My position this year has afforded me many different experiences, but none so humbling as speaking at the University of Texas Medical School at Houston graduation at the end of May. What could I say to the new graduates? I certainly did not want to focus on SGR, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or ICD-10. These are transient issues, and certainly, not issues that matter at the core of why we became physicians. So, it made me reflect back as to how we got here, and why we are still practicing medicine. It’s easy to lose sight of taking care of patients with the weather-like changes that swirl around us. One of the most important aspects of medicine is lifelong learning, keeping up with the science of medicine and the technology that helps us take care of patients. I don’t think any other profession has to sort through the volume of information as we do in medicine. Most importantly is how we bring together what we have learned and apply it to individualize our patient’s care. I want to share this speech with you. Please use it as a reminder of why we started on this path, renewing our commitment to the art and science of medicine and patient care.

Good afternoon, distinguished faculty, administrators, honored guests, our newly minted doctors, and family and friends. I am honored to stand before you on this most auspicious occasion, and grateful for this opportunity. Congratulations to the graduates and their families from the 1,750+ members of the Harris County Medical Society. This momentous occasion marks the completion of the first stage of your medical training and demonstrates your commitment to lifelong learning. As you look forward to starting your residency, I want you to reflect on how you have grown and what you have learned in the last few years. I want you to remember the joy and excitement you felt starting medical school and use that same energy to drive you through residency. This is where you learn from your clinical faculty to bring together the art and science of medicine.

Share your passion for medicine with your colleagues, as this will help buoy you through any difficulties. Share your compassion with your patients and be generous with your time and attention. Remember that your patients are someone’s dad, mom, brother, sister, husband, wife, or friend. Treat them as you would want your family cared for. Share your smile, laughter and human touch, as healing can start even without medication or technology. Sometimes it is all you have to offer.

As physicians, it’s our job to listen attentively, examine thoroughly, and deliberate our plan thoughtfully, translating that information to patients. It is important that we gain our patient’s trust by showing them their medical care is our top priority. The training of a physician is unique in the amount of both our knowledge base, which starts in medical school, and the time we spend refining that knowledge as well as the many hours we spend actually caring for patients before we can go out on our own care and for the sickest of patients.

Although we are a part of a team, we cannot be replaced by any other member of the medical team. We are the team leaders. Our team members are very important. Each we have our duties. And, they do overlap so as to prevent errors or oversights in patient care. However, physicians are the leaders of the medical team and responsible for directing medical care. We are not data entry clerks, neither are we slaves to guidelines or merely an extension of our electronic health record (EHR). The importance of our cognitive skills, which we utilized to formulate a plan for patient care, cannot be minimized nor should it be undervalued. Patient care is much more than the sum of lab values and a CAT scan or X-ray reports.

Health care is personal. And, patients expect individualized care. We are in a unique position to deliver that care. Patients also have a responsibility to participate in their own health care. We need to give them direction on how to do that. It is the role of the public education system to improve literacy and the upcoming generation’s knowledge of anatomy and physiology, so patients can better care for themselves. And, it is the role of society to decide how we pay for health care and for physicians to decide how to best deliver that health care.

As new physicians and leaders in training, you need to help forge the future of medicine. Your recent experience in medical school and your upcoming residency will give you the knowledge to help shape the future for that level of training. Over 90% of Texas medical students participate in organized medicine. By participating in organizations, like the Harris County Medical Society, the Texas Medical Association and the American Medical Association, we can all help educate legislators on health care issues and help direct legislative efforts to improve the care and safety of our patients, keep physicians in charge of patient care, and help preserve the doctor-patient relationship. These organizations also help us navigate the business aspects of our medical practices, so we can focus our time on patient care. Congratulations again. And, may I be the first to call you Doctors.
In Memoriam

Federico Angel, M.D., a neurosurgeon and neurologist, died July 1. He had been a member of HCMC since 1968.

Albert L. Ebaugh, M.D., a psychiatrist, died July 19. He had been a member of HCMC since 1960.

Edward G. Rizk, M.D., a pediatrician, died July 26. He had been a member of HCMC since 1984.

