



# The Forum

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### REIMBURSEMENT CONUNDRUMS

How many times has one of the following scenarios unfolded in your office?

**Act One, Scene 1:** (Your office exam room) Enter an adolescent girl with numerous complaints — fatigue, abdominal pain, dizziness, cold intolerance. You document significant weight loss and a drop in her pulse and blood pressure, plus she looks very thin. She describes an ideal menu plan and calorie intake, all the time hugging herself because she is cold despite being dressed in a bulky sweat suit. She remains an excellent student, runs track, and has an abundance of friends.

You diagnose an eating disorder and spend the next 30 minutes talking with her and her mother about the disorder and its management.

**Scene 2:** (Your office, on the telephone) The next several days are spent contacting psychologists, nutritionists, reviewing lab work you ordered with the family and arranging for follow up. You make the big mistake of coding for anorexia nervosa.

**Scene 3:** (Your office, several weeks later) Your office manager tells you your claim was denied because you are a primary care provider and the diagnostic code used is reimbursed only for mental health providers.

Reminds me of a commercial:

Time spent seeing patient: 60 minutes

Time spent on phone arranging follow-up: 45 minutes

Reimbursement for your time: priceless

**Act Two, Scene 1:** (Your office exam room) Enter a mother carrying her toddler who is running a low-grade fever, has blood-tinged green discharge from his left nostril and is in discomfort. You look up his nose and see a foreign body but are unable to grasp it. Mother

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## New Meningococcal Vaccine Requirement for Certain Students in Residential Schools and Colleges

Kafi Sanders, M.P.H.

Effective August 2005, recently enacted law and related regulations will require that all new students at public and private residential schools that provide education for students in grades 9–12 (or in the case of ungraded classrooms, those with students 13 years or older) and new, full- and part-time undergraduate and graduate students in degree-granting programs at postsecondary schools (e.g., colleges) that provide or license housing.

The law requires the following of new students and affected institutions:

- ★ Institutions must provide to all new students information about meningococcal disease and vaccine.
- ★ Students must provide documentation of receipt of one dose of meningococcal vaccine within the past five years, or qualify for one of the exemptions to immunization established by

the statute (see below).

At all affected institutions, these requirements apply to all new students, regardless of grade, year of study, and whether or not they reside in school- or campus-provided housing. Please note that at residential schools, the requirements apply to students in lower grades (pre-K through 8) if the school combines these grades in the same school or part of the school with students in grades 9–12.

As an alternative, new students or their parents/legal guardians may sign the Meningococcal Information and Waiver Form developed by MDPH to indicate that they have read and understand the required information related to the risks of meningococcal disease, and have elected to decline the vaccine. This form can be downloaded at [www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/menin/menin\\_info\\_waiver.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/menin/menin_info_waiver.pdf).

## Obesity Committee Supports BMI for Age Screening

Julie Meyers, M.D., Co-Chair, Obesity Committee

Pediatric overweight is a major public health problem, and addressing it is a key goal for MCAAP. The Obesity Committee was formed two years ago to focus on this important issue, and has grown to include members from the Department of Public Health (both the Nutrition Committee and WIC), Department of Education, Massachusetts Public Health Association, pediatricians rep-

resenting health plans, community and academic pediatricians, and nutritionists. The Committee and the Chapter have encouraged efforts that support the goals of preventing overweight in children and adolescents and of treating those already affected.

The Chapter and the Committee have stressed to payers the importance of reimbursement and incentives for services related to screening and to helping care for this population. In response, Blue Cross Blue Shield of

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## Obesity Committee

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Massachusetts (BCBSMA) has included Body Mass Index (BMI) for Age measurement as a component in their PCP Incentive Program for 2005. Use of BMI (weight in kg/height in meters squared) has been found to be a better assessment of overweight than simple weight for height, or than clinical impression. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) produced revised growth charts in 2000 showing the percentiles of BMI for Age. An incentive such as BCBSMA has introduced is essential to help pediatricians deal with the changes in practice necessary to implement routine BMI for Age screening. The Chapter and the Obesity Committee endorse such routine screening and charting of BMI for Age.

BCBSMA is also distributing revised copies of the Jump Up and Go! Clinician Toolkit to further support practices in screening for and caring for this population. The toolkit will include a pediatric BMI wheel that allows for quick calculation of BMI by lining up height and weight. Also included will be BMI for Age Growth Charts, and educational materials and tools to help you with your efforts to

prevent pediatric overweight and to manage affected children and adolescents.

