

June 1, 2015

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NEWS FROM THE LEADING VOICE FOR THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN GEORGIA



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Gov. Deal signs landmark "name tag" bill into law while MAG unveils fact sheet addressing measure's key provisions



Gov. Nathan Deal signed the "Patient Consumer and Awareness Act" into law on May 12. In addition to Gov. Deal, the dignitaries that were on hand for the bill-signing ceremony included Sen. Fran Millar (far left), MAG Government Relations Director Marcus Downs (far rear on left), MAG President-elect John S. Harvey, M.D. (dark coat in far rear on right), MAG member Steven Kane, M.D. (lab coat on right), Rep. Carl Rogers (brown coat on right), MAG Executive Director Donald J. Palmisano Jr. (second from far right), and MAG Legislative Associate Ryan Larosa (far right).

On May 12, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal signed a crucial bill (H.B. 416) into law that will require the vast majority of licensed health care practitioners in the state to wear an ID on their "lab coats or similar distinguishing clothing or uniforms" that states their name and license or educational degree when they are caring for a patient.

"This has been one of the Medical Association of Georgia's (MAG) legislative priorities for the last two years," says MAG Council on Legislation Chair Michael E. Greene, M.D. "It is a great development for patients in particular because they are going to have instant access to some fundamental information about their health care provider's qualifications."

With the exception of optometrists and chiropractors and dentists who do not practice in hospitals or nursing homes or assisted living facilities, the "Patient Consumer and Awareness Act" covers every licensed health care practitioner

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“Overall, Georgia ended up surprising experts with an enrollment in this year’s [federal health insurance] exchange of 541,080, far outpacing last year’s total of 316,543.”

“Gwinnett tops counties in exchange enrollees,” Georgia Health News, May 13

in the state.

Dr. Greene notes that the measure by Rep. Carl Rogers (R-Gainesville) and Sen. Fran Millar (R-Atlanta) received widespread support from a number of groups, including speech language pathologists, audiologists, respiratory therapists, marriage and family therapists, registered dieticians, ophthalmic technicians, and APRNs.

[Click for H.B. 416 “Name Tag Bill” Fact Sheet](#)

[Click for media report highlighting need for H.B. 416](#)

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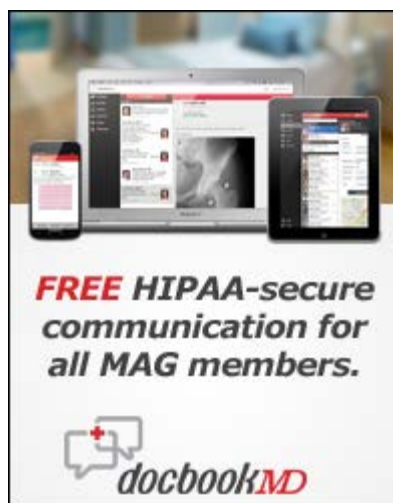
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Château Élan offering discount for MAG's "Legislative Update"

The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) will host its annual "Legislative Update" meeting at the Château Élan Winery & Resort in Braselton on Friday, July 31 and Saturday, August 1.

MAG is encouraging attendees to call 678.425.0900 and reference the "Medical Association of Georgia" or go to <https://booking.chateauelan.com> and use code 63Q8MJ to obtain a discounted room rate of \$185 per night plus taxes. The discount will be available until July 6 or when the block of rooms sells out.

Contact Anita Amin at 404.299.7700 or anita@jlh-consulting.com with questions.

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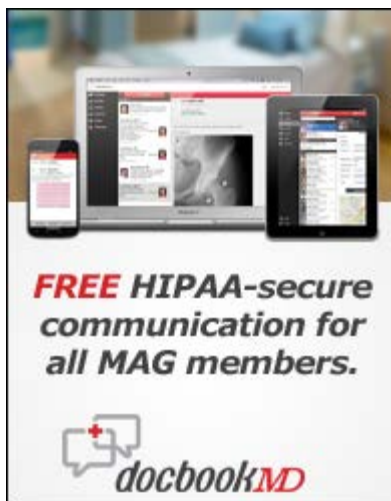
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House HHS vice chair appears on MAG's 'Top Docs' show



From the left are MAG Executive Director Donald J. Palmisano, 'Top Docs Radio' host C.W. Hall, Georgia Rep. Rick Jasperse, and MAG Government Relations Director Marcus Downs.

