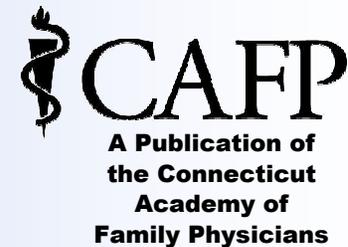


# CONNECTICUT FAMILY PHYSICIAN



Vol. 12 • Issue 2 • March 2012

“Senate Bill 261 would allow persons practicing naturopathy to administer vitamin B-12 by injection.”

## CAFP Opposes Two Legislative Proposals

### Senate Bill 261

The Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians opposes Senate Bill 261 - An Act Concerning Naturopathic Medicine and respectfully urges the Public Health Committee of the General Assembly to oppose this bill.

Senate Bill 261 would allow persons practicing naturopathy to administer vitamin B-12 by injection. Our opposition to this bill is three-fold.

First, injecting vitamin B-12 has the potential to mask medical conditions that, if not

### Senate Bill 243

The Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians submits this statement in strong opposition to Senate Bill 243 - An Act Concerning Certificates of Merit. We have come before the Judiciary Committee many times over the past several years to advocate for medical malpractice reform and today we submit this statement to urge you not to weaken one of the few protections that physicians have left.

The bill before you attempts to erode the certificate of merit system in place in medical malpractice cases. Certificates of merit are

“The bill [243] before you attempts to erode the certificate of merit system in place in medical malpractice cases.”

treated, will, in many cases, result in patient harm. This is particularly true for injected vitamin B-12 because of its increased effectiveness versus oral administration. Medical conditions such as Crohn’s disease, pancreatic insufficiency, autoimmune atrophic gastritis, and adverse effects of certain prescription medications, as well as other potentially treatable diseases that result in pernicious anemia, may be masked, and thus missed, by a naturopath providing injectable B-12. Naturopaths are not rigorously trained in these conditions and are not able to apply evidence-based medicine to treat these conditions.

In addition, it is not just our opinion that naturopaths should not administer injections. Even leading naturopathic associations are divided over the administration of injectable medications. The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians and the American Naturopathic Medical Association, two leading naturopathic organizations, are divided over this and other issues regarding the scope of naturopathic medicine.

Our third objection to this bill is that it attempts to circumvent the process that this committee put in place for determining scope of practice issues. Public Act 11-209 – An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health’s

*(Continued on page 2)*

meant to deter frivolous and weak claims and reduce unnecessary lawsuits by requiring that an attorney or claimant cannot file a medical malpractice lawsuit or apportionment complaint unless he or she has made a reasonable inquiry under the circumstances to determine that grounds exist for a good faith belief that the claimant received negligent medical care or treatment. The complaint must contain a certificate of merit which is a written, signed opinion from a “similar health care provider”.

The requirement of a “similar health care provider” is an important one but this bill seeks to weaken that. Different medical specialties have different prevailing professional standards of care and practices. It would be incredibly unreasonable to think that a psychiatrist would be able to comment on a possible breach by an oncologist. While both have completed medical school and residency, they then complete specific training in their specialty. While one treats mental illness another treats cancer. It is unreasonable to think that a psychiatrist would be up-to-date on the latest medical advances in oncology nor would an oncologist be the best to comment on the type of care a psychiatrist should provide. But this bill supposes just that. By not requiring that the health care provider be one who is similar,

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Of Note...

- The CAFP Student Research Award for Family Medicine was awarded to Oscar Gerdner of Simsbury, CT. He was awarded \$100 for his research on the role of fathers in the care of HIV kids.
- Drs. Peter Gates, Gary Bertman and Steven Johnson were quoted extensively in a feature article in the New London Day on the impact the SGR is having on physician access.
- Dr. Stacy Taylor, CAFP President, commented on the Academy's Contact of Care program in an article in the Hartford Courant on "Insurers Focus on Primary Care to Improve Health and Reduce Costs!!"
- East Granby Family Practice has received recognition as a Patient Centered Medical

### Bill 261 (continued)

Oversight Responsibilities Relating to Scope of Practice Determinations for Health Care Professionals, establishes a formal process for the submission and review of requests from health care professions seeking to revise their existing scope of practice or to establish a new scope of practice. Under the act, the scope of practice review committee is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the scope of practice requests and providing written assessments to the Public Health Committee, including any legislative recommendations. There is no evidence that this process was followed here. It is our belief that this process results in outcomes which best reflect the concerns of all parties involved.

We strongly urge this committee to oppose this bill

### Bill 243 (continued)

the door swings open to all sorts of frivolous lawsuits as those who are making the decisions on the merits of the case will not be familiar with the actual standard of care that may or may not have been breached.

