President’s Perspective

Charles A. McKay, MD, FACMT President

The ACMT Board of Directors is pushing an initiative to increase the visibility and impact of Medical Toxicology within the "house of medicine." As Louise Kao, MD, FACMT notes elsewhere in this edition, we are trying to increase our liaison activities with a number of different groups that share similar interests. See her report for some particular examples and consider how you might help. Also, in case you were not aware, Danyal Ibrahim, MD, FACMT, working with others in the Practice Committee, has been successful in petitioning CMS to grant Medical Toxicology a unique specialty code - a very important achievement highlighted elsewhere in the newsletter. I want to take this rest of this space to describe activities related to the AMA.

We applied and were accepted to the Section and Specialty Society Caucus (SSS) and I attended the interim meeting last month in Orlando. A number of physicians I met mentioned activities or individual toxicologists with whom they were familiar. There were also a large number of resolutions developed by different committees enroute to the AMA House of Delegates for a vote - these were developed without input from medical toxicologists. Some of these directly impact areas of our practice or teaching, such as ….

- Individualized Compounding in Physicians’ Offices
- Expanding the Treatment of Opiate Dependence Using Medication-Assisted Treatment by Physicians in Residency Training
- Pharmaceutical Industry Drug Pricing as a Public Health Emergency
- Clinical Implications and Policy Considerations of Cannabis Use
- Establishing and Achieving National Goals to Eliminate Lead Poisoning and Prevent Lead Exposures to Children
- Closing the Loop on Pharmaceuticals [issues of disposal and environmental consequences of pharmaceuticals]
- Model State Legislation Promoting the Use of Electronic Tools to Mitigate Risk with Prescription Opioid Prescribing
- Urine Drug Testing [discusses problems in qualitative urine drug immunoassay interpretation; calls for MRO referral as experts]
In order for us to be seated at the House of Delegates (HOD), we need to have another 40 or so ACMT members (an additional 10% of our membership) join the AMA in the next couple of years. A seat on the HOD will allow us to have greater impact, which is very important for our small specialty, as we work with other medical and ancillary specialties.

In order to make it as painless as possible, we will have AMA membership information at our annual spring ASM and fall NACCT ACMT booths. Ask about options for group practices to join at reduced rates.

So please join. I think I have covered the How, When, Where, and Why…If not you, then who? And why not?

Executive Director 2016 Year in Review

Paul M. Wax, MD, FACMT, Executive Director

2016 has been an exciting and very busy year for ACMT. Among the many highlights:

Education.
We have seen record attendance at our Annual Scientific Meeting and biennial Board Review Course. Both conferences are organized and led by our dedicated course directors and faculty. Kudos to their hard work and innovative approaches as we continue to aspire to deliver the highest quality education in medical toxicology.

We have hosted almost weekly medical toxicology webinars. Between the National Case Conference, National Journal Club, ACMT Grand Rounds, and PEHSU Grand Rounds we have provided numerous opportunities each month for educational enrichment and times to learn from one another. A traditional “College” tends to teach regularly – daily/weekly – rather than just sporadically – at annual conferences. Our multiple webinar series has allowed for ongoing regular engagement with our members. Thanks to all who have led, and participated in these efforts

Practice
As described by Chuck McKay in his President’s column, and Danyal Ibrahim, ACMT achieved two landmark accomplishments in 2016. Obtaining a unique billing code from CMS for the provision of medical toxicology professional services has been long sought by our members. This seemingly small change will allow us to join the ranks of other consultative specialists who are specifically reimbursed for the care they provide. In addition, ACMT applied to join and was accepted as a member of the AMA Specialty and Service Society Caucus. We now have a seat at the table with other specialty medical societies and can weigh in on important policy and clinical initiatives involving toxicological issues. Both accomplishments are pivotal as ACMT attempts to secure a place for medical toxicologists in the every changing house of medicine. We want to express our appreciation to those who continue to pave the road towards the future for medical toxicologists. The importance of recognition of our unique professional knowledge and skills by others cannot be underestimated. We earned this recognition and achieving these significant milestones is worth celebrating.