Georgia Rep. Rick Jasperse (R-Jasper) – the vice chairman of the House Health and Human Services Committee – joined Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) Executive Director and CEO Donald J. Palmisano Jr. and MAG Government Relations Director Marcus Downs on the 'Top Docs Radio' program on the Business Radio-X Network on May 12.

They discussed a number of key issues, including the milestone "name tag" bill that passed in 2015 – as well as number of scope of practice and health insurance reform measures.

MAG provides the featured guest on the 'Top Docs' show at 2:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month.

[Click to listen to Top Docs recording](#)

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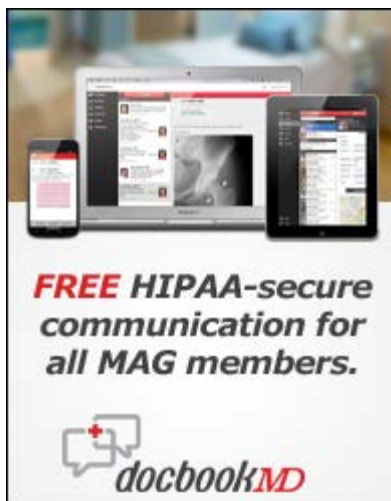
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MAG forum on POLST, IOM report now online

A recording of a town hall conference call that the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) hosted on May 18 that addressed the role of a physician order for life-sustaining treatment (POLST), POLST legislation in Georgia, the Institute of Medicine's 2014 "Dying in America" report, and the resources that are available on the Georgia POLST Collaborative website is now available on MAG's website.

The call featured Richard W. Cohen, M.D., who is the facilitator of the Georgia POLST Collaborative, and Adrienne Mims, M.D., who is the chief medical officer for Medicare Quality Improvement with Alliant GMCF.

The forum was supported with a grant from Health Care Research, a subsidiary of Alliant Health Solutions.

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[Click for Dr. Cohen's slides](#)

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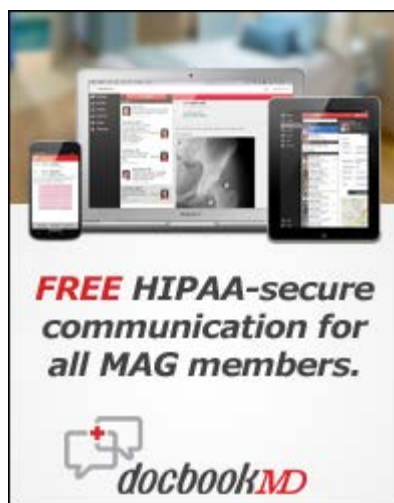
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MAG gets on "bus" to help physicians in North Georgia



Stephen W. Jarrard, M.D. – a member of the Medical Association of Georgia's (MAG) Board of Directors and a general surgeon in Clayton – was one of the North Georgia health care providers who took advantage of a special "Rural Physician Outreach Bus Tour" that took place on May 13 and 14. The event was designed to provide health care providers in rural areas with technical assistance and information on a number of key issues, including the EHR meaningful use attestation process and the upcoming ICD-10 billing code transition. It included stops in Commerce, Demorest, Clayton, Blairsville, Ellijay and Dahlonega. MAG Health Policy and Third Payer Advocacy Department Director Susan Moore took part in the effort and says that, "This was a great way to provide rural physicians and their practice staff with information they need to succeed from both business and patient care perspectives." The event also featured representatives from HomeTown Health, GA-HITEC, the Georgia Department of Community Health, HP Medicaid, and the Georgia Health Information Network (GaHIN). MAG members can contact Moore at smoore@mag.org.

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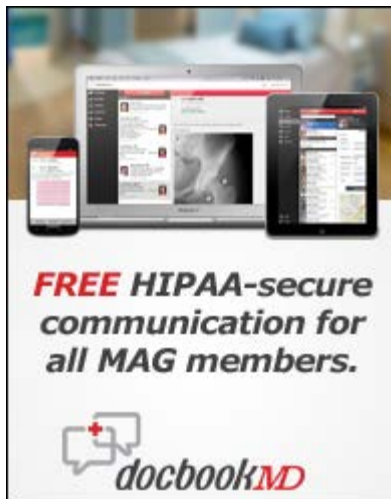
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MAG encouraging HOD attendees to reserve rooms ASAP

The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) will hold its House of Delegates meeting at the Hyatt Regency in Savannah on Saturday, October 17 and Sunday, October 18. The MAG Board of Directors will meet at Hyatt Regency on the morning of Friday, October 16.

