



Pennsylvania Surgical News

News & Updates for the Keystone and Metropolitan Philadelphia Chapters American College of Surgeons

July 2021

The final day of July has arrived! Hard to believe we are moving quickly to the fall and the upcoming educational conferences.

Dr. Shannon Marie Foster, President of the Keystone Chapter shares another great article in her *Meanderings from a Wandering Surgeon*. Check out her article on [stimulating thought, conversation, and feedback](#) on page 2.

A few new bills are being introduced as we head into the summer legislative recess. Check out all the updates on legislative issues both in the state and federal legislative arena on starting on page 5. [ACS State Legislative](#) page provides additional information on all current bills being monitored on the state and federal level.

Have you registered for the Keystone Chapter's Case Review Webinar? This LIVE, on-demand webinar offers **2.5 CME credit hours and 2.5 Self-Assessment credit hours** and highlights the top ten Case Review submissions from Residents and Medical Students in both the Keystone and Metro Philly Chapters. The webinar will be available through December 31, 2021. Free to Chapter Members and a nominal fee of \$10 for non-Chapter members! Click [HERE](#) to register. The Keystone Council invites all members to take this opportunity to view these novel and unique submissions and earn CME credit hours. If you have registered, do not forget to claim your CME credit hours!

The first in-person surgical conference in the Philadelphia Region since the Pandemic, will be held on Monday, September 13th at the Marriott Philadelphia Old City. The keynote lecture, *From Medical Student to Dean – a Path Toward Leadership and the Future of Medical Education,* will be presented by **Amy J. Goldberg, MD, FACS**. The abstract/case review papers reached over 75. Judging is currently taking place and 30 poster presentations will be included in the annual meeting agenda. New this year, the top scoring abstract submission will have an opportunity to give an oral presentation to conference attendees prior to Dr. Goldberg's keynote lecture. [Registration](#) is now open!

ACS Clinical Congress has gone virtual. The decision was made recently for the safety and well-being of all participants. Registration is now open for Clinical Congress 2021. More on the event and other ACS happenings can be found starting on page 5.

Do you have a burning desire to be part of the leadership? Help shape the goals and vision of the Chapters? We are looking for fresh faces, ideas, and thoughts to move the local Chapters forward and provide relevant content to our membership. Contact your Chapter office for additional information.

Keystone – info@kc-acg.org
Metro Philly – info@mp-acg.org

Meanderings from A Wandering Surgeon

Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS
Keystone Chapter President



Greetings friends and colleagues – I hope you are making it through the summer - the hot, humid, stormy summer. Unpredictable, atypical, and sometimes downright inhospitable summer.

My comments here are meant to be contemporaneous to events as this is published – and meant to stimulate thought, conversation, and feedback. Comment and share (info@kc-accs.org).

To mask or not to mask? To distance or not to distance? It seems we will be drilling down to a conflict of the vaccinated vs those who refuse the “jab”– how much responsibility remains on the shoulders of the many who have complied to protect the many who have not? And how will our hospitals and healthcare systems adapt? A comparator: Is there any institution in our geography that does not require the influenza vaccine and proof annually? Breakthrough or other strain Flu infections still occur, but all employees comply for the good of themselves, others, and ...to keep their job. In my role, I have traveled and worked at a number of institutions – all are approaching things differently, with different rules and requirements for staff, patients, and visitors. If we cannot agree and streamline as health care facilities and providers – what is grocery store, movie theater, or place of regular business to do?

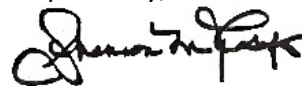
The Olympics are an exciting international event – steeped in history and pageantry. The joy of sport, the beauty and athleticism...has become a billion-dollar industry where the most decorated participants get long-lasting attention of press and populace. Tokyo 2020 is happening...in 2021. With multiple countries in the midst of viral surges. All the merchandise, branding, etc. will still say 2020 to confuse us further (just as did Euro 2020 and Copa

2020 for my fellow football fans) – to not use them would be a major loss of dollars. Lots of dollars (yen) will cover the repeat COVID tests and performative cleaning. All of those gorgeous custom-built facilities in Japan will be empty as COVID threats and protocols are preventing any international spectators and visitors other than the athletes and contingents.

I am generally confused about it all – and would love some thoughts from all of you to share and publish with our readers. Remember – this is a safe space for any and all opinions stated with respect.