There are several free online resources related to BMI and to management of pediatric overweight. These include the following:

- ★ An online course about BMI for Age on Medscape with available free CME: [www.medscape.com/clinicalupdate/pediatricgrowth](http://www.medscape.com/clinicalupdate/pediatricgrowth). BCBSMA sponsored the development of this course.
- ★ A CDC website with a course about BMI for Age: [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/growthcharts/training.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/growthcharts/training.htm)
- ★ A CDC site to obtain the new growth charts: [www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/](http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/)
- ★ An online course on Medscape on management of pediatric overweight, with available free CME: [www.medscape.com/viewprogram/2656](http://www.medscape.com/viewprogram/2656). BCBSMA sponsored the development of this course, as well.

The Obesity Committee meets every two to three months at the Massachusetts Medical Society in Waltham. For further information or questions, please contact Cathleen Haggerty at [chaggerty@mms.org](mailto:chaggerty@mms.org).

## Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine Available Year-Round

Remember! Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPV 23) is available for all providers, and PPV23 can be given year-round. For more information, please contact the MIP Vaccine Management Unit at (617) 983-6828

### MCAAP COMMITTEES & ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

<b>AAP Breastfeeding Coordinators</b> Susan Browne Jean Sheeley	<b>Emergency Pediatric Services</b> Patricia O'Malley	<b>International Child Health</b> Open	<b>Nutrition</b> Open
<b>Bylaws Committee</b> Carole Allen	<b>Environmental Hazards</b> Siobhan McNally Michael Shannon	<b>Legislation</b> Eric Fleegler Carole Allen	<b>Obesity Committee</b> Alan Meyers Julie Meyers
<b>CATCH Co-Coordinator</b> Robert Kossack Emily Roth	<b>Fetus &amp; Newborn</b> Elizabeth Brown	<b>Massachusetts Healthy Families</b> Howard King	<b>Pediatric Council</b> Peter Rappo
<b>Child Abuse &amp; Family Violence</b> Robert Nelken	<b>Finance Committee</b> Paul Schreiber	<b>Membership</b> Patricia Moffatt	<b>Pediatric Practice</b> Open
<b>Committee on Adolescence</b> Harris Faigel	<b>Forum Editor</b> David Chung	<b>Mental Health Task Force</b> Walter Harrison Eugenia Marcus	<b>PROS Network Coordinators</b> Hank Bernstein Ben Scheindlin
<b>Continuing Medical Education</b> Mary Beth Miotto	<b>Foster Care</b> Linda Sagor	<b>MMS Delegate/ House of Delegates</b> Carole Allen	<b>School Health</b> Linda Grant
<b>Developmental Disabilities</b> Beverly Nazarian	<b>Immunization Initiative</b> Sean Palfrey Hadassa Kubat	<b>MMS Interspecialty Committee Representatives</b> Open	<b>Substance Abuse</b> John Knight
	<b>Infectious Disease</b> Sean Palfrey	<b>Nominating Committee</b> Open	<b>Technology</b> David Norton William Adams
	<b>Injury Prevention &amp; Poison Control</b> Paul Schreiber		

# Information on Toxic Threats to Children

**P**hysicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) affiliates in Boston and San Francisco have developed an innovative clinical tool to enable pediatric health care providers to incorporate environmental guidance into everyday practice — the Pediatric Environmental Health Toolkit. The toolkit was developed in response to a needs assessment conducted by a nationwide series of training programs for health professionals based on the Boston PSR report, *In Harm's Way: Toxic Threats to Child Development*.

The toolkit includes practical and easily accessible guidance materials for both providers and patients on preventing exposures to toxic chemicals and other substances that may affect children's health. It employs the conceptual framework of T. Berry Brazelton, MD's innovative "Touchpoints" program, which identifies critical developmental stages and opportunities for age-appropriate interventions to promote health during well-child visits.

The toolkit was developed with six pediatricians and a peer-review process. It was pilot tested for six months from August 2004 to February 2005 at 17 pediatric and family health practices in California and

Massachusetts. A comprehensive evaluation component was built into the process. Pilot sites in Massachusetts include Boston Children's Hospital and sites in Worcester and the Berkshires. The 34 providers, in a cross-section of demographic pilot sites, will reach an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 patients by the end of the one-year test. MCAAP's Environmental Health



Committee co-chair, pediatrician Siobhan McNally, helped spearhead the toolkit project. Greater Boston PSR is working with MCAAP and the National AAP Committee on Environmental Health to explore

wider dissemination of the toolkit across Massachusetts and the country.