ACMT Visibility
Moreover, our grants and contracts continue to provide a ticket to greater external recognition of medical toxicologist contributions in research, consultation, and public health service. Currently our portfolio of such activities include co-leading the CDC/EPA funded Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit program with the American Academy of Pediatrics, multiple grants to support the Toxicology Investigators Consortium (ToxIC), and work with the Department of Homeland Security on chemical preparedness issues. All of these efforts have provided us with the opportunity to introduce medical toxicology and ACMT to a growing number of external partners and stakeholders who share these common interests. Now with >53,000 patient encounters in the ToxIC Registry, ToxIC itself engages over 100 members on an almost daily basis. Hats off to all who have led and participated in these programs.

ACMT Growth
Finally, I applaud both the hard working and extremely dedicated ACMT Board of Directors and our incredible ACMT staff. 2016 was a year of transition from ACMT President Leslie Dye to ACMT President Charles McKay. Both have led and lead the College with passion, enthusiasm and unwavering commitment. As the Board leaders, they inspire the other board members with their unwavering service, and dedication. Many thanks to their tenacity and inspiration.

And finally, many thanks to the ACMT staff. In 2016 we also brought on Adrienne Dunavin as our Education Program Manager and Leslie Lindquist as our first Director of New Business Development and Philanthropy. Both have been great additions to our ACMT family. It is hard to fathom that within a few short years ACMT has grown to 12 staff – 9 full time and 3 part time. They all work tirelessly, with a unified and singular focus on the mission of the College, which is the support of its members and our constituencies, particularly our patients. All the staff welcome member engagement, interaction, and challenge.

Happy Holidays and Healthy New Year to our members, leadership, and staff.
A Historic Breakthrough: Specialty Code for Medical Toxicology

Danyal Ibrahim, MD, MPH, FACMT

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) has recognized us as a “specialty” and will be assigning a unique specialty code for Medical Toxicology.

For the purposes of enrollment in the Medicare program by Part B Medicare carriers, all providers who provide services to Medicare beneficiaries must enroll in the Medicare program before claims can be submitted and processed. Medicare assigns a two-digit specialty code that corresponds to the specialty type declared by the applicant on the enrollment form. We just received the approval letter from CMS few weeks ago, and the process will take ~ 6-12 months before they issue the specialty code for Medical Toxicology. We plan to keep you up-to-date on this development, and also provide adequate education on how this impacts you and your practice, and a roadmap on how to navigate to the next steps. Here are some FAQ’s and answers:

1. What is the impact of the new specialty code for Medical Toxicology on enrollment with CMS and credentialing with private insurers?

   When the new specialty code becomes available, you will be appropriately recognized as a unique specialty with CMS and also private insurers. If you are in a group practice, this will enhance your ability to bill for services offered to new patients, and also potentially reduces your medical claims denials. The National Uniform Claim Committee (NUCC) maintains a list of 10-digit “health care provider taxonomy codes.” Please note that Medicare does not use the taxonomy code for pricing a provider’s services. Medicare uses the provider’s specialty code to price appropriately. So according to Medicare, the taxonomy codes are used as a HIPAA-accepted code set necessary for compliance with HIPAA standards regarding electronic claims submissions and acquisition of NPI numbers, but not used to identify a provider’s specialty for claims processing purposes.

2. What is the impact of the new specialty code for Medical Toxicology on coding and billing?

   There will not be impact on your coding of procedures and services offered to your patients. Your billing might be impacted as there will be potentially lesser claims denials (see below):

   **Group Practice:** Physicians in the same group practice who are in the same specialty code must bill and be paid as though they were a single physician. If more than one evaluation and management (face-to-face) service is provided on the same day to the same patient by the same physician or more than one physician in the same specialty code in the same group, only one evaluation and management service may be reported unless the evaluation and management services are for unrelated problems.

   **New Patient:** Interpret the phrase “new patient” to mean a patient who has not received any professional services, i.e., E/M service or other face-to-face service from the physician or physician group practice (same physician specialty code) within the previous 3 years.

