

Pennsylvania Surgical News

May 2022



Robbi-Ann M. Cook, CAE
Executive Director

We are heading into the summer months. Time continues to march forward at a record pace. The Keystone and Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters are gearing up for some great educational and networking opportunities for members. We hope you take time to register and connect throughout the year. Members are the backbone of associations. We are here to provide you with the tools to make your daily grid a little less stressful.

Members who have not remitted their 2022 membership dues are encouraged to log into your member portal and remit your dues now. Without the support of the surgical community, providing educational and other events is difficult. The Chapters would like to be able to provide members with FREE educational programs, but without financial support from all the members, this cannot happen. Support your surgical community and your fellow colleagues by renewing or joining your local ACS Chapter today!

Have news updates you would like to share with your colleagues? We are always looking for additional content for the monthly newsletter and love to highlight career advancements, research papers published, and personal milestones. Send your articles to me at rcook@rmcmanagementsolutions.com and we will be happy to include it in an upcoming issue.

Check out all to offer in this issue of the *Pennsylvania Surgical News*.

Robbi

Robbi-Ann M. Cook, CAE
Executive Director

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

ACS Updates	4
Advocacy Webinar	3
Meanderings of a Wandering Surgeon	2
Medical Liability Venue Rule Update	6
Membership Update	8
Wellness Minute	7

Pennsylvania Surgical News is a collaborative effort of the Keystone and Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters. Content is copyright. Articles are the opinion of the writer(s), and may not reflect the mission, goals, and focus of the Chapters.

Editorial Team
Robbi-Ann M. Cook, CAE
Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS



Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS
Keystone Chapter
Immediate Past President

Meanderings from A Wandering Surgeon

Caring for Our Loved Ones, Friends AND Ourselves

Friends and colleagues:

Welcome to the too hot too fast summer - heavy pollen and lots of outdoor activities - and with it the strange and disturbing mix of rise in play and escalation of violence. Opposite sides of release from the cold, the indoors and the constraints of the winter and school season.

On my mind constantly is the story of the caregiver. Parent, child, sibling, friend - providing for the needs and welfare of another regardless of role is no easy task. In all caregiving relationships, there are a few simple goals when responsible for another: Create a safe environment. Avoid hazards. Prevent falls and injury. Ensure healthy diet and body. Build a place of love, respect, and peace.

I struggle to meet those goals in caring for my aging parents regularly. One of the worst obstacles is the constant and strong resistance to any changes or perceived "interference" that diminishes independence or unwanted alterations to comfort and routine. I have tried to change my approach, altered my own schedule, eating habits, and work life to better meet their needs. And I still sometimes fail. Well, honestly, frequently fail. But I keep trying. And Hoping. Although the confrontations and conversations are never easy, we discuss

(sometimes argue) to figure out a safe but empowering option that works for us.

At this moment, most pressing for parents is sending your children outside to play or to school each day. That tiny release, in fact, requires a huge amount of trust that the goals are met by others. Others being ALL of us. Safety is always first on the list. As caregivers for our communities we are failing. Children are dying. Bullets are flying. Both in streets and in classrooms. Just as for my parents, I will sacrifice what is needed to give them the safety they need to thrive - maybe we can all do the same as a community to ensure the same for our children.

Respectfully,

Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS

Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS is Immediate Past President of the Keystone Chapter. She also serves as the PA Chapters Collaborative Task Force Chair, and at the national level as a Governor-at-Large, PA Liaison to CoT and WiS Committees, DEI Outreach Workgroup, Board of Governors Executive Committee, and the Communications Pillar Lead



**Keystone & Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters
American College of Surgeons
Invite You to Join Us**

**Surgical Advocacy
Why Your Voice is Important**

**June 6, 2022
6:30 PM—8:00 PM**

AGENDA

**6:30 PM Welcome Chand Rohatgi, MD, FACS
(Co-Chair Advocacy Task Force)**

**6:35 PM Advocacy 101 Christopher Johnson
(ACS Government Relations Director)**

**7:20 PM Grassroots Experience Testimonials
Sr. Advocacy Champion Michael A. DellaVecchia, MD, PhD, FACS
First-Timer Advocacy Champion Stanislaw Stawicki, MD, FACS**

**7:40 PM Venue Change Legislative Update Curt Schroeder
PA Coalition for Civil Justice Reform**

To register: <https://www.kc-acs.org/event-4833130>

A collaborative event hosted by the Keystone and Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters of the American College of Surgeons.