The Hyatt Regency Savannah is sold out — although attendees should contact their county medical society, if applicable, to determine if a room has already been reserved for them.

Attendees who would like to be added to the Hyatt waitlist should contact Anita Amin at anita@jlh-consulting.com or 404.299.7700. Any waitlisted rooms will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

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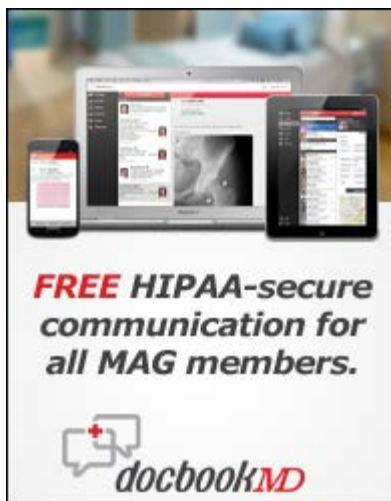
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MAG rallying support for RAC reform bill

The Medical Association of Georgia is encouraging physicians to contact their Congressional leaders to encourage them to co-sponsor the Fair Medical Audits Act of 2015 (FMAA) by Rep. George Holding (R-NC). The bill would address a number of problems that physicians have reported having with Medicare recovery audit contractors.

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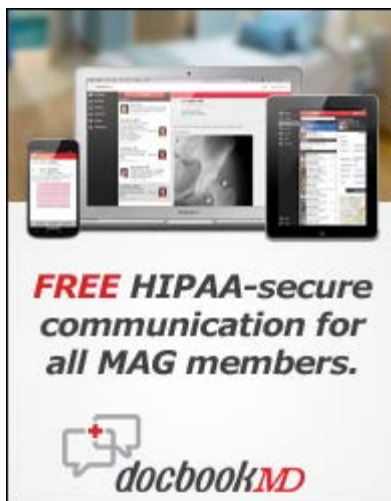
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MAG calling for nominations for 2015 awards

The Medical Association of Georgia's (MAG) annual awards will be presented during MAG's House of Delegates meeting at the Hyatt Regency Savannah on Saturday, October 17. MAG is encouraging county medical society leaders and MAG members to nominate those individuals who they believe deserve to be recognized for their outstanding contributions to the medical profession.

Nominations for the *Lamartine Hardman Cup*, the *Joseph P. Bailey Jr., M.D., Physician Distinguished Service Award*, and the *John B. Rabun Award* must be submitted by a county medical society. The *Jack A. Raines, M.D., Humanitarian Award*, the *Donna Glass Non-Physician Distinguished Service Award*, and the *Physician's Award for Community Service* nominations may be submitted by a county medical society or an individual member.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, July 17. Nomination letters and supporting information (CV, letters, etc.) should be submitted to Samantha Grantham at sgrantham@mag.org.

Nominations must be submitted by email. Nominations that are mailed through the postal system will not be accepted. Nomination materials should be no longer than three pages per document. The MAG Awards Committee will accept re-nominations.

Contact Grantham at sgrantham@mag.org with questions.

Click [here](#) for the awards criteria.

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“Gwinnett tops counties in exchange enrollees,” Georgia Health News, May 13



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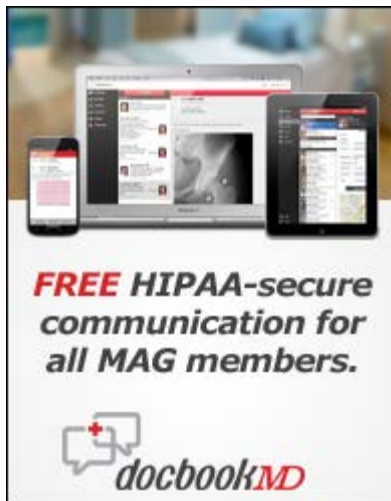
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Oconee County Jail wins MAG's 'Spivey' award



Pictured from the left are MAG Executive Director Donald J. Palmisano Jr., Oconee County Jail Nurse Administrator Kim Steiner, Oconee County Jail Medical Director Paul Buczynsky, M.D., Oconee County Sheriff Scott Berry, Oconee County Jail Administrator Chuck Johnson, MAG Correctional Medicine Committee Chair Patton Smith, M.D., and MAG Correctional Medicine Director Clyde Maxwell.

