

HARRIS COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

Opportunities for Participation

General Participation –Network and Build Collaborative Relationships

The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) welcomes your involvement and encourages you to take advantage of the following opportunities for general participation. These activities are designed to provide you with the latest information on the practice and business of medicine while offering opportunities to network, build your referral base, and develop new venues for professional collaboration. If you have any questions, please contact the HCMS office, 713-524-4267 or e-mail Vice President of Member Services, Ahuva Terk, at ahuva_terk@hcms.org.

HCMS Branch Societies – With over 11,500 members spread out across the Greater Houston area, HCMS believes it is important to reach out to all of its members in their communities. As a result, HCMS has seven branch societies (Central, North, Northwest, West, Southwest, East, Southeast) that meet three times a year to offer Continuing Medical Education seminars (usually ethics) on topics that focus on practice management, medical legislation and medical liability. The meetings offer excellent networking opportunities and provide information on HCMS/TMA member benefits, services and events. All HCMS physicians are designated to a branch based on their primary address and are welcome to attend.

The branch meetings are held three times a year at various locations within each branch area. Meetings generally start at 6 p.m. and last approximately two hours. The branches are: Central (includes the area within the 610 Loop); East (includes Baytown, Channelview, LaPorte, Highlands, and Crosby areas); North (includes Humble, The Woodlands and north areas); Northwest (includes Spring, Tomball, Cypress and northwest areas); Southeast (includes Pasadena and Clear Lake areas); Southwest (includes Alief, Sharpstown, Bellaire, and Sugar Land areas); and Western (includes Memorial, Spring Branch, and Katy areas).

Young Physicians Organization (YPO) – The HCMS Young Physicians Organization offers a variety of programs throughout the year to foster networking for referrals and collaboration with colleagues. The YPO holds one meeting a year as well as the HCMS New Member & Young Physician Reception, which is held annually in August at the John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science. The reception offers physicians the opportunity to earn CME credit while their children are cared for and entertained on site. Young Physicians are 40 years of age or younger, or in practice eight years or less. For those interested in future elective positions, this is a good place to start. Leadership at the YPO starts with a position as a Young Physician Ambassador. See details in the “Appointed Positions” section.

HCMS Women Physicians Section – The HCMS Women Physicians Section offers two meetings a year to foster networking and referrals as well as address the unique challenges faced by female physicians across all practice settings. Leadership in the HCMS Women Physician Section starts with a position as an Officer at Large, elected by the current Chair, Vice Chair and Immediate Past Chair. Other leadership opportunities include Branch Diplomat.

First Tuesdays at the Capitol – Since 2003, physicians, Alliance members (spouses of physicians), medical students, and medical societies from around the state have converged on Austin on the first Tuesday of each month during the legislative session for First Tuesdays at the Capitol. Legislative sessions occur in odd numbered years and take place during the months of February, March, April and May. While physicians are encouraged to attend as many of the First Tuesday events as possible, all levels of participation are welcomed. Each First Tuesday visit is a full day commitment. HCMS makes the appointments and provides briefing papers and key insights on the officials. Physicians interested in a future elective position on the HCMS Board of Medical Legislation have found this is a good place to start.

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Appointed Positions – Lead and Gain Experience to Seek Elective Office

The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) welcomes your involvement and encourages you to explore the opportunities to actively participate in your society and obtain experience needed to seek elective office. Committee appointments are made by the HCMS president beginning in November of each year. If you are interested in serving on one of the following, contact Teosha Blaylock, 713-524-4267, ext. 260 or e-mail her at teosha_blaylock@hcms.org.

Community Health Improvement and Communications Committee – This committee oversees the Society’s internal and external communications to members, the media and the public on issues related to health care trends, health care costs, quality care and the business of medicine and our community service activities. This committee meets two times a year at 6:30 p.m. at the HCMS offices. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday.

Emergency Care Committee – The committee represents HCMS in all matters pertaining to emergency care and disaster planning, including educational programs for physicians, emergency medical personnel and the public; advances in emergency medical communications and equipment; and liaison with emergency departments, medical staffs and community emergency services. This committee meets twice a year, usually at noon for one and a half hours. The meetings are held at the HCMS offices. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday.

Healthcare Quality Committee – The committee monitors quality related medical care projects and investigates methods to assist members with developing and documenting quality improvement in their practices by working with the TMA and other appropriate organizations. This committee meets two times a year at the HCMS offices. Meetings are generally held at 6:30 p.m. and are scheduled Monday to Thursday.