David C. Kay, M.D., a psychiatrist, died July 13. He had been a member of HCMC since 1968.

Thomas T Nguyen, M.D., a family medicine practitioner, died July 6. He had been a member of HCMC since 1984.

William J. Riley, M.D., a neurologist and child neurologist, died July 21. He had been a member of HCMC since 1969.

Edward G. Rizk, M.D., a pediatrician, died July 19. He had been a member of HCMC since 1964.

Discounted Astros tickets and more

Tim to head out to the ballpark for HCMC nights at Minute Maid Park? Harris County Medical Society (HCMC) members, employees, family members and friends are invited out to many great games during the 2014 season at discounted rates. HCMC has other special offers, including discounts on Dell Computers. Visit the HCMC home page at www.hcms.org/membership/discounts/ for more information on this special offer and how to purchase tickets.

Hot Member Benefit

Keep staff informed

Are you interested in keeping your staff up-to-date with important changes that impact your practice? Then have your staff subscribe to HCMC Direct Practice Management and Insurance. This free subscription will provide email notifications, alerting staff members to your practice's compensation. E-mail C.V. to jhmmdpa@hotmail.com or call 713-377-3941.

Medicaid Corner: AIM Specialty Health is now the benefit manager for Amerigroup

Effective July 1, 2014, AIM became the benefit manager for outpatient radiation utilization review for Amerigroup. If you are experiencing any problems with getting preauthorizations from AIM for Amerigroup patients, email the Harris County Medical Society (HCMC) Payment Advocacy Department at paymentadvocacy@hcms.org. HCMC is collecting this information to intercede with Amerigroup on behalf of our members.

Presented by Board on Socioeconomics

Quality Corner: HCMC assist physicians with quality incentive programs

In the current health care environment, more and more payers are linking cost to quality and moving toward a value based payment system. The Harris County Medical Society (HCMC) holds that physician quality efforts should be linked to increased payments to offset lost productivity, the cost of information technology, and increased staffing requirements needed to comply with many of the quality reporting initiatives. Thus, HCMC takes every effort to inform physicians of the potential incentive dollars that may be available to them and provides hands-on assistance for physicians who are interested in participating in these programs.

Presently, there are two programs in Harris County that offer opportunities to physicians who achieve Bridges to Excellence (BTE) recognition:

- BlueCross BlueShield of Texas (BCBSTX) will reward physicians who achieve BTE recognition for cardiology, asthma and child care, and diabetes care, and

- Aetna started rewarding physicians through BTE in 2013 through the Teachers Retirement System of Texas (TRS) for those physicians who achieve BTE recognition in diabetes care.

The HCMC Quality Initiative project selects graduate medical business students from several universities in Houston to provide hands-on assistance to practicing physicians in collecting the necessary data required for BTE recognition as well as provide feedback and consultation to practitioners. The project practices are aligned with the various quality reporting programs such as the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), Meaningful Use (MU), and Maintenance of Certification (MOC).

For more information on how to participate, go to www.hcms.org/quality or email quality@hcms.org.

Unfamiliar with Bridges to Excellence (BTE)? BTE is a well-known non-profit entity that recognizes physicians for their quality care. Unlike many of the health plans’ quality initiatives, BTE uses actual data abstracted from the patient’s clinical documentation, not claims data, to better a representation of the quality of care patients receive.

To receive email reminders on upcoming deadlines or important developments in quality, sign up for HCMC Direct Practice Management and Insurance at www.hcms.org/news/subscriber.html.

Presented by the HCMC Health Care Quality Committee

Get year-round exposure with an Online Practice Listing in the HCMC Pictorial Roster

Looking for new ways to share information about your practice with colleagues? Create a Practice Listing in the HCMC Online Member Directory by Oct. 1 and pay $99 for the first physician and $40 for each additional physician in your practice listing. Your listing goes live immediately as soon as the Harris County Medical Society (HCMC) receives your payment and remains online until July 1, 2015.