The Medical Association of Georgia's (MAG) Correctional Medicine Committee awarded its *Herman E. Spivey, M.D., Award for Excellence* to the Oconee County Jail during a ceremony that took place in Watkinsville on April 20.

MAG Correctional Medicine Committee Chairman Patton Smith, M.D., MAG Executive Director Donald J. Palmisano Jr., and MAG Director of Correctional Medicine Clyde Maxwell were on hand for the presentation.

"The Oconee County Jail has an exemplary medical program," says Dr. Smith. "This was the first time that we had a correctional facility achieve a perfect score on its first accreditation survey."

He adds that, "It's a great accomplishment, and everybody who is associated with the medical program at this facility should be proud and applauded."

Oconee is the second jail to receive the award, which was established to honor the late Herman E. Spivey, M.D. – a long-time physician at the Chattooga County Jail and a member of MAG's Correctional Medicine Committee.

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In a related development, Maxwell notes that MAG’s Correctional Medicine Committee is recruiting physicians who are interested performing accreditations at correctional facilities in the state.

He explains that, “The committee is focused on enforcing the national accreditation standards for prisons and jails to ensure prisoners are receiving adequate health care.”

Maxwell also says that the physicians who perform the accreditations receive a small stipend.

MAG members who have an interest in performing accreditations should contact Maxwell at cmaxwell@mag.org or 706.746.2009.

MAG created its Correctional Medicine Committee following the high-profile prison riots that took place in Attica, New York in 1975, and just before the Georgia State Prison system was placed under the jurisdiction of the federal courts for maintaining health care facilities that violated a constitutional prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment. The MAG committee was charged with “studying and recommending ways to improve the delivery of health care in non-federal prisons in Georgia.”

MAG subsequently developed standards for evaluating health care in jails and prisons in the state, which evolved into the standards that are now used by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care.

In 1982, MAG developed the legislation that was used to establish an accreditation program for health care for correctional facilities in Georgia. The state began funding the program in 1983, and MAG subsequently started charging application fees for site accreditation visits.

The Medical College of Georgia at Georgia Regents University assumed responsibility for the health services contract for state prisons in the 1990s. GRU’s Division of Georgia Correctional Health Care currently provides health care at more than 60 correctional facilities throughout the state.

MAG conducts surveys at 33 prisons and 10 county jails in the state. Each facility is surveyed every three years.

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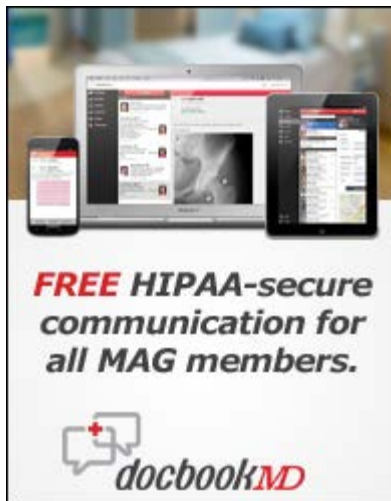
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Top GAMPAC donors enjoy exclusive DC "fly-in"



GAMPAC hosted an exclusive "fly-in" event for its Chairman's Circle (\$2,500 or more) donors in Washington, D.C. on April 28-29. The agenda included a private nighttime tour of the U.S. Capitol that was hosted by MAG member and U.S. Rep. Tom Price, M.D. The GAMPAC contingent met with a number of U.S. Congressional leaders, including Reps. Lynn Westmoreland, Austin Scott, Tom Graves, Buddy Carter, Rick Allen, Jody Hice and Barry Loudermilk. They also had breakfast with Rep. David Scott and lunch with Sens. Johnny Isakson and David Perdue. Some of the health care issues they discussed included Medicare Recovery Audit Contractors, ICD-10, and Medicare. Dr. Price (far right) is pictured leading the tour of the Capitol. Chairman's Circle members include John S. Antalis, M.D., Jim W. Barber, M.D., Thomas E. Bat, M.D., W. Scott Bohlke, M.D., Jack M. Chapman Jr., M.D., S. William Clark, III, M.D., the Georgia Orthopaedic Society, Matthews W. Gwynn, M.D., Katarina G. Lequeux-Nalovic, M.D., John G. Porter, M.D., Randy F. Rizor, M.D., Manoj H. Shah, M.D., Stanley W. Sherman, M.D., James L. Smith Jr., M.D., and Steven M. Walsh, M.D. Go to www.mag.org/organizations/gampac for additional information or to join GAMPAC.