Hospital Survey Committee – The Committee manages all aspects of the HCMS Physicians’ Hospital Survey. That includes survey development and enhancement, distribution and promotion, analysis of survey results and promotion of results to hospitals, media and the public.

Membership Committee - The committee brainstorms and actively engages in new and creative ways to promote membership in HCMS and Texas Medical Association. Through the committee, strategies are developed to strengthen HCMS’ recruitment and retention efforts. This committee meets twice a year at 6:30 p.m. at the HCMS offices. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday.

Hospital Employed/Academic Practice Subcommittee – The sub-committee represents employed physicians primarily in a hospital setting. Its charge is to better understand the needs of hospital employed and academic physicians and ensure HCMS is meeting those needs. The sub-committee is part of the Membership Committee. It meets independently once a year and meets with the full Membership Committee twice a year. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday at 6:30 pm.

Independent Practice Subcommittee – The sub-committee represents physicians in independent practice. Its charge is to identify and implement ways for independent physicians to promote their practices to colleagues. The sub-committee is part of the Membership Committee. It meets independently once a year and meets with the full Membership Committee twice a year. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday at 6:30 pm.

Physician Wellness Committee – The Committee monitors physician wellness programs available to HCMS members and manages, develops and promotes all HCMS wellness initiatives. In addition, it promotes TMA and other organizations’ programs as deemed appropriate. The Committee convenes wellness leaders from hospital systems to learn and collaborate with each other. This committee meets twice a year at 6:30 p.m. at the HCMS offices. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday.

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Physicians Counseling Committee – The committee offers help to physicians dealing with substance abuse problems. This advocacy group encourages physicians to seek treatment, supports those in recovery and monitors progress. This committee meets monthly on first Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m. at the HCMS offices when clients are scheduled.

Young Physician Ambassadors (YPAs) – The Ambassadors are young physicians appointed from each of the HCMS seven branches to increase the attendance and participation of young physicians in HCMS events and meetings. Each ambassador also has an appointment on the HCMS Membership Committee. Young Physicians are 40 years of age or younger, or in practice eight years or less. The ambassadors will attend 3 branch meetings, two young physician events/meetings and two membership committee meetings. Meetings are scheduled Monday to Thursday. The Vice Chair and Chair of the Young Physicians Organization are elected from among the YPAs.

Branch Officers – Serving as a branch officer is an ideal way to begin service with HCMS and get to know physicians in your community. Branch leadership begins at the Secretary/Treasurer level and after four years of service, culminates to Branch President. A branch leader is required to attend his/her branch meetings. The Branch President is required to also attend the eight HCMS Executive Board meetings.

Branch meetings generally start at 6 p.m. and last approximately two hours. They are scheduled between Tuesday to Thursday. Executive board meetings generally start at 6:30 pm and last approximately two hours. They are always scheduled on Tuesday, usually the third Tuesday of the month.

Those interested in submitting their candidacy for Secretary/Treasurer should contact their branch coordinator at (713) 524-4267:

- Central Branch: Susan Loucks
- North Branch: Lyssa Howeth
- Northwest Branch: Lyssa Howeth
- Western Branch: Debbi Eschenbach
- Southwest Branch: Debbi Eschenbach
- East Branch: Jessica Smith
- Southeast Branch: Jessica Smith

Texas Medical Association Political Action (TEXPAC) – There are many ways for physicians to make their voices heard in the political arena but one of the most direct ways is to join TEXPAC. For \$125, physicians can become a part of the bipartisan, political arm of the Texas Medical Association that helps elect medicine-friendly candidates to state and federal office. TEXPAC membership entitles physicians to participate in the process to determine which candidates TEXPAC supports. TEXPAC meetings are usually held in Austin, in conjunction with TMA meetings. Spouses also may join and participate. For those interested in an elective position on the HCMS Board of Medical Legislation, this is another good entry point.

Locally, active TEXPAC members can be appointed as a district chair or vice-chair and help coordinate local political activities. Interested parties may get involved in local candidate races and/or host a fundraising reception.

