

May 31 Town Hall Meeting a Success

More than 50 people attended the May 31 Town Hall meeting in Harrisburg. Discussion centered on patient access and quality threats to emergency care in Pennsylvania. The group also debated the potential impact of Governor Ed Rendell's health care reform package, *Prescription for Pennsylvania*.

In true form for a Town Hall meeting, audience members peppered panelists with questions and stories of their experiences in emergency departments.

PaACEP President Ron Strony, MD, FACEP opened the program with brief remarks and introduced the day's panelists who included:

- Douglas McGee, DO, FACEP, Past President, Pennsylvania ACEP
- Lawrence Clark, JD, Director of Legislative Affairs for the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform
- Cheri L. Reinhart, Vice President, Integrated Delivery Systems, The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania
- Chris Peischl, a paramedic in the Operations Office in the City of Allentown
- Diane Ross of West Chester, PA, a patient from West Chester, PA

G. Terry Madonna, Ph.D., Professor of Public Affairs at Franklin and Marshall College, moderated the lively discussion.

The true benefit of the Town Hall was the opportunity for EM providers to relay their concerns to Lawrence Clark of the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform (OHCR). The Town Hall provided the springboard for further discussion at a June 4 meeting when chapter leaders met with officials of the OHCR.

Chapter Takes Concerns About Access to Governor's Office

On June 4, Ron Strony, MD, FACEP, John Kelly, DO, FACEP, and Executive Director David Blunk, met with Rosemarie Greco, director of the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform and Lawrence Clark, JD, director of Legislative Affairs to discuss access problems facing emergency departments in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Strony applauded Governor Rendell for recognizing that the state's emergency departments are approaching a crisis situation, but said that provisions contained in his Prescription for Pennsylvania Plan will not solve ED overcrowding. The gridlock in emergency departments is not caused by too many patients with non-urgent conditions, but by boarding acutely ill patients in an emergency department because no inpatient beds are available in the hospital, he said.

In response, Greco asked for data to support PaACEP's contentions. She requested that the chapter submit a 'white paper' to the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform that: Describes the boarding/crowding/diversion problems facing Pennsylvania's emergency departments; Includes Pennsylvania-specific data on the effect these problems have on quality and cost; and Provides some broad conceptual ideas for solutions

A July 15 deadline for submitting the paper was set.

One Day Can Make All the Difference

Summer is a great time to invite your legislator to visit your emergency department. Both you and your legislator will benefit because...

- It builds relationships with those voting for issues affecting emergency physicians.
- It allows you to educate your legislator about the specialty.
- It allows your legislator to learn more about your hospital.
- One visit can lead to one "yea" vote that can swing a crucial vote on legislation in PaACEP's favor.

When Pennsylvania's General Assembly reconvenes in September, many issues affecting emergency medicine will be on the agenda, including both Rendell's and the Republicans' plans for health care reform. The only way these legislators can vote intelligently on these issues is to be informed. That job is up to you.

PaACEP can help you plan your ED visit. Check out the chapter's Web site at www.paacep.org/HostingEDVisit.htm to learn the "how to" of scheduling and preparing for the visit. There are also tips on how to make an impression on your legislator and suggestions for follow up.

July 2007

Call for Abstracts

Presentation of abstracts is open to emergency physicians for the "Reperfusion Therapies 2007: Strategies for Developing Integrated D2B Programs for STEMI Seminar" that will be held October 17, 2007, at the Hershey Lodge & Convention Center Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Emergency medicine is recognized as an integral part of the multidisciplinary team involved in the management of patients with STEMI. On October 17, there will be a state gathering of emergency medicine physicians and cardiologists to share time saving strategies and protocols, and to identify and implement solutions to overcome barriers that adversely impact door-to-balloon time.

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American College of Cardiology is sponsoring the October 17 program in collaboration with Highmark Incorporated and Independence Blue Cross.

ABSTRACT DUE DATE:

July 20, 2007

For abstract submission information, you can access the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American College of Cardiology web site at: www.pcacc.org

Emergency Medicine Written Board Review Course

September 6-9

Hilton Philadelphia Airport Hotel

Developed by practicing board certified physicians, this course provides "what you need to know" to pass the board exam in just three days.

Oral Board Simulation Course

October 12-14, Crowne Plaza Harrisburg, PA

PaACEP has offered this highly acclaimed review course for the past 23 years. This course's unique feature is board certified faculty simulate the exam by presenting practice cases one-on-one.

13th Annual National ED Information Systems Symposium

December 10-13, Sheraton New Orleans Hotel, New Orleans, LA

The "premier" ED informatics course in the country offers the information system purchaser a chance to research and window-shop the various options before purchasing and implementing a hospital information system.