Register



ACS Scholarships Available Deadline to Apply: June 30th

ACS is currently accepting applications for the following fellowships:

Claude H. Organ, Jr., MD, FACS, Traveling Fellowship (\$5,000) – Deadline June 30

The family and friends of the late Claude H. Organ, Jr., MD, FACS, have established an endowment through the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Foundation to provide funding for an annual fellowship to be awarded to an outstanding surgeon from the Society of Black Academic Surgeons, the Association of Women Surgeons, or the Surgical Section of the National Medical Association. This annual award is intended to serve as a lasting memorial to the extraordinary life and work of Dr. Organ.

The Organ Traveling Fellowship is awarded to an outstanding young surgeon so he or she can attend an educational meeting or make an extended visit to an institution of his or her choice, tailored to his or her research interests. The successful applicant will receive the sum of \$5,000 U.S. This amount is to be used to help defray travel and per diem expenses, plus the cost of any courses the awardee may take in association with the award. The Organ Fellow will make his or her own travel arrangements.

[Click Here for Application Requirements and How to Apply](#)

Gerald B. Healy, MD, FACS, Traveling Mentorship Fellowship (\$5,000) – Deadline June 30

The colleagues and friends of Dr. Gerald B. Healy have established funding for an annual mentoring fellowship program in his honor.

Mentorship is one of the hallmarks of academic and professional success. This program is intended to help young surgeons develop new ideas, innovative approaches, and well-informed attitudes about safety, quality, and professionalism via visits to successful mentors.

The Gerald B. Healy, MD, FACS, Traveling Mentorship Fellowship will be used to facilitate visiting and engaging with one or more successful mentors. The award, in the amount of \$5,000, will be used by the traveling fellow to cover travel and per diem costs incurred and subsidize lost revenue from days away from clinical duties.

[Click Here for Application Requirements and How to Apply](#)



During the recent ACS Leadership & Advocacy Summit, Executive Director Patricia L. Turner, MD,



MBA, FACS, detailed the meanings of the College's motto, "To Heal All with Skill and Trust." She explained how it relates to the ACS's priorities, and how the College is moving its work forward.

[Watch](#) Dr. Turner's full address.

Register for Free ACS Well-Being Program Webinar on Caring for Patients, Loved Ones, and Yourself



Being a caregiver for a someone in your social support system can have challenges. To help surgeons who might find themselves as caregivers, the ACS Surgeon Well-being Program will host a free webinar 4:00– 5:00 pm CT on **Wednesday, June 22**: [“Surgeon as Caregiver - The Triple Threat: Caring for Yourself While Caring for a Loved One While Caring for Patients.”](#)

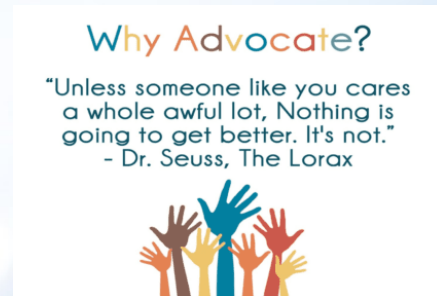
This webinar will feature Melissa Red Hoffman, MD, FACS, and Rohan Jeyarajah, MD, FACS, who will share their experience and perspectives as surgeons and caregivers surgeons—from lessons learned to boundaries, compassion, empathy, career trajectory, and more. Carla Haack, MD, FACS, will moderate.