3. What is the impact of the new specialty code on RVUs and reimbursement rates?

   The CMS physician fee schedule is based on Resource-Based Relative Value System (RBRVS). Each CPT and HCPCS code has a weighed RVU as determined by physician work, practice expense, professional liability insurance and geographic status. CMS now has one fee schedule for all physician services based on CPT code - the same reimbursement applies regardless of the physician specialty - only difference is geographic adjustments. As for our specialty, we have little procedures and rely largely on E&M CPT codes e.g. 99205 new patient level 5. Our new specialty code will allow us to potentially negotiate more fairly with private insurers on the percent of Medicare rates associated with our frequently utilized E&M codes.

4. What other benefits might be realized from the new specialty code for Medical Toxicology?

   Currently we are in the blind spot as far as CMS and other private insurers are concerned. Our impact on our patients is hidden within other specialties like emergency medicine, pediatrics, occupational medicine and others. With the new specialty code, our patients can be properly attributed and our contribution accurately measured. This will also help measure and track quality outcomes meaningful to our patients. In addition, we will be able to better substantiate a burning platform to adequately fund our research agenda.
ACMT Liaison Program

Louise Kao, MD, FACMT, Liaison Program Organizer

One of the major goals of the ACMT Strategic Plan is: “To Enhance The Awareness And Recognition Of Medical Toxicology As A Distinct Medical Specialty.” In order to address this goal, ACMT is initiating a new liaison program.

Within this program, selected ACMT members who are involved with other medical societies have been asked to assist us in achieving our goals by enhancing bidirectional communication and encouraging a collaborative relationship between the two societies. We are hopeful that this program will inspire mutually beneficial agreements as well as opportunities for networking, and increase our reach as a society and as a medical specialty.

As an example, I’d like to highlight a liaison activity for the membership. As the liaison with AAEM (American Academy of Emergency Medicine), Ziad Kazzi, MD, FACMT has arranged an agreement whereby each society will donate booth space to the other at their respective annual meetings, and seek to collaborate with educational endeavors where they arise. At this year’s Annual Scientific Meeting, ACMT will present a Medical Student and Resident Track on Saturday, April 1, 2017 at the Intercontinental, San Juan. For this event, we are partnering with AAEM and the two medical schools in Puerto Rico. Speakers will present topics such as toxicologic visual stimuli, toxidromes, marine/tropical toxins, and USMLE tips. The afternoon will conclude with a career forum and networking event. If you are interested in participating, or can suggest speakers on topics such as drugs of abuse/smuggling or toxic physiology, please contact Dr Kazzi at Zkazzi@emory.edu.

Thank you to the inaugural members of the Liaison Program!

- AACT (American Academy of Clinical Toxicology) – Chuck McKay, MD, FACMT
- AAPCC (American Association of Poison Control Centers) - Erica Liebelt, MD, FACMT
- AAEM (American Academy of Emergency Medicine) - Ziad Kazzi, MD, FACMT
- ABEM (American Board of Emergency Medicine) Toxicology Subboard - Michelle Ruha, MD, FACMT
- ACEP (American College of Emergency Physicians) - Sam Stellpflug, MD, FACMT
- ASAM (American Society of Addiction Medicine) - Tim Wiegang, MD, FACMT
- AMA (American Medical Association) - Chuck McKay, MD, FACMT
- CORD (Council of Emergency Medicine Residency Directors) - Bryan Judge, MD, FACMT
- EMRA (Emergency Medicine Residents Association) - Ayrn O Connor, MD, FACMT
- SAEM (Society of Academic Emergency Medicine) - Jason Hoppe, DO
- SOT/SLC (Society of Toxicology/Scientific Liaison Committee)- Michael Kosnett, MD, MPH, FACMT

Best wishes for a safe and joyful holiday season!

Medical Toxicology Foundation

The Medical Toxicology Foundation is a not-for-profit charitable organization affiliated with the American College of Medical Toxicology and is intended to provide ACMT members, the general public, and commercial sponsors with a tax deductible mechanism to support Medical Toxicology. Your gift to the Medical Toxicology Foundation - a 501(c)(3) educational organization - is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law.