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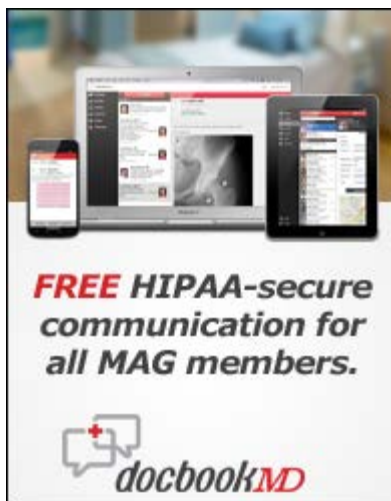
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MAG's 'Georgia Pulse' gets fresh design

MultiView, Inc. has unveiled a new design for the weekly *Georgia Pulse* media briefs report that it produces for the Medical Association of Georgia. The *Georgia Pulse* is a "compilation of select news briefs that are collected from thousands of state, national and medical trade media outlets as a resource for physicians in the state."

MultiView says that the new design will provide a "consistent user experience...whether (subscribers are) reading the news brief on a 22-inch monitor or catching a quick read on (their) phone, the publication will look great across all devices." MultiView also says the new format will more "clearly convey information and encourage social sharing [of information]."

The *Georgia Pulse* report is free. It now has more than 5,500 subscribers.

Go to <http://multibriefs.com/optin.php?mag> to subscribe to the *Georgia Pulse* report.

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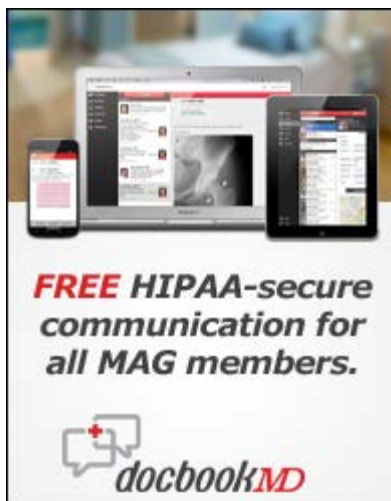
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Georgia Drug Card flags report on patient Rx preferences

The Georgia Drug Card reports that an "Issue 5: Putting a price on positive outcomes" summary that appears on the PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP website states that, "Faced with higher out-of-pocket costs and escalating drug prices, consumers – like other purchasers – are becoming choosier about the medicines they buy. It also notes that, "In 2015, the growing conflict between drug access and affordability will create fresh pressure for data that show these expensive medications work better than others and are worth the premium."

The Georgia Drug Card is consequently reminding physicians in the state that their patients who have high-deductible plans or who do not have prescription coverage or who take prescription drugs that aren't covered by their health insurance plan can use the Georgia Drug Card to obtain savings of up to 75 percent off the retail price for brand and generic FDA-approved medications.

Georgians can print the Georgia Drug Card for free at www.GeorgiaDrugCard.com, they can request the Georgia Drug Card savings at any CVS/pharmacy in the state, or they can request a hard card by sending an email to John Cenerazzo at johnc@georgiadrugcard.com.

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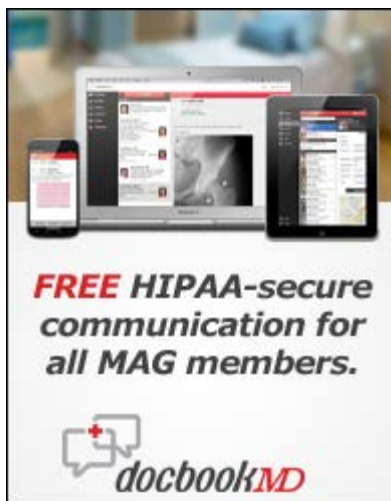
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MAG welcomed the following new members during May...

Chuck Andrew Jetton, M.D., Atlanta

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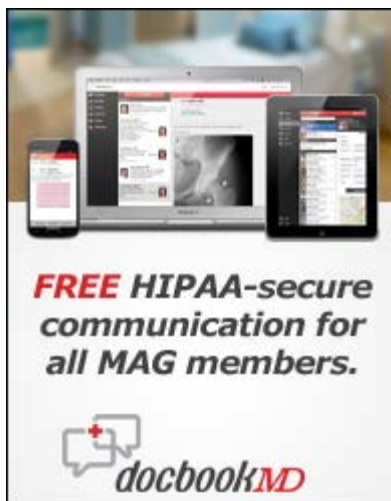
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Physicians Foundation promoting free ICD-10 tool

The Physicians Foundation is encouraging physicians to take advantage of a free 'ICD-10 Charts' resource that was designed to help medical practices make the transition to the ICD-10 billing codes that will go into effect on October 1, 2015.

