double
All rooms are subject to sales and room tax. A guarantee is required for all reservations via credit card. We encourage you to stay in the host hotel, the Grand Hyatt Hotel. Make your housing reservations no later than April 23, 2013 to receive the negotiated rate. To receive the negotiated rate (TCACC does not have their own rate at this hotel, TCACC attendees should use the TMA rate as this meeting is happening in conjunction with the TMA TexMed Meeting.) Call 210-224-1234 and let the reservationist know you are with the TMA TexMed Meeting. If you must cancel your reservation, please do so before 7 days prior to your check in date so that you do not forfeit your deposit.

Meeting Fees
Registration fees include the scientific program, Friday Welcome Reception, continental breakfast, breaks, Saturday Luncheon, and the Saturday Closing Reception.

No Fee for FITs
$150 for FACCs
$250 for non-member physicians
$75 for member CCAs and practice administrators
Did You Know TCACC's Website Offers Tools for TCACC Members and Their Patients?

- **Online resources** Links to various cardiology related websites
- **Ask a Coder** Have a coding question? Submit it here.
- **View your online profile** Verify that TCACC has your correct contact information
- **Patients** Your patients can find a cardiologist and use helpful tools to assist them in managing their health
- **HeartPAC** TCACC HeartPAC needs your help! Make an online payment today.