To learn more about the Medical Toxicology Foundation and its mission, please click here.

Click here to read the 2016 Medical Toxicology Foundation Annual Report
ACMT Educates
Bryan Judge, MD, FACMT, Education Committee Chair

Our next Education Meeting for all committee members will occur on January 6, 2017 starting at 1 pm EST. Reports from working group leaders will be due approximately one week prior to the meeting.

If you haven’t already, please register for the **2017 Annual Scientific Meeting** in San Juan, Puerto Rico from March 31 through April 2, 2017 at the Intercontinental Hotel! The theme for the meeting is Toxicologic Impact: Research, Practice, and Teach. Two satellite sessions, **Epidemic of Addiction: Prescription Opioids, Heroin, & Fentanyl** and **Zika Overview: a 360° Look at the Epidemic** will be held on March 30, 2017. Please be sure to [register](#). Early bird discounts are available until January 15, 2017.

Don’t miss the **ACMT Grand Rounds webinar**, held every second Tuesday on months opposite National Journal Club. This series highlights speakers outside of medical toxicology sharing their expertise on a diverse array of topics. If you have a suggested speaker, please contact J.J. Rasimas, MD, FACMT at joseph.j.rasimas@healthpartners.com. Also the **National Journal Club** and **National Case Conference** webinars continue to provide stimulating discussion of our toxicology literature and fascinating cases. Please view the conference calendar [here](#) for dates and times.

I am interested in discussing and developing new ideas to expand the educational outreach and impact of ACMT. Current ideas under consideration: developing an educational app; and partnering with free open access medical education (FOAM) organizations.

If you have any thoughts or ideas to help out the Education Committee please contact me at [bryan.judge@acmt.net](mailto:bryan.judge@acmt.net). You can also contact Adrienne Dunavin at [adrienne.dunavin@acmt.net](mailto:adrienne.dunavin@acmt.net).
ACMT Participates at 15th Annual APAMT Conference
In November 2016, ACMT held a symposium at the 15th Asia Pacific Medical Association of Medical Toxicology Conference in Singapore. The symposium highlighted advances and innovation in toxicology education. The session was organized by Rais Vohra and moderated by Kent Olson.

Speakers included ACMT members Anselm Wong, MBBS; Andrew Dawson, MBBS, FACMT; Nicholas Buckley, MD, FACMT; Ashish Bhalla, MD; and RJ Hoffman, MD, FACMT. Topics included GETUP/GETKIT, Wikitox, online multiple choice question programs, education in India and the Middle East. The conference was well organized and all talks were well received by the audience.

Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) Program
Carrie Dickenson, PEHSU West Program Manager

The Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) Program is excited to announce the addition of our newest eLearning course to its National Classroom! This two-part course, School Environment, Health and Performance, will focus on the impact of the school environment on occupant health and performance. The course is FREE to all interested healthcare professionals, students, or other relevant occupations and qualifies as continuing education by the Centers for Disease Control.

Course: School Environment, Health and Performance

Authors:
• Larry Lowry, PhD, PEHSU Region 6

Learning Objectives:
• Identify areas of exposure in the school environment and the special susceptibilities of school populations
• Discuss the connections between a school’s indoor environment to both student health and academic performance
• Identify methods for creating a healthy indoor school environment
• Identify strategies to overcome barriers to maintaining a healthy indoor environment

Be sure to visit the PEHSU National Classroom to access this interactive, self-paced course in addition to a variety of other pediatric environmental health courses and on-demand webinars.
The *Journal of Medical Toxicology (JMT)* released its 4th issue of 2016 during the first week of December right after the Thanksgiving holidays. This issue includes more studies than ever, friendly debate in the Poison Pen section, and an important editorial on enhancing the rigor of survey-based research in medical toxicology. Please read the whole issue online or on your mobile app.

If you presented any research at NACCT, please consider JMT for your eventual manuscript. Our articles have high Altmetric scores and are frequently cited by other scholars, online research blogs, and even traditional news media. To learn more about Altmetrics and other journal impact metric systems, be sure to check out the special lecture on journal impact during ASM 2017 in Puerto Rico.