"ICD-10 Charts is a collection of innovative ICD-10 training resources that can help streamline your entire ICD-10 implementation process and save your practice a considerable amount of time and money..." says Parth Desai, the Mercer University medical student who founded ICD10Charts.com.

He explains that, "The ICD-10 Chartbuilder is the focal point of our system, allowing any practice to make fully personalized ICD-9 to ICD-10 conversion templates, instantly. Every conversion template is custom-made to only include the ICD-10 codes needed for your practice, and can be printed, exported to your EMR, saved, and updated to fit your needs."

And Desai notes that, "The ICD-10 Charts Training Academy includes over five hours of end-to-end ICD-10 training, specialty-specific ICD-10 training, and also a more concise version of the course for busy physicians and nurses. The goal is for practices to make the entire transition to ICD-10, using only these free services."

ICD-10 Charts has customizable templates for every major medical specialty, according to Desai.

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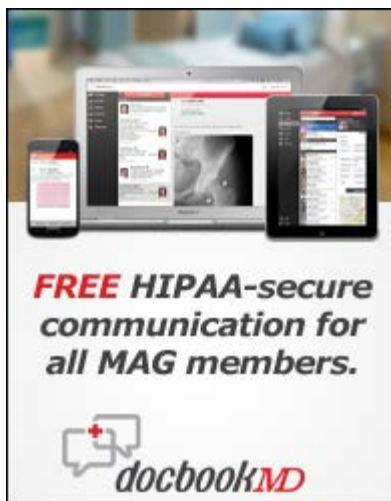
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Dougherty County MS names new executive director

The Dougherty County Medical Society (DCMS) has announced that Susan Workman will serve as its executive director beginning on May 1. Workman can be reached at director@dc-ms.org or 229.436.8191. Go to <http://www.dc-ms.org/index.html> for additional information on DCMS.

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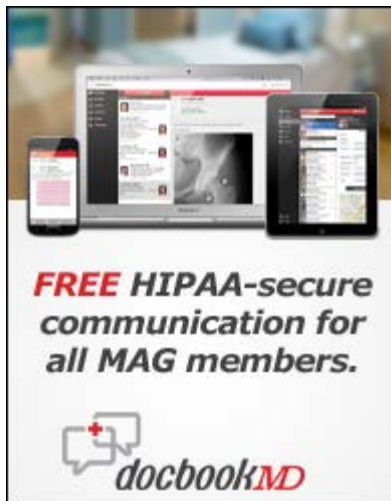
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New AMA documents address H.R. 2 details, timeline

The American Medical Association has produced two documents that address the recently-enacted "Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015" (H.R. 2), including "a detailed section-by-section summary...[and] a chronological list that shows when some of the major provisions will take effect."

[Click for AMA H.R. 2 section summary](#)

[Click for AMA H.R. 2 provisions timeline](#)

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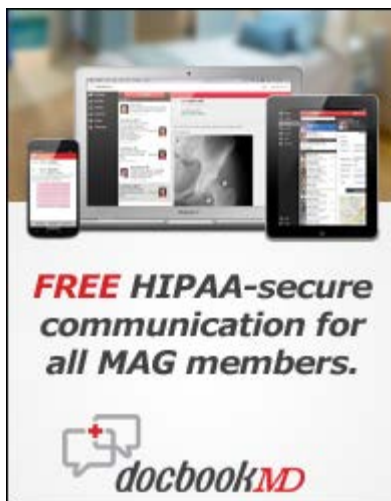
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CMS releases mid-year 2014 QRUR reports

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released the "2014 Mid-Year Quality and Resource Use Reports" (MYQRURs) for physicians who participated in the Shared Savings Program or a Pioneer Accountable Care Organization (ACO) or the Comprehensive Primary Care (CPC) initiative in 2014.

CMS says the reports are intended to be used for "informational purposes only" and "contain information on a subset of the measures used to calculate the 2016 Value Modifier."

CMS adds that the MYQRURs contain "interim information about performance on the six cost and three quality outcomes measures that CMS calculates from Medicare claims. These are some of the measures used in the calculation of the Value Modifier."