[Register today.](#)

Join Us for the Surgical Advocacy Webinar

The Keystone & Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters’ Joint Advocacy Task Force hosts the Surgical Advocacy webinar on Tuesday, June 6th. This **FREE** 90-minute webinar is open to all members of Pennsylvania ACS Chapters, and will include:

- Overview of the advocacy and grassroots lobbying process
- How to connect with your legislative representative



- How to connect with your legislative representative
- Updates on key state and federal legislation
- Fireside chat from members on their experiences meeting with legislators
- Update on Venue-Change legislation

Register [HERE.](#)

ACS-YFA SEEK MENTORS

The Young Fellows Association (YFA) of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) is [seeking applications](#) from Fellows who would like to be mentors for the year-long YFA Mentorship Program. Mentoring teams are made up of three people:

1. Early career surgeon – an Associate Fellow (an ACS member out of training, but not yet FACS) or a young fellow in practice less than 5 years, who traditionally will serve as a mentee in this triad relationship
2. Mid-level career surgeon – a Young Fellow (an ACS Fellow under the age of 45) who might serve as a mentor to the early career surgeon and a mentee alongside an advanced professional
3. Advanced professional – an ACS Fellow who holds a leadership position within the ACS or an ACS fellow who has been practicing for more than 10 years

The team will meet their triad at the 2022 ACS Clinical Congress in San Diego, CA, on Tuesday (11:30 am—1:00 PM). The mentorship relationship

Constitutional Amendment on Venue Needed to Protect Patient Care in Pennsylvania!

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Civil Procedural Rules Committee has for the last three years been considering a change to the Medical Liability Venue Rule that would severely hurt healthcare in our state. If adopted, it would usher in a return to venue shopping which targets physicians and other healthcare providers by dragging them into Philadelphia and other hostile court systems. It is time to remove this threat to healthcare in Pennsylvania.

PCCJR is calling on the General Assembly to pass a constitutional amendment to keep the current venue rule in place and prevent rampant forum shopping by opportunistic personal injury lawyers.

By way of background, in 2002 the state Supreme Court adopted a rule requiring medical professional liability actions against health care providers to be brought only in the county where the injury occurs. Prior to this change, Pennsylvania physicians were facing skyrocketing medical malpractice premiums – due in large part to forum shopping by plaintiffs' attorneys eager to take cases to Philadelphia's notoriously high-verdict court system in search of a large payday. For the past two decades, this rule helped to right size the Commonwealth's medical liability environment. However, there is now a serious effort underway to allow for forum shopping once again.

The effects of forum shopping on the state's already overly litigious civil justice system are real. (For a clear explanation on how venue negatively impacts our civil justice climate, watch our handy video [here](#).) In fact, plaintiffs' attorneys

aren't even trying to hide the fact that forum shopping plays a significant role in their quest to obtain the highest payday possible. This point was made loud and clear in a [blog](#) by a personal injury law firm located in southeast Pennsylvania.

“Philadelphia is always the preferred venue for filing cases because of its reputation for outsized verdicts against corporations...the goal is always to find a way to place your case into Philadelphia if you are a plaintiff's lawyer. Simply put, the insurers will attach a higher value for the identical case in Philadelphia County than they will in Delaware County,” the blog states.

Pennsylvania can't afford to go back to the days when forum shopping for medical malpractice cases resulted in unaffordable insurance premiums. Specialists were forced to curtail high-risk but necessary services, maternity wards closed, and the cost of healthcare sky rocketed. Those who acted heroically and served us so well during the height of the pandemic should not be uprooted from their practices to testify in far away jurisdictions at the expense of their patients!

A constitutional amendment will give the General Assembly the authority to prevent needless venue shopping at the expense of your health care.

Article shared, with permission, from the Pennsylvania Coalition for Civil Justice Reform (PCCJR). To learn more about venue-change legislation, join Curt Schroeder, of PCCJR and the KCACS/MPACS Collaborative Advocacy Work Group for its upcoming webinar on Monday, June 6th, beginning at 6:30 PM. To learn more about PCCJR, visit www.pccjr.org.