And one last area of contemplation and reflection: Participation. This is the time of year when many societies, ours included, are looking for willing volunteers. Start somewhere and raise your hand – if you have not yet – please - pick one, contribute, and be a voice. It is ok to start small – but start. The future of our profession is being written – you can help write – or just read the report when its finished.

Respectfully,



Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS
President, Keystone Chapter

Shannon Marie Foster, MD, FACS, President of the Keystone Chapter. She also serves at the national level as a Governor-At-Large, Vice-Chair of Communications Pillar Outreach Group, liaison to both the Women in Surgery (WiS) and Trauma (CoT) Committees.”



Pennsylvania Surgical News would like your feedback. Email our editor at: rcook@rmcmanagementsolutions.com.

July Wellness Tip



How to Recharge: Tips from a Stanford Wellness Coach

The first step to regaining your energy, according to Jordana Harshman, wellness manager and certified wellness coach at Stanford Children’s Health, is understanding what relaxation is and why you need it. Jordana spoke with *BeWell* recently and their June 30th article is available [HERE](#).

During the pandemic, finding ways to recharge this past year has been difficult. Many ways people used to relax, grabbing coffee with a friend, heading to the gym, or extended family time were not possible. The pandemic heightened stress, a time when prioritizing mental and physical relaxation is essential if you want to feel your best.

In her interview, Jordana talked about what it means to relax, how to choose relaxation activities, and tips on fitting relaxation into your daily regimen.

Relaxation and rest, often used interchangeably, includes a state of being free from tension and anxiety. A form of recreation after work and the release of tension in your body.

Relaxation is not about doing more to do less or pursuing a relaxation technique that you do not like. Relaxation should be giving your mind and body a break, allowing your energy to be restored, supporting your cognitive functions, and regulating your mood.

Physicians especially feel they do not have the time to commitment to relaxation techniques or wellness training. This is when you really need to “check in with yourself.” You always check in on others to make sure they are doing okay, why not look at yourself.....are you feeling your best?

Taking time to do a wellness check on yourself may seem like a luxury, especially given the long and uncertain changes the pandemic has thrust onto the healthcare community. Workloads and other responsibilities have drastically changed over the course of a few months. The most important thing you can do for yourself, your family, your friends, colleagues, and patients, is to check in with yourself, determine how you feel energetically and develop priorities based on your needs.

This is not a “one size fits all” wellness check. You need to choose the rest and relaxation path that is right for you. Yoga and meditation may work for some, but you might feel better taking a long walk in the woods or getting a massage.

In Harshman’s interview, she cites Sandra Dalton-Smith, author of *Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity*. Dalton-Smith maintains that we need both sleep and rest in order to maintain our energy throughout the day. A few types of rest that can satisfy diverse needs include:

- Physical – activities that are somewhere between quiet wakefulness in a hammock and gentle physical movement like yoga, walking, or stretching;
- Mental rest that incorporates short, intentional breaks. Stop and record small wins or three good things that happened to you during the day;
- Sensory rest breaks your focus on screens, noise, or other environmental stimuli. Think “going off the technology grid” for a break.
- Creative rest involves nature, art, or music.

- Emotional rest checks in on your own needs, emotions, putting yourself first before attending to others;
- Spiritual rest is the nurturing of a feel or belonging or connection to something beyond the logistical realm of daily life.

One does not need to focus on all of these rest techniques. Choose the one that feels right for you and provides the type of rest you need for that day. Your rest needs will change from day to day so finding the balance of rest and relaxation techniques will vary to meet your needs.

Feeling resistance to changing your priorities to take care of you first is a normal process, especially when there are so many other competing needs. Make sure you reach out for support when needed. The journey does not need to be accomplished alone.

There is no magic formula on how much time you should spend resting or what counts as rest. The basic rule of thumb is it should not feel like a chore. Choose something you enjoy, stick with the activity, and experience the positive results. The smallest change like turning off social media and going for a walk with your family or pet, taking a few deep breaths, or closing your eyes for five minutes can get you back on track.

Part of self-care includes making sure you are prioritizing sleep. If you are too tired to experience self-care activities, that could be a sign you need more sleep. Sleep deprivation is associated with burnout and poor health outcomes. Prioritize sleep above all other activities.

According to Harshman, “Living in a state of relaxation deprivation is not a long-term strategy. It is not motivating. Accepting that relaxation will provide you with more energy to meet life demands can help buffer the idea that you should be doing more. Relaxation truly fuels us to be our best selves.”