And CMS notes that the information in the MYQRUR is "based on care provided from July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014, a period that precedes the actual calendar year 2014 performance period for the 2016 Value Modifier."

[Click for 2014 MYQRUR web page](#)

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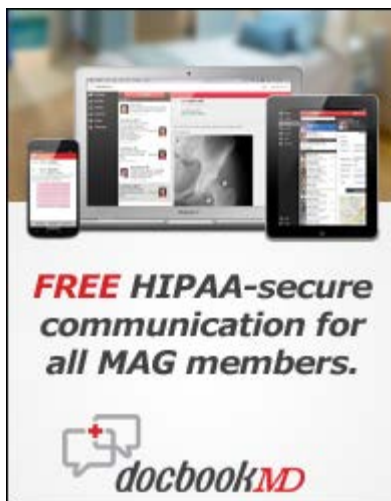
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CMS releases 2014 eCQMs for 2016 reporting

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released its annual update for the 2014 electronic clinical quality measures (eCQMs) for eligible hospitals and eligible professionals.

CMS says, "Providers will use these updated measures to electronically report 2016 quality data for CMS quality reporting programs, including the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), Inpatient Quality Reporting Program (IQR), and the EHR Incentive Programs."

CMS explains that it "updates the specifications annually to improve their alignment with current clinical guidelines and code systems so that they remain relevant and actionable within the clinical care setting."

There are 64 updated measures for eligible professionals, according to CMS.

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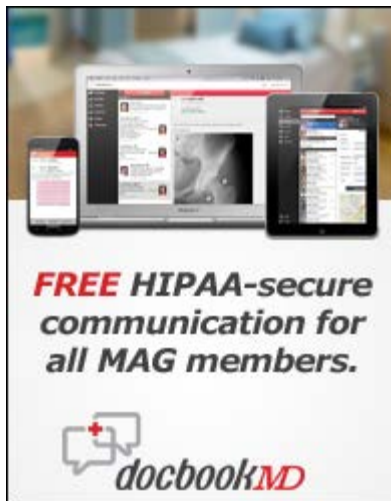
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New CMS newsletter includes fraud/abuse program update

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has distributed its "Spring Edition of the CMS Pulse," which includes an update on the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program. CMS says to "disregard the article on the 21% payment adjustment because Congress acted to stop the payment reduction and the President signed that law last month."

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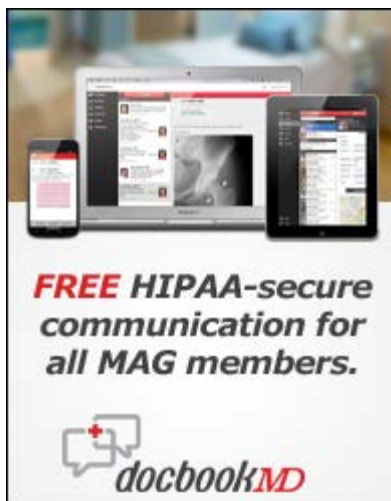
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Georgia gets B grades on telemedicine reports

The American Telemedicine Association (ATA) has released two state reports that assign "grades ranging from A-to-F based on telemedicine reimbursement and physician practice standards." Georgia received a B on both reports.

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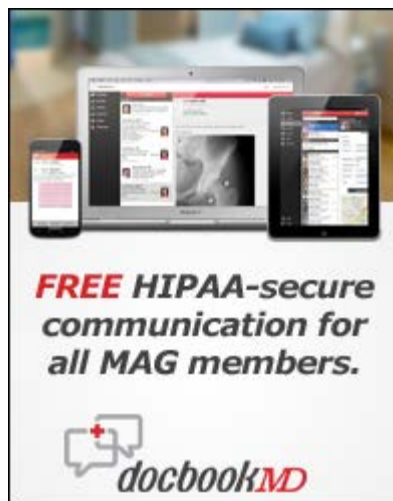
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CMS webinars on EHR proposed rules now online

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is promoting the availability of three webinars that address the proposed rules for the Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Records Incentives Program. CMS also notes that, "Comments for the Stage 3 proposed rule are due by May 29, 2015. Comments for the Modifications to Meaningful Use in 2015-2017 proposed rule are due by June 15, 2015."

