New www.aapmr.org Website Launched
The “new and improved” Academy website launched on January 4. Please take a moment to visit the website—www.aapmr.org. The new site features an improved user experience, enhanced content, and fresh imagery.

The mission for the website is to be the respected, definitive online resource for physiatrists and patients to learn about physiatry. The goals for the new website are as follows:

- Communicate our value propositions including what AAPM&R is about and what the Academy has to offer
- Make it easier for physiatrists to find and use AAPM&R content and resources
- Make using the AAPM&R website an enjoyable experience
- Make it easier for physiatrists to engage with AAPM&R and use or purchase the Academy’s products and services
- Improve the value of AAPM&R membership by providing relevant content

A lot of research (including an all-member survey) and industry best practices were utilized in the creation of the new site. The site is mobile-friendly and the platform will allow new opportunities for the Academy to share news and resources with members. We are excited to start the New Year off on such a positive note for our members and the specialty as a whole.

Call for Awards
The AAPM&R 2016 Awards Committee has scheduled its conference calls for late March and mid-April; the nominations process opened in early February. The Committee is responsible for selecting recipients for the following:

- Frank H. Krusen Lifetime Achievement Award (requires Board approval)
- Distinguished Member Award(s)
- Distinguished Clinician Award(s)
- Distinguished Public Service Award(s)
- PASSOR Legacy and Lectureship Award
- Honorary Membership (optional; not given out every year)
- Member Council for Outstanding Council Service Awards

The Annual Assembly has seen and will continue to see some wonderful innovations thanks to the dedication of creative volunteers and staff who are working diligently to enhance the member experience. In 2015, the awards session at the Assembly saw a dramatic change with the introduction of the video presentation of awards. The feedback has been positive – from both award winners and audience – and plans are to continue this video initiative for the 2016 event.
Again because of your unique leadership role, you are encouraged to nominate a physician who has made significant contributions to both the specialty and to people with disabilities. Visit the Call for Awards web page and submit your 2016 nomination here.

Value Propositions
The Academy recently developed (with Board input and approval) 4 value propositions to tell our members what the Academy is focused on as well as to reinforce the value of membership. They provide a succinct way for us to communicate the many initiatives, information, and resources we have for our members. Please keep them top-of-mind when communicating all that the Academy offers to both members and nonmembers alike.

- Your Academy provides me with the resources I need to meet mandates (regulatory, certification, licensure).
- Your Academy provides me with the advanced clinical skills to meet future PM&R opportunities and career enhancements.
- Your Academy is an essential resource to lead me through the transitions occurring in the business of health care.
- Your Academy advocates to strengthen the specialty.

These value propositions are reinforced on the new website, in the 2015 Report to Members, and in our membership (retention and recruitment) collateral (i.e., emails, print pieces, etc.).

Medical Education

The Medical Education Committee (MEC) held its first 2016 conference call on January 5, where they selected the following precourses that will be offered at the 2016 Annual Assembly:

- Regenerative Medicine
- Coding and Billing
- Ultrasound (changed to a 1-day course)
- Practice Preparedness (to be confirmed by the Practice Preparedness Committee)

Self-Assessment Examination for Practitioners (SAE-P) Update
The Self-Assessment Examination (SAE) Committee is finalizing development of the Advanced Sports Medicine Concepts and Controversies SAE-P planned to launch in late March. The SAE-P will have 36 questions and is associated with the 2016 March PM&R Journal supplement.

2016 Self-Assessment Examination for Residents (SAE-R)
The 2016 SAE-R has been re-administered. As previously announced, the Academy will provide a $100 discount per resident, in the form of a credit toward the 2017 SAE-R registration fee for programs that registered for and administered the 2016 SAE-R.

The Academy’s Medical Education Committee continues to work with the vendor for the 2016 results analysis, and together with the SAE committee, is in the planning stage for administration of the 2017 SAE-R.

2016 Annual Assembly Update
2016 Plenary Speakers
The Academy has confirmed all speakers for the three plenary sessions for 2016 Annual Assembly in New Orleans:

- Thursday, October 20—Presidental Plenary Speaker will be political commentators, James Carville and Mary Matalin.
• Friday, October 21—Plenary will be Dr. Bennet Omalu, forensic neuropathologist and inspiration for the film *Concussion*, detailing his history-making work on chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

• Saturday, October 22—Walter J. Zeiter Award Lectureship is Dr. William Adair, physiatrist and longtime Academy member. He is a board certified physiatrist, who since 2011 has served as the Vice President of Clinical Transformation at Advocate Christ Medical Center, leading the hospital’s health outcome, quality and safety efforts.
  - He has been a leader in post-acute care as a component of population health management, working with the Advocate system in its development of a post-acute network; integrating care across hospitals, acute and day rehabilitation, skilled nursing facilities, home health, and the community.
  - His lecture will focus on the new opportunities for the specialty and individual members in the changing health care environment.