The medical malpractice system is already broken and the court system is already overburden, yet the proponents of the bill before you are attempting to weaken one of the safeguards put in place to guard against frivolous lawsuits. We hope that the Judiciary Committee will recognize how unwise this bill is.

### New ABFM Requirements

Beginning in 2012, any physician who does not successfully pass the MC-FP examination within the three calendar years following the year in which he/she completes residency training will be required to satisfy the MC-FP entry process in order to take the exam and gain initial certification status

In addition, any physician who has been previously certified, and has never entered the MC-FP process, will need to complete the MC-FP re-entry process in order to take the examination and regain the certification status.

MC-FP Entry and Re-entry requirements:

- 50 MC-FP points (including at least one Part II and one

Home from the National Committee on Quality Assurance, a certifying organization.

- Practicing physicians, faculty, residents, and students with an interest or experience in international activities/global health are encouraged to submit abstracts for poster and peer sessions at the 2012 AAFP Family Medicine Global Health Workshop, September 6-8 in Minneapolis, MN. For more information or to register, visit [www.aafp.org/intl/workshop](http://www.aafp.org/intl/workshop). Questions? Contact Rebecca Janssen, AAFP Program Coordinator, at [rjanssen@aafp.org](mailto:rjanssen@aafp.org).
- Dr. Robert Tafuri is now offering Bariatric Medical Training Centers in Hartford, Tolland, Windham and Litchfield counties. For more information contact Dr. Tafuri at Bariatric Associates of New England, email [bariatricassociate@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bariatricassociate@sbcglobal.net).

## Atlantic Health Partners Offers Best Purchasing Terms for 2012-12 Flu Season

Atlantic Health Partners offers CT AFP members the overall best purchasing terms for Sanofi's Fluzone, Merck's Afluria, and MedImmune's Flumist. As a leading vaccine buying group in the country, Atlantic can assist your practice with reserving flu doses for the upcoming flu season, including Sanofi's High-Dose and Intradermal Fluzone.

Furthermore, Atlantic provides our members with the lowest costs for the complete spectrum of Sanofi and Merck vaccines. Thousands of physicians nationwide have seen how

Atlantic can improve the financial and operational practice performance of providing immunizations to your patients.

In addition Atlantic offers a unique program that enables physicians to provide vaccines like Zostavax and Medicare Part D patients with fair and timely reimbursement.

We encourage you to contact Atlantic to determine how their program can be of benefit to your practice. You can reach Jeff or Cindy at 1-800-741-2044 (Eastern Time) or at [info@atlantichelppartners.com](mailto:info@atlantichelppartners.com).

**CONNECTICUT FAMILY PHYSICIAN** is published by the Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians and is made possible in part through unrestricted grants from:

- Connecticut Medical Insurance Company
- Core Content Review of Family Medicine

Part IV activity) 150 CME credits

- Successful completion of the MC-FP examination
- A valid, full, and unrestricted license

If a physician does not anticipate being able to complete the MC-FP requirements for entry/re-entry by the deadline to clear application deficiencies, he/she may want to wait until the next examination period to apply. However, once a physician starts the entry/re-entry process, all components must be completed within (3) years; otherwise the process will have to be restarted.

For questions regarding MC-FP Entry and Re-entry requirements, Diplomats may contact the ABFM Support Center: 877-223-7437 or [help@theabfm.org](mailto:help@theabfm.org).

## Contemplations on My 8<sup>th</sup> Trip to the Dominican Republic

*By: Craig Czarsy, M.D. President and Chair, Health Horizons International*

My eighth service trip to the Dominican Republic was the most satisfying of all. Health Horizons International has been building a chronic care program and successfully increasing the number of patients in it. We have reached the point that on this trip most of the patients seen were by appointment only. The trip in May 2012 will be entirely by appointment.

While this may not seem like much of an accomplishment to those who are used to electronic medical records and requested appointments by email, it is really big for us in the Dominican Republic. It means that each patient we see has a chart that contains not only previous clinic visits, but interim reports of visits to the patients by the

come. For the first time, they worked in intake and triage during the clinics. More importantly, they accompanied the patients they follow to their appointments with the docs. This allowed them to hear firsthand what the docs told the patients so they could help reinforce the message over the next four months until the next medical service trip. The cooperadores are an amazing group of motivated individuals who are anxious to make a difference in their own communities.

We had a veteran group of physicians with us, Brad Wilkinson (Vice President of HHI), Stacy Taylor, current CAFP President, Sandra Hughes and Anne Brewer. The Quinnipiac University Physician Assistant

On a personal note, I was very proud to have two special people accompany us on the trip. Marc Bouffard is a fourth-year medical student at Tufts, and he is the one who got me involved in the Dominican Republic in the first place. He called me in 2004 and asked if I would like to accompany him on a medical trip. The rest, as they say, is history. Also joining us was my daughter, Mary Frances, who went to high school with Marc so I suppose without her Marc would not have known me! Mary is HHI's



*Roosevelt, a Community Health Worker and translator, fluent in Spanish, Haitian, Kreyol and English*

cooperadores and the International Program Team. We know of no other nongovernmental organization likewise.