Why add a Practice Listing? Each member has a free individual biographical listing in the HCMC Online Member Directory. This listing includes your contact information, but does not offer information about your practice as a whole. Adding a Practice Listing to your free biographical listing gives referring colleagues a better idea of how you care for patients. The Practice Listing will be at the bottom of your biographical listing online. Many practices use this space to list multiple office locations, website addresses, procedures performed, languages spoken, and anything that makes their practice unique.

To get started, email roberts@medserv-hcms.org, call 713-843-7187, or visit www.hcms.org/advertise/marketing-practice/.

To explore the HCMC Online Member Directory, go to www.hcms.org/member-directories/ and use your Texas Medical Association login to access the directory.

Presented by the HCMC Board on Socioeconomics
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ALBERT L. EBAUGH, M.D.
1968 – 2014

Edward G. Rizk, M.D.
1968 – 2014

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To enter, go to www.hcms.org/news/practice-resources/medicare.html or email MedicalLinker@gmail.com.

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Keep staff informed

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If you are interested in this free member benefit, direct your staff to sign-up on the HCMS website at www.hcms.org/news/subcribe-to-direct.html

September Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 1</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 8</td>
<td>6:30 p.m., Houston Dermatological Society, Location: TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 9</td>
<td>6:30 p.m., HCMS Central Branch meeting, Trevisio, 6550 Bither Ave.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 10</td>
<td>6:30 p.m., HCMS Western Branch meeting, Location: TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 11</td>
<td>6:30 p.m., Texas Gulf Coast Gastroenterology Society, Location: TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 12</td>
<td>6:30 p.m., Houston Society of Plastic Surgeons, Sommodo Ristante Italiani, 415 Westheimer Ave.</td>
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For more information, visit www.hcms.org.
Fall Branch CME meetings near you!

Need ethics CME credit? Want information on how to run a more efficient practice? Want to meet other physicians in your area and expand your referral base? Look no further. Attend the Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) Branch meeting in your area!

HCMS offers ethics CME credit meetings, through its six branch societies. These Branch meetings provide information on practice management, medical legislation, medical liability, HCMS and Texas Medical Association events, as well as offer dinner and networking opportunities in your area of town.

As an HCMS physician, you are automatically designated to a Branch in the area you work or reside. Watch your email and fax for announcements regarding upcoming meetings. To find out your branch designation, go to the "Physicians by Specialty" section starting on page 27 of the HCMS/HAM Pictorial Roster.

Branch designations can be adjusted per physician preference by calling HCMS at 713-524-4267.

Billing, coding and payment issues?

3 days only! Act now, space is limited!

The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) is hosting the Billing Cure, formerly known as the 30-Minute Reimbursement Consultation, with a Texas Medical Association (TMA) reimbursement expert at five locations throughout Houston. To schedule your free 30-minute appointment to discuss your particular payment issues, contact Kerry Hardwick at 713-524-4267, ext. 262, or email Kerry_Hardwick@hcms.org.

Dates and locations:

- Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2014, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  Houston Northwest Medical Center
  800 Peakwood Dr, Suite 1D, Houston, TX 77090

- Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2014, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  Memorial Hermann Katy
  23900 Katy Freeway, Cougar Rm., Katy, TX 77494

- Thursday, Sept. 18, 2014, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  Memorial Hermann Memorial City
  921 Gosner Rd, 5 East Conference Rm., Houston, TX 77024

- Thursday, Sept. 18, 2014, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  Memorial Hermann Northwest
  1635 North Loop West, Classroom A, Houston, TX 77008

- Friday, Sept. 19, 2014, 9 a.m. to Noon
  Harris County Medical Society
  1515 Hermann Dr., Boardroom, Houston, TX 77004

In case of emergency... HCMS has resources

The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) provides emergency information to physicians when a disaster or public health crisis occurs. In the past, HCMS has provided resources after Hurricane Ike, requests for volunteers for Hurricane Katrina evacuees, information on H1N1, and much more.

By going to www.hcms.org/disaster-preparedness/ you can register with the Medical Reserve Corps, which will provide you with liability immunity for rendering care in a declared emergency; sign up for the HCMS Physician Alert System so that HCMS can contact you in case of an emergency or public health crisis; and download information on preparing your practice and patients for a disaster.

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