2016 President’s Reception
The 2016 President’s Reception will be held at The National WWII Museum. Holding steady as the No. 1 attraction in New Orleans for the third consecutive year, this venue is consistently recognized as one of the top museums in the country, ranking No. 3 in the nation. Because the physiatry specialty had its beginnings during World War II, the Academy found it particularly fitting to bring its marquee event to this exceptional venue.

Attendees will have exclusive access to two areas of the museum: the Campaigns of Courage exhibit, the museum’s newest pavilion, which chronicles the story of how American service members overcame extraordinary challenges during the war; and the US Freedom Pavilion, an incredible, multi-level display of tanks, airplanes and war machines. Attendees can also enjoy private screenings of “Beyond all Boundaries,” a 4-D journey through WWII, narrated by actor Tom Hanks. Food and beverages will be stationed throughout the event space, and a USO show, led by the Victory Belles, will entertain the crowd. The museum is located 0.4 miles from the convention center, and is an approximate 10 minute walk. Circulating shuttle service will be available, departing from the convention center.

Interfaith Gathering Room
For attendees who wish to observe religious holidays during the Assembly, the Academy will offer an Interfaith Gathering Room that may be used for religious practices. Attendees may request a gathering room by contacting meetings@aapmr.org prior to the Assembly.

In 2016, the Assembly falls during the Jewish Holiday Sukkot. We have provided information on www.aapmr.org for our members who wish to attend the Annual Assembly and also observe the holiday.

Quality Practice, Policy and Research

• Quality and practice initiatives will continue to be an important part of the Academy’s work in 2016. Significant efforts are underway to help members as the MACRA legislation is implemented. In recent months, the Academy has submitted comments to CMS on numerous proposed rules and requests for information. QPPR members have contributed educational articles to the *PM&R Journal*: http://www.pmrjournal.org/article/S1934-1482(15)00890-4/pdf and http://www.pmrjournal.org/article/S1934-1482(15)01052-7/abstract, *The Physiatrist*, and a MACRA Webinar for members was released in December: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZDVVdcKvRo
The new Practice Preparedness Committee, with Michael Lupinacci, MD, as Chair, is leading the Academy’s continued efforts to focus practice education and product development on three key areas: Running your Practice; Transitioning your Practice; and Diversification of Practice. The Committee is currently making plans for the 2016 Annual Assembly and a possible Pre-Course.

Your Academy’s Innovative Payment and Practice Models (IPPM) Work Group is developing a white paper describing a model for spine care that is supported by outcomes and economic data. We anticipate this project will yield a testable model that your Academy can propose to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to gain acceptance as a qualified alternative payment model (APM) that satisfies MACRA requirements. The following Academy members are serving on a technical advisory panel to inform the project: Stuart Glassman, MD; Anthony Lee, MD; Chris Standaert, MD; and Santosh Thomas, MD. Additional members and stakeholders will be consulted during the project as needed.

In response to a request from the General and Medical Rehabilitation Council, on February 8, your Academy submitted comments to the American Physical Therapy Association regarding the “Petition to American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties for Recognition of Oncology as an Area of Specialty Practice in Physical Therapy.” Our letter focused on the need for a team approach to cancer rehabilitation that includes physiatry.

**Evidence Based Practice (EBP) Committees**

- The EBP Committee and Sub-Committees met in Rosemont, IL on January 29-30 to develop a short- and long-term quality strategy that expands beyond our plans to develop a spine registry.
- The Performance Metrics Committee provided comments on the National Quality Forum’s 2015-2016 considerations for implementing measures in Federal Programs. Measures reviewed included ones for consideration in the post-acute care setting as well as for the Merit Based Incentive Payment System.
- The Clinical Practice Guidelines Committee submitted comments to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the [Proposed 2016 Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain](#).
- The Clinical Practice Guidelines Committee’s comments were favorably incorporated on the clinical questions being considered for the development of the NASS Low Back Pain Clinical Practice Guideline. Mathew Smuck, MD represents your Academy on this work group.