Read more at [Stanford News](#).

JULY - THE START OF A NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

There is still time to renew or apply for membership in your local ACS Chapter. Keystone and Metro Philly Chapters have exciting programming coming your way the second half of the year. Members receive discounted rates on CME-approved educational meetings, access to free webinars, and other resources to help you grow and move through the various stages of your surgical career.

Renew your membership today. Know a colleague who would benefit from the educational content, networking opportunities, and other benefits of belonging to the local chapter? Encourage them to consider becoming a member.

Your local Chapters represent **YOU** and the interests of surgeons (general and all specialties). The Chapters promote the ideals, policies, and programs of the ACS and are dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of surgical care through education and advocacy for all members of the surgical profession. Benefits provided by both local Chapters far outweigh the minimal dues investment to join and become a member of the only healthcare society dedicated to being the voice of the surgical community.

As a member of the ACS your membership is already approved. Simply complete the membership registration information and remit the local Chapter dues (not included in your ACS membership dues).

To renew your membership, log into your membership portal and submit your renewal payment.

Keystone - Click [HERE](#).

Metro Philly - Click [HERE](#).

RENEW OR JOIN TODAY!

Be a Voice for the
Surgical Community!



American College of Surgeons News & Updates



ACS Virtual Clinical Congress

Register now for the most comprehensive surgical meeting in the world.

Join us October 23–27 for Clinical Congress 2021. This virtual event offers important surgical education opportunities for medical professionals across all specialties and career stages.

Resilience in the Pursuit of Excellence

The Clinical Congress 2021 program addresses essential clinical and nonclinical content.

- A compelling series of Named Lectures by world-renowned experts.
- Postgraduate Courses incorporating best practices in education and training.
- More than 105 Panel Sessions on timely, relevant subjects.
- The Scientific Forum, featuring exciting surgical research presentations and ePosters.

Earn more than two hundred Continuing Medical Education Credits

Clinical Congress 2021 offers the opportunity to earn more than 200 Continuing Medical Education Credits until February 1, 2022. Some of these credits have been designated as potentially meeting state-specific CME requirements (Credit to Address Regulatory Mandates). American College of Surgeons Accreditation/Verification Program participants can find CME opportunities in the relevant content areas. Credits can be claimed for sessions viewed both during the meeting and following the event.

REGISTER TODAY

Legislative Bill Activity in PA

We continue to work with ACS' Government Relations division monitoring legislative activity both on the Federal and State level. Currently we are monitoring [34 bills](#) in Pennsylvania. [\[CLICK HERE\]](#) to view the complete list of all Federal and State legislation being monitored across the country by ACS.

State legislative priorities include out-of-network payment; prior authorization; MOC; scope of practice and more. The following is an overview of a number of Bills with recent movement. For a complete list of state legislative priorities, visit the [State Legislative Priorities](#) page.

New bills introduced at the end of July (click link for Bill language) include:

HB 1723 (Frankel) – Prescription Drug Affordability Board. Rep. Frankel's proposed legislation would

establish a Prescription Drug Affordability Board that would assess whether certain drugs pose affordability burdens and would set limits on the amount pharmacies, providers, patients, health plans, and wholesalers would pay for them.

SB 815 (Muth) – Senator Muth’s bill is a re-introduction of SB 1277 and similar legislation to bills introduced by Representatives Fiedler and Hanbridge. The bill would prohibit pelvic, rectal, and prostate exams without explicit consent of the patient. Senator Muth’s legislation will require medical schools, teaching hospitals, and medical institutions obtain patient consent for all procedures and exams performed under anesthesia by medical students or for training purposes.

SB 818 (Ward) – Senator Ward’s legislation would align procedures permitted in licensed Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs) with other states and federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The intent of the Bill is to update Pennsylvania regulations to ensure Pennsylvania residents benefit from high-quality care and cost-effective procedures that can be performed safely on an outpatient basis in ASCs.

SB 828 (Ward) – Senator Ward’s legislation would amend the Unfair Insurance Practices Act to prohibit health insurers from altering coverage or premiums included in an insured person’s health insurance policy during the policy term when the insured has already received treatment, service, or prescription medication. The Bill will provide protection for patients who are already receiving a benefit within the policy year of their health insurance contract. The insurer would still be able to alter covered benefits for insured patients who are not already receiving a specific service, treatment, or medication and would not apply to benefits removed from coverage due to being deemed unsafe by the FDA or when production of a prescription drug has been discontinued.