We are recruiting interested fellows-in-training to join our editorial board for the year. It’s a terrific opportunity to learn about every aspect of publishing from our talented editorial board. All fellows in the first year of an accredited Medical Toxicology program are eligible for the 2017-18 FIT term, and applications are due in early January. If any questions about our FIT editor position, please contact Trevonne Thompson, the Associate Editor for the Leslie R. Dye JMT FIT Program at jmtinfo@acmt.net.

If ever any questions or comments about JMT, we’re always happy to hear from you: jmtinfo@acmt.net.

Happy Holidays from our entire editorial staff!
ACMT Research Committee
Russ Kerns, MD, FACMT, Research Committee Chair

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Original abstracts for the 2017 ASM San Juan, Puerto Rico March 30 – April 2, 2017:
The Research Committee reviewed 145 eligible abstracts for the 2017 ASM and 121 were accepted for platform and poster presentation at the meeting. Congratulations in advance to those investigators and authors with acceptances. A great deal of thanks goes out to Sam Stellpflug, MD, FACMT for Chairing the review process and to the following reviewers that volunteered their time to score submissions:

Vik Bebarta                    Kristin Engebretsen                    Eric Lavonas                    Sam Stellpflug
Katie Boyle                   Yaron Finkelstein                     Michael Levine                   Richard Wang
Diane Calello                 David Jang                          Gerald Maloney                   Brandon Wills
Stephanie Carreiro           Louise Kao                             Mark Mycyk                       Luke Yip
Jon Cole                      Kenneth Katz                         Anne Riederer
Kirk Cumpston

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The MTF offers four research grants for 2017:

2017 MTF Innovative Research and Teaching Award: Applicants may request up to $20,000 to support innovative research or educational efforts. Application deadline: February 15, 2017

2017 MTF Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Award: The major goal of this award is to support the development and/or analysis of innovative prevention, treatment, and/or harm reduction strategies related to prescription drug abuse. $5,000 is available to support direct costs for such efforts. Application deadline: February 15, 2017

2017 MTF Practice Award: The objective of a study funded by this award should be to measure the impact on patient care from the provision of medical toxicology services in either the inpatient or outpatient setting. Request for support of direct costs can be up to $5,000. Application deadline: February 15, 2017

2017 EMF-MTF Toxicology Research Award. Fellows and residents are eligible to apply for this $10,000 award that is co-sponsored by the MTF and Emergency Medicine Foundation. Application deadline: January 16, 2017
New for 2017: Young faculty <5 years post-fellowship are now eligible to apply for this grant!

Please visit the MTF webpage for more information about these grant opportunities and applications! www.acmt.net/medical_toxicology_foundation/Funding_Opportunities.html

END OF YEAR NOTE

Research is a critical component of advancing our practice of Medical Toxicology. Strategic activities of the committee include:

- Promoting scientific discourse: Organizing original research presentations at the ASM
- Promoting research funding opportunities: Developing and overseeing research grants for members
- Education: Mentoring MTFITs and young investigators with research skills
- Scientific review: Oversight of ToxIC research protocols and MTF grant applications

As we approach the end of 2016, I wish to thank ACMT Research Committee members that volunteer a great deal of time toward committee activities and to the ACMT Staff that provides incredible behind the scene support of the college research activities.

On a similar note, as we approach the beginning of 2017, I want to extend an invitation to ACMT members to join the Research Committee. If you would like to take part in promoting the college’s strategic research goals, please contact me directly at rkerns@carolinas.org. Any members including Medical Toxicology Fellows-in-Training are welcome.

Happy Holidays and a Happy (Healthy) New Year!
Toxicology Investigators Consortium (ToxIC)
Diane Calello, MD, FACMT

The ToxIC registry is gearing up for REDCap go-live on January 1st! This has been a tremendous effort on the part of ToxIC staff and leadership but will surely enhance the quality and searchability of the database long-term. All ToxIC investigators will need a REDCap credentials to participate so please contact Sharan Campleanman (sharan.campleman@acmt.net) for details if you have not already signed up.