Speaking of the cooperadores, it is particularly gratifying to see how far they have

students rolled up their sleeves and jumped right in. They are a great asset to HHI. The Tufts undergraduates stayed very busy with their public health project.

web master and came on her first trip to observe the operations and take pictures for the website.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## What's New: Pregnancy Exposure Information Service

As a state-funded program based in the Division of Human Genetics at the University of Connecticut Health Center, the Connecticut Pregnancy Exposure Information Service (CPEIS) has been providing free, confidential, up-to-date information on all types of exposures during pregnancy for Connecticut residents or women who have Connecticut health care providers for more than 25 years.

Information is provided to callers by teratogen information specialists and/or genetic counselors. All calls are kept confidential. Some callers are asked

to come in for a no charge detailed discussion if the information is extensive or complicated.

CPEIS is working with the UConn Health Center, Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine to provide evaluations to prevent or reduce exposures at work that may have an effect on fertility, mother's health, a pregnancy, and the baby's development. Evaluation of the workplace is especially helpful for individuals or couples who are considering pregnancy so that measure can be taken to prevent hazardous exposures prior to pregnancy. However, evaluation is also

helpful after you have learned that you are pregnant, so recommendations can be made to reduce or eliminate exposures that may be of concern.

CPEIS is the CT affiliate of the Organization of Teratogen Information Specialists (OTIS; [www.OTISPregnancy.org](http://www.OTISPregnancy.org)); a North American non-profit dedicated to providing accurate evidence-based, clinical information to patients and health care professionals about exposures during pregnancy and lactation. For more information or brochures to share with patients, please contact CPEIS at 1-800-325-5391.

### New CAFP Member Welcome:

Kumuda Kumar, MD  
*(Westport, CT)*

“... the give and take discussions included many Board members discussing their own experiences as practicing family physicians and reaching out to the medical school students to share their real life experiences.”

*Connecticut Family Physician* is published by the Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP). Views and opinions published in the *Connecticut Family Physician* are not necessarily endorsed by the CAFP.

## CAFP Board Meets with UConn Students

On March 7, 2012 Fifteen UConn medical students – mostly from their FMIG and members of the family medicine faculty met with the CAFP Board of Directors for an open discussion on a number of important topics as they pertain to medical students.

Among those topics discussed were: Differences in a 3-year family practice residency program vs. a 4-year; Different types of settings where family physicians can work; How recent graduates are handling medical debts (and if any are

doing so working part time); International travel opportunities for FPs including locum tenans; Residency interviewing questions; CV questions; Lifestyle discussions and how, as individuals or as FMIG, they could work even closer with the CAFP.

Many of the students came up to Executive Director, Mark Schuman and commented how much they appreciated the Board taking the time to meet with them and discuss their future. A large group of Academy Board members including

CAFP President Stacy Taylor participated.

Dr. Taylor said that these types of sessions will continue a couple times a year and will also include students from the Yale Medical School. She added that the give and take discussions included many Board members discussing their own experiences as practicing family physicians and reaching out to the medical school students to share their real life experiences.

UConn students attending were: Sabrina Browning, Ankeet Bhatt, Christine Castater, Tom Durante, Loreen Fournier, Tyler Hudon, Shawnet Jones, Nadia Lomakina, Ray Lorenzoni, John Mahler, Steve Marko, Mariah McAlister, Nneoma Nwachuku, Alex O’Campo and Steve Pirnie.

## Contemplations (*continued*)

It has been an amazing journey for HHI so far, and I am really excited about the work we are doing and the direction we are headed. For those CAFP members who would like to

participate in a future medical mission, please email me at [craigczarsty@gmail.com](mailto:craigczarsty@gmail.com).

**CONNECTICUT  
FAMILY  
PHYSICIAN**

---



**Connecticut Academy of  
Family Physicians**

PO Box 30  
Bloomfield, CT 06002

Phone: 860-243-3977  
Or 800-600-CAFP  
Fax: 860-286-0787

Email:

Mark Schuman

[Mschuman@ssmgt.com](mailto:Mschuman@ssmgt.com)

Arthur Schuman

[Aschuman@ssmgt.com](mailto:Aschuman@ssmgt.com)

Mary Yokose

[Myokose@ssmgt.com](mailto:Myokose@ssmgt.com)

Editor

Michelle Apiado, M.D.

**Vol. 12 • Issue 2 • March 2012**