



# ARIZONA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY

## GOVERNOR'S NEWSLETTER

March, 2000

By Karl B. Kern, MD, Chapter President, ACC Governor for Arizona

### Chapter Activities

#### *Election*

The Chapter is seeking interested members to serve as Councilors on the Board of Councilors. The Board meets twice a year to discuss issues of concern to the practice of cardiology and manage the administration, property and activities of the Chapter. Please contact Patrice Hand, Chapter Administrator, by April 15 if you are interested in serving on the Council. We are currently looking for three representatives from the Phoenix area, two from Tucson, one at-large, and a secretary/treasurer. Please note that a recent bylaws amendment has allowed nominees to run unopposed for council positions.

#### *Dedication of the Total Artificial Heart Display*

Thank you to all members who joined us on Friday, February 25 at the Halle Heart Center in Tempe, for the dedication of the Total Artificial Heart Display. The Board of Councilors met for a brief meeting and then adjourned to a delightful reception provided by the American Heart Association, and a guided tour of the Halle Heart Center. The Chapter has contributed \$25,000 to the development of the Total Artificial Heart Display and was recognized for its contribution by the American Heart Association. The Halle Heart Center is an educational cen-

ter for people of all ages regarding the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of various aspects of heart disease. I encourage you to visit the Halle Heart Center soon and see how your Chapter has contributed to this effort.

#### *Operation Heartbeat*

The American Heart Association (AHA) has developed an initiative to increase public awareness and support for a strong chain of survival for victims of sudden cardiac arrest. The chain of survival is a four-step process for providing quick treatment that may determine whether a person lives or dies from sudden cardiac arrest: early access to care, early cardiopulmonary resuscitation, early defibrillation and early advanced care. Operation Heartbeat estimates that strengthening the chain of survival nationwide can save 50,000 lives each year and improve the national sudden cardiac arrest survival rate from 5 percent to 20 percent and higher. With this initiative, they seek to lead communities as they develop protocols for AED use and make the public aware of these life-saving devices. The AHA is looking for physician involvement to support this project and insure its successful completion by 2003. I urge any interested members to contact Consuelo Grant, Health Education Manager for more information at (602) 414-5353.

#### *Task Force on Electrophysiology*

The Electrophysiology Task Force continues to meet as needed and has been successful in developing recommendations for hospitals and cath labs in Arizona with respect to implanting and testing automatic defibrillators, and reviewing coding recommendations from NASPE and the ACC for electronic stimulators, defibrillators and pacemakers.

#### *Task Force on Pediatric Cardiology*

A task force on Pediatric Cardiology has been created under the chairmanship of Craig Cohen, MD, to examine concerns raised regarding the care of older teenagers and adults who have been forced by insurance and/or managed care plans to be treated by cardiologists who may not have expertise in the treatment of complex congenital heart disease. Preliminary guidelines have been developed and are in the process of review by a group of pediatric and adult cardiologists. If you are interested in providing input to these guidelines, please contact Tom Ross, MD, at (602) 258-1173 or Craig Cohen, MD, at (602) 253-6000.

#### *Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee*

Dr. Bhupendra Bhatija serves as the Chapter representative to the Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee (CAC), which meets quarterly in Phoenix. The CAC is a

Health Care Financing Administration-mandated committee overseen by Trans America Occidental Life Insurance Company and William J. Mangold, MD, carrier medical director for the states of Arizona and Nevada. The purpose of the CAC is to provide a formal mechanism for physicians in the state to be informed of and participate in the development of local medical review policy, provide a mechanism to identify areas needing improvement in administration of the Medicare program and achieve resolution of identified problems, and to provide a forum for information exchange between physicians and Medicare.

#### *Chapter Web Page*

A Chapter web page has been established under the domain name: **www.acc-az.com**. or may be reached through the Arizona Medical Association web site: **www.armadoc.com** - click on specialty societies. Current legislative information is available from the Arizona State legislative session.

#### *Chapter Participation*

I would like to make a personal invitation to those of you who have not yet done so to become involved in our Chapter activities. We realize that time is a precious commodity, but we believe that the preservation and continuation of the practice of medicine and specifically the practice of cardiovascular medicine should be of concern to us all. I have included a

survey with this newsletter asking you to select an area of interest to you personally. Please indicate one or two areas that you would be interested in participating in with your colleagues, or suggest a different area of interest. We do not ask for a large time investment, only your valuable input once or twice a year. Please give it serious consideration.

#### **Other Items**

##### *Malpractice Panel/ Cardiology-Specific Disability Standards*

Dr. Brendan Phibbs, Chief of Cardiology at Kino Community Hospital and Professor of Clinical Medicine at the U of A, is presenting two proposals for consideration by the members of the Chapter. The first proposal is to develop a panel of volunteer "experts" to provide, at no cost, an honest, unbiased opinion in cardiology malpractice suits. After this panel is established through the Chapter, these volunteers would undergo some simple legal coaching in procedures from Tucson and Phoenix attorneys. The availability of this panel would then be publicized to the judiciary in the State so that judges as well as attorneys know where to turn for true expert testimony. This is a simple step to correct a real nightmare that threatens every physician, and our Chapter can take a giant stride toward correcting it.

The second proposal is the development of guidelines for work-related heart disease to be provided

to the Worker's Compensation Authority. Dr. Phibbs believes that at this time, there are no rules in place, and he is concerned about the number of lawyers and physicians who are willing to testify about the relation of work-stress to coronary disease in general and myocardial infarction in particular. He suggests that a group of cardiologists around the State form a committee to address and research the current statutes in Arizona and in comparable states, develop guidelines, and furnish them to the hearing officers and Worker's Compensation Department.

If you have an interest in becoming involved in either of these areas, please contact Brendan Phibbs, MD, at (520) 294-4471.

#### **Officers and Board of Councilors**

Karl B. Kern, MD, President 1999-02  
Thomas F. Ross, MD, Past Pres. 1999-02  
Peter C. Maki, MD, Sec/Treas. 1998-00  
Board of Councilors - Greater Phoenix  
Rebecca A. Allison, MD - 1998-01  
George E. Bandy, MD - 1997-00  
Charles R. Breed, MD - 1998-01  
Carman H. Brooks, MD - 1997-00  
Neal A. Klein, MD - 1997-00  
Michael E. O'Meara, MD - 1998-01  
Board of Councilors - Tucson  
Mark C. Goldberg, MD - 1997-00  
Laryenth D. Lancaster, MD - 1998-01  
Param P. Sharma, MD - 1998-01  
Board of Councilors - At Large  
Andrew S. Newton, MD - 1997-00  
Board of Councilors - Pediatric  
Peter J. Baron, MD - 1998-01  
Board of Councilors - Surgeon  
David W. Campbell, MD - 1998-01

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Please feel free to contact me directly at (520) 626-2477 if there are any questions or comments regarding these or other matters of interest, or you may contact our administrative coordinator, Patrice Hand at (602) 246-8901.