Affiliate Spotlight
Michele Zell-Kanter, PharmD, DABAT

Chuck McKay, MD, FACMT spoke about the “breadth and depth” of medical toxicology resources available to ACMT membership in his inaugural President’s Perspective (ACMT Newsletter 2016, volume 5). I think it is exactly this ‘tox cornucopia’ that attracts medical toxicologists who do not fulfill ACMT’s full membership criteria to become affiliate members. The number of clinical pharmacists (Pharm.D.) has been increasing since the inception of the affiliate membership in 2012. This is good for all of us.

In this edition of the Newsletter I am highlighting our affiliate member Dr. Susan Smolinske. Dr. Smolinske received her Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from the University of Gainesville in 1977 and her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Idaho State University in 1993. She became a Diplomate of the American Board of Applied Toxicology in 1996 and Fellow of the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology in 2015. Dr. Smolinske has been very involved in the various clinical toxicology associations throughout her career.

Dr. Smolinske was the editor of Poisindex® for many years and spent the majority of her career as the managing director of the Children’s Hospital of Michigan Regional Poison Center (1994 – 2014) and at Wayne State University, achieving the rank of Professor, Department of Pediatrics. Her responsibilities there included teaching an interprofessional rotation in medical toxicology, and participation in a quarterly Grand Rounds toxicology series. She moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico in 2014 as Director of the New Mexico Poison and Drug Information Center, and Professor and Clinician Educator, Department of Pharmacy Practice and Administration, University of New Mexico. In this capacity her duties include teaching a third-year pharmacy elective in Clinical Toxicology, providing lectures in core pharmacy curriculum topics, and continuing an interprofessional rotation that includes pharmacy students, pharmacy residents, and medical residents.

Dr. Smolinske’s niche within toxicology includes designer drugs of abuse and the toxicology of plants and herbs. She coordinated a large cathinone epidemiology study and was awarded for her work in eliminating cathinone availability in Northern Michigan. Dr. Smolinske is the PI for an ongoing surveillance study of prescription opioid and amphetamine exposures to her poison center. Her contribution to the toxicology literature throughout her career has been extensive. One of her current projects is authoring triage algorithms for the webPoisonControl application.

I asked Dr. Smolinske what she expected to gain from becoming an ACMT affiliate member. Her initial impetus was to be able to attend the Annual Scientific Meeting. However, she avidly enjoys the variety of webinars hosted by ACMT. She has incorporated the webinars into her teaching of pharmacy students rotating through the poison center as part of their clinical requirement.

Member Certificates Available Upon Request

Did you know that you can get a copy of your ACMT Membership Certificate by simply sending a request to membership@acmt.net? Request it today!
Calendar of Events

Webinar Schedule

January 2017

January 4, 2017 at 1pm ET
PEHSU Webinar

January 10, 2017 at 12pm ET
ACMT National Journal Club

January 18, 2017 at 1pm
PEHSU Grand Rounds Webinar

January 19, 2017 at 1pm ET
ACMT National Case Conference

February 2017

February 14, 2017 at 12pm ET
ACMT Grand Rounds

February 16, 2017 at 1pm
ACMT National Case Conference

Visit the ACMT Webinar Webpage to view recordings of previous webinars.

We want to hear from you! Please share with us any news of yourself or ACMT colleagues and we’ll include it in the next ACMT newsletter. We also welcome comments and suggestions for future newsletters. Send information to newsletter@acmt.net.

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2017
March 12-16 SOT Annual Meeting and Tox Expo
Baltimore, MD
More Information

March 30 ACMT Satellite Courses
San Juan, Puerto Rico
More Information

March 31-April 2 ACMT Annual Scientific Meeting
San Juan, Puerto Rico
More Information

May 16-19 SAEM Annual Meeting
Orlando, FL
More Information

May 16-19 EAPCCT Congress
Basel
More Information

ACMT Wishes You a Joyous Holiday Season and A Very Happy and Peaceful New Year.