4 Important New Discoveries About Hugging

“The Length of a Hug Influences Our Mood”

I recently attended the American Psychiatric Society’s annual conference in New Orleans, LA. It was the first in-person meeting for this organization since the pandemic began in 2019. Most frequent comment heard.... **“It is so good to be able to hug you!”** Hugs are an important part of our well-being, feeling connected with others, and comforting.

The following is an excerpt from a recent article on hugging, written by Sebastian Ocklenburg, PhD., a professor for research methods in psychology at the Department of Psychology at MSH Medical School in Hamburg, Germany. Dr. Ocklenburg’s article was published in the February 2022 issue of *Psychology Today*. The full article can be viewed [HERE](#).

- Research shows getting hugged by others, but also hugging yourself, may reduce stress hormones.
- Longer hugs are perceived as more pleasant than shorter hugs.
- Older people who at least occasionally get hugs tend to feel better about their health.

Dr. Ocklenburg shares that “during the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns and restrictions, one of the things many people missed most was getting hugged by their loved ones.” This led to an increased interest in the positive effects of hugging in the psychology research community. Several studies published give credence to what it means to be hugged. Here are four of the most interesting findings from the studies that Dr. Ocklenburg included in his article:

1. **Getting hugged by others, but also hugging yourself, reduces stress hormones.** Researcher Aljoscha Dreisoerner, and his team, from the Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, focused on positive effects of hugging on stress ([Dreisoerner et al., 2021](#)). They studied how getting hugged by other people could reduce stress, and whether hugging yourself (e.g., when other people are not available during a lockdown) has a positive effect on stress. Based on the results of their study, volunteers who were hugged for 20 seconds by another person, or hugged themselves for 20 seconds, showed lower cortisol levels than those in the control group that received no hug. So, getting hugged by other people, but also hugging oneself, reduces the negative effects of stress.

2. **Hugging duration is important for mood.** I believe you would agree hugging has a positive effect on mood. We feel better when we are hugged, but why? According to Ocklenburg, researcher Anna L. Dueren and her team from the Department of Psychology, at the University of London, U.K., focused on what influences the effect of hugging on mood ([Dueren et al., 2021](#)). The study of 45 women who hugged a researcher for either one, five, or 10 seconds and reported how the hug felt, indicated the five- and 10-second hugs rated as more pleasant than one-second hugs. Conclusion of the research team: The optimal hug should be at least five seconds long.

3. **Hugs and health are related in older adults.** Researcher Tia Rogers-Jarrell and her team, from the School of Kinesiology and Health Science at York University in Toronto, Canada, studied the positive effects of hugging on older adults ([Rogers-Jarrell et al., 2021](#)). Not much was known on whether hugging had different psychological effects in different life phases,

prior to the study. The study provided an important contribution to understanding the role of hugging in different life phases. The team analyzed data from over 20,000 people (aged 65+) through a Canadian Community Health Survey. The outcome: older adults that indicated being hugged “some,” “most,” or even “all” the time indicated higher self-rated health than those reporting no opportunity for hugs.

Factoring in potential influence factors such as relationship status, income, and chronic illnesses, did not have a significant effect on the initial results. The study concludes there is a strong connection between hugging and health. Older people who receive hugs at least some of the time feel healthier than those who did not.

4. Culture influences how we hug. A recent international multi-center study, conducted by researcher Agnieszka Sorokowska from the University of Wroclaw, Poland, investigated which factors influence whether people show affective touch behaviors like kissing or hugging ([Sorokowska et al., 2021](#)). Data compiled from over 14,000 individuals from 45 countries was analyzed. Researchers concluded that overall, 92.6% of study participants had shown any form of emotional touch towards their partners in the week before data collection. The study did find large differences between countries, with people in less conservative and less religious countries showing more emotional touch. People in warmer countries showed more emotional touch, most likely due to living in a warmer country allows for more outdoor activities and opportunities to meet other people. Researchers also indicated; individual characteristics influenced the frequency of emotional touch: younger people showed more emotional touch than older people; men and women hugged and kissed their partners similarly often; women

hugged friends and children more often than men; and, liberal people showed more emotional touch than conservative people.