**Reimbursement and Policy Review Committee (RPRC)**

- Barry Smith, MD, was nominated and appointed to the Joint Commission Hospital Professional and Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC). PTAC representatives assist The Joint Commission in the development and refinement of standards and elements of performance for hospitals.
- Matthew Grierson, MD was appointed to the AMA RUC as the AAPM&R Advisor, and Barry Smith, MD was appointed as the AAPM&R Alternate RUC Advisor. The RUC advisors play an important role in advocating for fair reimbursement for physiatric procedures.
- Jeffery Brault, DO, was appointed to the CPT Telehealth Workgroup. The goal of the Telehealth Workgroup is to recommend solutions for the reporting of current non-telehealth services when using remote telehealth technology (to include but not limited to E/M services) and consider potential new codes and use of current codes.
- AAPM&R and AMRPA hosted the “2016 Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility Update - What is the Impact?” webinar.
- RPRC and KarenZupko & Associates, Inc. (KZA) are teaming up again in 2016 to provide specialty-specific coding and reimbursement and ICD-10 education to members and their office staff. Four workshops will be held throughout the year. Read more [here](#).
- The Coverage Determinations Workgroup successfully convinced National Government Services to halt an unfavorable Local Coverage Determination for prosthetics and orthotics which was being promulgated by all of the DME Medicare Contractors. CMS is forming a workgroup to further examine the policy.
Health Policy and Legislation Committee (HP&L)

- The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) unanimously passed a modified version of S. 800, the “Enhancing the Stature and Visibility of Medical Rehabilitation Research at the NIH Act” to improve, coordinate, and enhance medical rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Academy supports this legislation and is leading efforts in collaboration with the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC).
- Staff attended the MedPAC Commission meeting January 15-16 that included a discussion on “Assessing Payment Adequacy and Updating Payments: Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities Services.” MedPAC Commissioners also heard presentations on assessing payment adequacy for Post-Acute Care, SNFs, home health, and LTCH. MedPAC’s recommendations will be sent to Congress in a comprehensive report.
- NIH is moving ahead with its plan to update the Rehabilitation Research Plan, and will be convening a conference, “Rehabilitation Research at NIH: Moving the Field Forward,” on May 25-26 to hear from interested parties on the first draft of the plan. Registration information is being shared with members (click here for the link), and the Academy hopes to send a representative.
- Academy staff and lobbyist, Peter Thomas, PPSV, met with House Ways & Means Committee senior staff, Lisa Grabert, to discuss H.R. 1906, a bill that would allow inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units to count recreational therapy towards the three hour rule. AAPMR is spearheading support for this legislation. Ms. Grabert also indicated revised PAC Value-Based Purchasing legislation will move forward in the House in the near future. Academy staff is participating in a newly-formed Post-Acute Care Work Group that includes IRF, LTCH, Acute, and SNF providers, medical professionals, American Federation of Hospitals, American Hospital Association and American Healthcare Association.
- Recent AAMP&R Comment Letter and Coalition sign-on Letters include:
  - NIH Rehabilitation Research Plan Priorities – Dec. 2015
  - Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) NIH Rehabilitation Research Plan Priorities Comment Letter – Dec. 2015
  - Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation (CPR) Comment Letter on CMS Proposed Payment Parameters – Dec. 2015

State Activities

- The PM&R Section Council introduced a Resolution on Complex Rehabilitation Technology (CRT) Accessories that was adopted at the AMA House of Delegates Interim meeting (Nov. 14-17). The Resolution asked the AMA to encourage (CMS) to refrain from implementing policies on January 1, 2016 that would restrict access to CRT wheelchairs and accessories by applying competitively bid prices to these specialized devices. The resolution also requested that the AMA encourage Congress to support legislation on this issue which ultimately assisted in the passage of S. 2425, the “Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act,” providing for a one-year delay preventing CMS from inappropriately restricting access to critical complex wheelchair components/accessories. Our resolution was critical in educating and persuading Minority Leader Pelosi, other congressional representatives and staff in getting this bill passed.
- On December 18, 2015, your Academy submitted comments to the Virginia Board of Medicine and the Medical Society of Virginia with regards to the Regulations Governing the Practice of Physical Therapy: Practice of Dry Needling in Virginia. The comments, along with the Academy’s position statement on dry needling, stated that we believe the practice of dry needling should only be performed by practitioners with standard training and routine use of needles in their practice, such as licensed acupuncturists or licensed medical physicians. Comments were also submitted to the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall.
through the Virginia Department of Health Professions during the open commenting period. The Academy is closely monitoring similar issues impacting other states as well.


In addition, a 2015 state legislative summary for opioid prescribing and pain management can be found here: http://www.aapmr.org/docs/default-source/advocacy/pain-management/2015-state-opioid-update.pdf?sfvrsn=6

Read a recap of the Academy's 2015 advocacy efforts that was published in the December/January issue of The Physiatrist.