We will continue to monitor these and all current Bills both on the state and federal level.

ACS SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS & AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Information on ACS available scholarships, fellowship, and award opportunities will be posted in the newsletter. If you have an interest in any of the opportunities posted, visit the [ACS Member Services](#) page.

Resident Research Scholarship Open Call: July 1, 2021

ACS is offering two-year resident research scholarships, with eligibility limited to research projects of residents in surgery or a surgical specialty. Scholarships are supported by the generosity of Fellows, Chapters, and friends of the College, to encourage residents to pursue careers in academic surgery.

To learn more about the Scholarship and how to apply, click [HERE](#).

Joint Statement on Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccines for Health Workers

The American College of Surgeons has joined more than 50 health care professional organizations in releasing a joint statement calling for health care employers to require that employees be vaccinated against COVID-19. Following is the full text of the statement. [Read the press release for more information.](#)

Joint Statement in Support of COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates for All Workers in Health Care and Long- Term Care

Due to the recent COVID-19 surge and the availability of safe and effective vaccines, our health care organizations and societies advocate that all health care and long-term care employers require their workers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This is the logical fulfillment of the ethical commitment

of all health care workers to put patients as well as residents of long-term care facilities first and take all steps necessary to ensure their health and well-being.

Because of highly contagious variants, including the Delta variant, and significant numbers of unvaccinated people, COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are once again rising throughout the U.S. Vaccination is the primary method to put the pandemic behind us and avoid the return of stringent public health measures.

Unfortunately, many health care and long-term care personnel remain unvaccinated. As we move toward full FDA approval of the currently available vaccines, all health care workers should get vaccinated for their own health, and to protect their colleagues, families, residents of long-term care facilities and patients. This is especially necessary to protect those who are vulnerable, including unvaccinated children and the immunocompromised. Indeed, this protection is why many health care and long-term care organizations already require vaccinations for influenza, hepatitis B, and pertussis.

We call for all health care and long-term care employers to require their employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19

We stand with the growing number of experts and institutions that support the requirement for universal vaccination of health care workers. While we recognize some workers cannot be vaccinated because of identified medical reasons and should be exempted from a mandate, they constitute a small minority of all workers. Employers should consider any applicable state laws on a case-by-case basis.

Existing COVID-19 vaccine mandates have proven effective. Simultaneously, we recognize the historical mistrust of health care institutions, including among many in our own health care workforce. We must continue to address workers' concerns, engage with marginalized populations,

and work with trusted messengers to improve vaccine acceptance.

As the health care community leads the way in requiring vaccines for our employees, we hope all other employers across the country will follow our lead and implement effective policies to ensure vaccination. The health and safety of U.S. workers, families, communities, and the nation depends on it.

ACS Releases New Statement on PPE for Residents, Revised Statement on Family Accommodation for Surgeons

At its June meeting, the ACS Board of Regents approved two official statements from the College:

- A new Statement on Resident Access to Personal Protective Equipment;
- A Revised Statement on the Importance of Workplace Accommodations for Pregnancy, Parental Leave, and Lactation Support for Practicing Surgeons.

These statements, which will be published in the August issue of the *Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons*, are summarized as follows.

The [Statement on Resident Access to Personal Protective Equipment](#) (PPE), developed by the ACS Resident and Associate Society (RAS), was issued in response to data showing that more than one-third of residents have experienced PPE shortages in the last year. [\[Read the full statement\]](#).

The [Revised Statement on the Importance of Workplace Accommodations for Pregnancy, Parental Leave, and Lactation Support for Practicing Surgeons](#), developed by the ACS Women in Surgery Committee, represents an update of a statement originally approved in 2016. [\[Read the full statement\]](#).

Why Join Your Local ACS Chapter?

Your local chapters are stronger than ever. The COVID pandemic created opportunities to expand how your local chapters provide educational content, networking, and resources. It also opened new collaboration efforts with other ACS chapters and surgical societies throughout Pennsylvania. If you are not a current member, or your membership is in lapse status, make a commitment today to join or renew.

NETWORKING



VISIBILITY



REPUTATION



LEARNING

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

Gain a say in what happens in healthcare through government advocacy efforts.

Have a voice!

Stand out and get noticed in your community!

Raise your reputation through professional membership!

Get a competitive edge over non-members with low cost and free training and educational opportunities.

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!