Based on studies, the outcome of the research shows cultural factors have a strong influence on whether people enjoy hugging or avoid it. Individual factors also play a big role in our hugging behavior. According to Dr. Ocklenburg, by integrating both cultural and individual factors, one can understand the importance of hugging.

Feel free to hug yourself, your family, friends, or colleagues!

References for Dr. Ocklenburg’s article:

- Dreisoerner A, Junker NM, Schlotz W, Heimrich J, Bloemeke S, Ditzen B, van Dick R. (2021).** Self-soothing touch and being hugged reduce cortisol responses to stress: A randomized controlled trial on stress, physical touch, and social identity. *Comprehensive Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 8, 100091.
- Dueren AL, Vafeiadou A, Edgar C, Banissy MJ. (2021).** The influence of duration, arm crossing style, gender, and emotional closeness on hugging behaviour. *Acta Psychol (Amst)*, 221, 103441.
- Rogers-Jarrell T, Eswaran A, Meisner BA. (2021).** Extend an Embrace: The Availability of Hugs Is an Associate of Higher Self-Rated Health in Later Life. *Res Aging*, 43, 227-236.
- Sorokowska A, Saluja S, Sorokowski P, Frąckowiak T, Karwowski M, Aavik T, Akello G, Alm C, Amjad N, Anjum A, Asao K, Atama CS, Atamtürk Duyar D, Ayebare R, Batres C, Bendixen M, Bensafia A, Bizumic B, Bousmena M, Buss DM, Butovskaya M, Can S, Cantarero K, Carrier A, Cetinkaya H, Chabin D, Conroy-Beam D, Contreras-Graduño J, Varella MAC, Cueto RM, Czub M, Dronova D, Dural S, Duyar I, Ertugrul B, Espinosa A, Esteves CS, Guemaz F, Hařamová M, Herak I, Hromatko I, Hui CM, Jaafar JL, Jiang F, Kafetsios K, Kavcic T, Kennair LEO, Kervyn NO, Khilji IA, Köbis NC, Kostic A, Láng A, Lennard GR, León E, Lindholm T, Lopez G, Manesi Z, Martinez R, McKerchar SL, Meskó N, Misra G, Monaghan C, Mora EC, Moya-Garófano A, Musil B, Natividade JC, Nizharadze G, Oberzaucher E, Oleszkiewicz A, Onyishi IE, Özener B, Pagani AF, Pakalniskiene V, Parise M, Pazhoohi F, Pejičić M, Pisanski A, Pisanski K, Plohl N, Popa C, Prokop P, Rizwan M, Sainz M, Salkičević S, Sargautyte R, Sarmany-Schuller I, Schmehl S, Shahid A, Shaikh R, Sharad S, Siddiqui RS, Simonetti F, Tadinac M, Ugalde González K, Uhryn O, Vauclair CM, Vega Araya LD, Widarini DA, Yoo G, Zadeh ZF, Zařková M, Zupančič M, Croy I. (2021).** Affective Interpersonal Touch in Close Relationships: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. *Pers Soc Psychol Bull*, 47, 1705-1721.



WHY JOIN AN ASSOCIATION?

Associations are stronger than ever. By joining, you get members-only perks, exclusive advertising and networking opportunities, and a whole lot of exposure for yourself and your institution. Get on board and see the difference!

NETWORKING

It's not just who you know, it's who others know. Networking is powerful.



VISIBILITY

Stand out and get noticed in your community.



HAVE A VOICE

Gain a say in what happens in government through the association advocacy efforts.



EXCLUSIVE MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

DISCOUNTS

Increase your purchasing power through members-only discounts and perks.*

*Available with your ACS Membership



CREDIBILITY

Raise your reputation through membership.



LEARNING

Get a competitive edge over non-members with exclusive training opportunities on a variety of hot topics.



Keystone & Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters
American College of Surgeons

JOIN US!

Contact us to learn more about the benefits of membership today!