Greater Boston PSR is currently scheduling presentations on the toolkit findings. If you are able to help schedule a pediatric grand rounds, a session at a state pediatric or family practice association conference or other appropriate venue, or you are interested in being notified of toolkit evaluation findings and future steps including availability of the toolkit, please contact Michelle Gottlieb, Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility, at (617) 216-5658 or [mbgottlieb@comcast.net](mailto:mbgottlieb@comcast.net).

## President's Message

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wonders where her small pearl earring went.

**Scene 2:** (Your office, on the telephone) You call an ENT office to arrange for removal of the object. The ENT doctor says, "Send him right over." The receptionist says, "What insurance do they have? ...Oh...we'll see him tomorrow."

**Scene 3:** (Your office exam room) You tell the mother that her child can't be seen today by ENT, but that he has an appointment tomorrow (His insurance doesn't cover same-day services.). The mother says she's going to the ER.

I note the above examples to highlight a much more important issue — how reimbursement practices contend with access and efficiency. In the first scenario, access may well be an issue, as providers for mental health services are often hard to find, and in many cases, limited to "carve-out" services with long waiting lists and/or inconvenient locations for the family. The second scenario illustrates inefficient use of the medical care system.

The MCAAP is engaged in many efforts to help solve these problems. For example, we participate on the advisory board of the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project (MCPAP), a model to provide timely psychiatric consultation and education to the primary care providers in management of mental health disorders. We also meet on a regular basis with insurers and a variety of state agencies to discuss the problems encountered in our day-to-day activities as practicing pediatricians. We continue to work for you and your patients, promoting the health of the children in this state.

— Lynda Young, M.D., FAAP

## MCAAP MEMBERS RECEIVE AWARDS AND APPOINTMENTS

### AWARDS

**Richard Lipman, M.D., FAAP**

AAP 2004 Outstanding Achievement Award

Recognizing "pediatricians who have made outstanding contributions toward advocating for children and child health in the community through the effective use of epidemiologic information"

### ELECTED

**Ed Bailey, M.D., FAAP**, District 1 Representative

*The Forum* will regularly feature Chapter members who have received awards or honors. If you have recently received an award or honor, please submit your name to Cathleen Haggerty at [chaggerty@mcaap.org](mailto:chaggerty@mcaap.org).



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## The Forum

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### SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

**Contact:** Dana G. Parris, MD, FAAP  
(781) 639-1963  
doctordana@earthlink.net

**Residency:** Children's Hospital Orange County,  
Orange, CA

**Residency Completion:** June 1996

**Available:** April 2005

**Description:** Board-certified, Massachusetts-licensed, experienced pediatrician who previously had own private practice seeks private practice setting. Areas of interest include adolescent medicine.

**Contact:** Larry Xanthopoulos, MD, FAAP  
70 Johnson Road, Winchester, MA 01890  
lxanthopoulos@hotmail.com

**Residency:** NEMC/Floating Hospital for Children,  
Boston, MA

**Residency Completion:** June 2002

**Available:** April 2005

**Description:** Board-certified, Massachusetts-licensed pediatrician seeks full-time position. Interests include prevention and anticipatory guidance. Two years experience in a private practice setting.

### LOOKING TO HIRE OR BE HIRED?

Job listings are a free service provided by *The Forum* to MCAAP members and residents completing their training. Nonmembers may submit ads for a fee.

#### If you are looking to fill a position

*MCAAP members: Free*

*Nonmembers: \$250*

*Please submit the following information:*

- Practice Name
- Position Title and Description (25-word limit)
- Availability (e.g., starting July 2005)
- Contact Name
- Address, Telephone Number, E-mail Address

#### If you are looking for a job

*MCAAP members and residents:*

*Free Nonmembers: \$50*

*Please submit the following information:*

- Your Name
- Contact Information
- Residency Program
- Availability (e.g., available now)
- Comment (25-word limit)

Please send text information via e-mail to [dchung@mcaap.org](mailto:dchung@mcaap.org). Checks may be mailed to the MCAAP office, c/o Cathleen Haggerty, Executive Director, P.O. Box 9132, Waltham, MA 02454-9132. All submissions must be received by June 15, 2005, to be included in the next issue of *The Forum*. All submissions are subject to review for appropriateness.

**For information, please contact the editor at [dchung@mcaap.org](mailto:dchung@mcaap.org).**