

THE BULLETIN

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President's Message

Cynthia Brown, MD



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A Seat at the Table

It isn't lost on physicians that the pace of change in medicine is accelerating. Our biggest challenge used to be keeping up with all the advances in medicine. While working in a busy practice, we somehow learned to carve out time to read journals in order to deliver up-to-date medical care and advice. We have to be prepared because our patients come to their appointments with questions about what they heard on *Good Morning America* or read online. Keeping up with the literature is daunting - Medline now catalogues 2000-4000 articles per day, nearly 700,000 each year! No pressure.

In addition to keeping up with the scientific progress in medicine, we now need to keep up with the coming changes that may profoundly affect *how* we practice medicine. Healthcare reform is here and surveys find that most physicians feel unsettled because there is so much uncertainty on exactly how it will impact our practices. I am sure you read the predictions, which vary tremendously on what the final form our healthcare system will take. Even if politicians end up amending some of the provisions of the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, significant changes in healthcare delivery are inevitable and necessary. It is tempting to think we can ignore what is coming, hope it will go away or believe that our retirement will happen first. But if you plan on practicing medicine in the near future, you can't afford to sit on the sidelines.

There are a few simple things we can do to prepare. First, we should take time to become familiar with the healthcare models being proposed; learn the terminology; and understand the basic principles behind bundled

payments, withholds, risk pools and shared savings. In 2012, one of the goals of the Western Carolina Medical Society is to continue to provide educational opportunities to physicians on these important topics. Watch for new tools and online forums to make these educational opportunities more accessible to all of our members.

Second, whichever healthcare model comes to be, an important component will be the use of quality measures. It will be critically important for us to understand the tools being developed to evaluate our performance and patient health outcomes. In fact, physicians should be involved in choosing and evaluating the effectiveness of these measuring tools.

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Doctor's Corner

Dowler named NCAFP President-elect

Dr. Shannon B. Dowler, a family physician from Asheville, was installed as president-elect of the N.C. Academy of Family Physicians Inc. on Dec. 3, 2011. Dowler is the chief medical officer for Blue Ridge Community Health Services in Hendersonville and will serve a one-year term. The NCAFP is the largest specialty medical association in the state, representing more than 3,000 family physicians, family medicine educators and residents.

In addition to her clinical service, Dowler serves as a trustee on the Western Carolina Medical Society Foundation and is a member of the Physician Advisory Group, a clinical advisory board for North Carolina's Medicaid program.



Shannon Dowler, MD

Local Physician Shares Expertise at Largest Gathering of Orthopedic Surgeons in the World



Local orthopedic surgeon Gordon I. Groh, M.D., a board-certified specialist in shoulder, elbow and hand surgery at Blue Ridge Bone & Joint, served as the course chairman for an instructional series on reverse shoulder replacement at the recent annual meeting of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, the preeminent provider of musculoskeletal instruction for orthopedic surgeons and others in the world. Dr. Groh also presented a scientific paper detailing his experience with inferior shoulder dislocation and served as an official evaluator for the meeting.

Gordon Groh, MD

The largest gathering of orthopedic surgeons in the world, the AAOS conference was held Feb. 7-13, in San Francisco, CA, with some 30,000 attendees.

Earlier this year, Dr. Groh led a session on shoulder fracture repair for another educational event, the 2012 Current Solutions in Shoulder and Elbow Surgery course at The Foundation for Orthopedic Research and Education (FORE) in Tampa, FL. He also served as the course moderator for a session on elbow surgery, as well as total shoulder and reverse shoulder replacement. The two-and-a-half day course was designed to provide orthopedic surgeons with a comprehensive update on the surgical treatments for various shoulder and elbow disorders. The course was attended by orthopedic surgeons from throughout North America.

Dr. Groh is one of only four orthopedic surgeons in the nation to hold memberships in the American Shoulder and Elbow Surgeons (ASES) society as well as the American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH). He was recently advanced from Associate to Active membership status in ASES, an educational body of select leading national and international orthopedic surgeons who specialize in surgery of the shoulder and elbow, open by invitation only. ASSH is the oldest medical specialty society in the U.S. devoted entirely to continuing medical education related to hand surgery.

He was named in 2011 one of the **65 Outstanding Shoulder Surgeons and Specialists** in the country by *Becker's Orthopedic, Spine & Pain Management Review*. Only five other shoulder surgeons across the Southeast were honored with this recognition, selected based on their expertise in shoulder surgery, positions of leadership in professional organizations and institutions, research and development in the field, and their reputation among other physician leaders.

Prior to joining Blue Ridge Bone & Joint 17 years ago, Dr. Groh served as a full-time faculty member and director of shoulder and elbow surgery at the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Denver. He continues to actively pursue research and teaching opportunities, and has presented in every major city in the U.S., as well as in Mexico, Canada and Japan.

For more information about Dr. Groh, call Blue Ridge Bone & Joint at 258-8800 in Asheville or 692-4318 in Hendersonville, or visit www.DrGordonGroh.com.