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Elected Positions-Lead the Society

The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) welcomes your involvement and encourages you to seek an elective position. The HCMS Nominating Board is responsible for selecting candidates for elective office. The Board takes into consideration a physician's interest in serving and previous service to HCMS. The Board is composed of the presidents of the seven HCMS branch societies, HCMS immediate past president and the president-elect, and the chair of the Board of Ethics. If you have any questions, or would like to nominate yourself or another physician, please contact Teosha Blaylock, 713-524-4267, ext. 260, or e-mail her at teosha_blaylock@hcms.org.

Alternate Delegate to the Texas Medical Association (TMA) (renewable by election every two years with good attendance) –The TMA House of Delegates, its policy making body, is convened during TexMed, the TMA annual session, held annually in April or May. It is a two day commitment. There are three local evening meetings held in the spring to prepare for the meeting. Alternate delegates participate in all aspects of the process. Most do have a chance to vote at the TMA House of Delegates. Alternates are promoted to delegates based upon attendance and seniority.

Board of Ethics (three-year term) — This Board is charged with supervising the ethical conduct of member physicians and counsels individual members, if warranted. The Board investigates and approves or disapproves applicants for membership. Service on a hospital peer review committee Hospital Peer Review Committee is helpful. This Board meets in the HCMS offices four times a year at 6:30 p.m.

Board of Medical Legislation (four-year term) – This Board stays abreast of legislative matters and proposals affecting the profession and keeps the membership informed. The committee also meets with elected officials to educate them about our positions. Service with TexPac, the HCMS Delegation to TMA or *First Tuesdays at the Capitol* is helpful. This Board meets eight times a year. Most meetings are held at the HCMS offices on the second Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Board on Socioeconomics (three-year term) – This Board stays abreast of medical economic matters that affect the profession (Medicare, Medicaid, managed care, etc.) and keeps the membership informed. This Board meets four times a year at 6:30 p.m. at the HCMS offices.

HCMS Executive Board Officers: The following positions meet with the Executive Board 8 times a year for evening meetings usually on the 3rd Tuesday of the month:

Executive Board Member at Large (four-year term on HCMS Executive Board) – A Member at Large also serves as an officer of the Houston Academy of Medicine. Several years of service to the HCMS are required to serve in this position.

President Elect (one-year term on HCMS Executive Board) – A physician must have previous service on the HCMS Executive Board, served in numerous positions on committees, councils and boards, and demonstrated leadership qualities in order to be considered for nomination for this position.

Vice President (one-year term on HCMS Executive Board) – The Vice President assists the president and should have prior service on a board, council or committee.

Secretary/Treasurer (one-year term on HCMS Executive Board) – Reports on the finances and meetings of the HCMS and should have prior service on a board, council or committee.

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Volunteer Opportunities – Provide Outreach to Our Community

The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) welcomes your involvement and encourages you to volunteer and serve our community. If you have any questions, please contact the HCMS office, 713-524-4267 or e-mail Vice President of Member Services, Ahuva Terk, at ahuva_terk@hcms.org.

John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science – John P. McGovern Museum of Health & Medical Science (The Health Museum) is an interactive and entertaining science experience for all ages that promotes understanding and appreciation of the human body. Volunteers are critical in providing museum guests with an experience that will inspire a lifelong commitment to health and wellness. The Health Museum has a variety of on-going volunteer positions in science education, marketing, exhibits and special events. *(HCMS helped establish The Health Museum in 1996)*

Science and Engineering Fair – Physicians, residents and medical students are needed to be volunteer judges for one day at the annual Science and Engineering Fair of Houston, held in the spring. Medical students will be paired with physicians to judge in the following divisions of Health and Medical Sciences: junior, ninth grade, senior laboratory and senior non-laboratory. This is a great opportunity to help and guide young minds toward a future in science.

Texas Disaster Volunteer Registry – Recent experience with large scale disasters has consistently shown that an effective response requires volunteers – lots of them. The volunteers must also be pre-credentialed and deployed through a coordinated effort. With limited time and resources to process volunteers, often only those with known credentials, are eligible for disaster response. By registering with the Texas Disaster Volunteer Registry, you can be part of an alert system and respond, when activated, to a significant disaster or public health emergency. The Volunteer Registry provides a secure database with readily available, verifiable information regarding each volunteer's contact information, qualifications, training and experience. The Registry saves critical time and ensures the appropriate match of a volunteer's skills and abilities with the needs of the emergency situation. The registration system will collect needed information about you and your professional skills. Go to <https://www.texasdisastervolunteerregistry.org> and click on "Register Now" to become part of the Texas Disaster Volunteer Registry.