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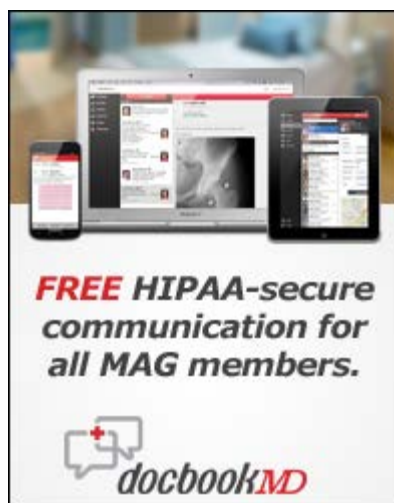
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CMS flagging July 1 Medicare adjustment deadline

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is stressing that "Payment adjustments for eligible professionals that did not successfully participate in the Medicare EHR Incentive Program in 2014 will begin on January 1, 2016." However, CMS also notes that, "Medicare eligible professionals can avoid the 2016 payment adjustment by taking action by July 1 and applying for a 2016 hardship exception."

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“Overall, Georgia ended up surprising experts with an enrollment in this year’s [federal health insurance] exchange of 541,080, far outpacing last year’s total of 316,543.”

“Gwinnett tops counties in exchange enrollees,” Georgia Health News, May 13

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PAI supports bill addressing Medicare audits

The Physicians Advocacy Institute (PAI) is encouraging lawmakers to pass the "Fair Medical Audits Act of 2015" – a bill by U.S. Rep. George Holding (R-NC) that PAI says "addresses many concerns that physicians have with regard to the extraordinary lack of transparency and expensive, time-consuming and often unfair processes that plague the current Medicare audit program."

PAI explains that, "This legislation would establish incentives for RACs to make more accurate audit findings and increase educational efforts to help physicians avoid common mistakes."

PAI's mission is to "advance fair and transparent payment policies and contractual practices by payers and others in order to sustain the profession of medicine for the benefit of patients."

Medical Association of Georgia Executive Director Donald J. Palmisano Jr. is a member of PAI's Board of Directors.

Contact Kelly Kenney at 312.543.7955 or k2strategiesllc@gmail.com with questions or for additional information.

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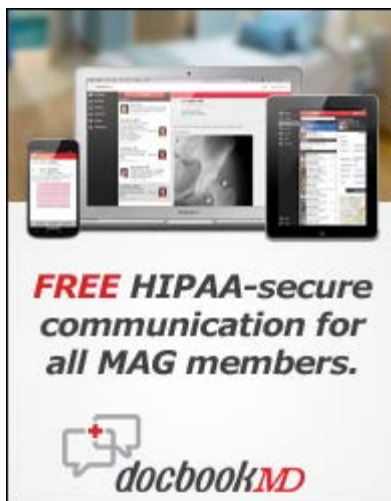
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Group promoting free cardiac/diabetes health webinars

The Georgia Clinical Transformation Team (GCT²) will host a number of free webinars in 2015, including "Excelling in Diabetes and Cardiac Health Through PQRS Reporting," "Meaningful Use/Stage 2 Readiness," "ICD-10 and Accurate Coding for Maximum Reimbursement," "Team Based Care Protocol – Systems for BP Control and the Role of the Pharmacist in Team Based Care," "Medication Reconciliation and Medication Adherence," "Smoking Cessation and Accurate Coding for Maximum Reimbursement," and "Implementing Team STEPPS in Medical Practice."

In addition to the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG), GCT²'s partners include Alliant Quality, the Georgia Department of Community Health, the Georgia Department of Public Health, GA-HITEC, the Georgia Association of Family Physicians, the Georgia Association of Primary Health Care, the Georgia Chapter of the American College of Physicians, and the Georgia Hospital Association.

MAG Director of Health Policy and Third Party Payer Advocacy Susan Moore says the webinars are designed for individuals and organizations that are interested in "collaborating on transforming cardiac and diabetes care for Georgia adults through clinical and practice quality improvement efforts."

Contact Angela Flanigan at aflanigan@gafp.org or 404.321.7445 with questions.

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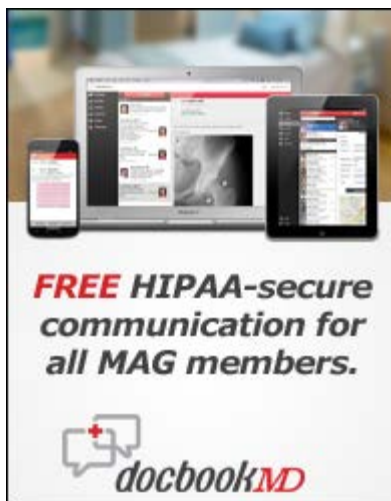
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