Membership

Calendar cycle dues renewal kicked off on November 17, 2015. As of March 5, more than 82% of Fellow members have renewed their Academy membership. At this time in 2015, we were at 78% retention of Fellow members, although dues renewal opened 2 weeks earlier in 2015. With the inclusion of current, fundamental Maintenance of Certification® resources and enhanced member communications, we are seeing positive response from members. Several communication efforts are currently underway, including electronic and hard copy invoices, informational brochures, targeted email blasts, and a calling campaign.

In an effort to reinforce the value of membership and encourage timely renewal (especially for those who typically pay their dues in March, April and May), for the first time AAPM&R implemented a “Past-Due” status on February 29. For those unrenewed members, their member benefits will be put on hold as their membership technically expired on December 31, 2015. There are roughly 1,200 unrenewed members, so this status would impact close to this amount when implemented.

This means that unrenewed members will not have access to members-only content on www.aapmr.org as well as discounted access to resources on the mē® Catalog. Unrenewed members will, however, still will be able to renew online. Of the members who have renewed, 5% (n=244) have already utilized the complimentary SAE-P to meet their end of year continuing medical education (CME) and MOC requirements.

Unity Initiative
In 2015, the Board of Governors approved the business plan for the Unity Initiative. The goal for the initiative is to create an emotional, positive feeling of connectedness within the specialty of physiatry that ignites and unifies the specialty and positions it for success in the new health care landscape. The Membership Committee is overseeing the implementation of the business plan, providing input and direction for all key milestones. The initiative is set to launch in 2016.

Academy Leadership Program
The Board of Governors and the Awards Committee are proud to present the 2015-2017 Academy Leadership Fellows. The following 10 candidates were chosen from a large pool of excellent applicants and will be trained and encouraged to take on association leadership roles at the conclusion of the 2-year program. They will be joining the Board of Governors at the 2016 Spring Meeting for Strategic Planning.
We look forward to working with them!

- **Shane Burr, MD**, The Physician Network
- **Alexios Carayannopolous, DO**, Comprehensive Spine Center
- **Mehul Desai, MD, MPH**, Minnesota Advance Pain Specialists
- **Carl Gelfius, MD, FAAPMR, FAANEM**, Texas Children’s Hospital
- **Corinne Layne-Stuart, DO**, West Virginia University
- **Annie Purcell, DO**, Redding Spine & Sports Medicine
- **Jeffrey Radecki, MD**, Lehigh Valley Health Network
- **Monica Rho, MD**, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago
- **Monica Verduzco-Gutierrez, MD**, UT Health Science Center
- **Aurora Wong, MD**, North Mississippi Medical Center

### Member Councils

The Member Council Executive Committees are preparing for the upcoming year by scheduling working conference calls as well as creating content for their future newsletters. A current view of the member needs as defined by the Council leaders through their inquiries with Council members, can be found here. We continue to encourage all committees to review this information prior to calls and meetings to help inform their discussions and decision-making to meet member needs. This information is also being shared and discussed at each Academy committee meeting.

### PM&R Journal

*PM&R* concluded 2015 with a record number of submissions. We received 526 manuscripts, which represents a 12% increase over 2014 submissions. International submissions were also up 20%—from 223 in 2014 to 268 in 2015. Online publication times also continue to improve. In 2015, the average number of weeks from acceptance to online publication decreased to 3.8.

The March issue of *PM&R* will be accompanied by a supplement entitled “Advanced Sports Medicine Concepts and Controversies” guest edited by Jonathan Finnoff, DO. An SAE-P will be available for this content.

AAPM&R and the Purple Journal exhibited at the AAP meeting in Sacramento on February 17-19.

### PM&R Knowledge NOW®

PM&R Knowledge NOW® is currently in a writing cycle of 55 submissions. This includes 10 new topics and 45 existing topics that were originally published 3 years ago and are undergoing review/refresh. These new and updated topics will publish in spring 2016. More than 70 author applications have been received for the next cycle of 65 topics (mostly refreshed topics.)
# 2016 Events and Meeting Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Meeting Name</th>
<th>Location/Hotel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 9-10</td>
<td>RPC</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 22-23</td>
<td>Program Planning Committee Meeting</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters (Saturday Only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29-30</td>
<td>EBP Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Hilton: Rosemont, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 11-13</td>
<td>Coding Regional Workshop</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27-28</td>
<td>Membership Meeting</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28 - March 1</td>
<td>HPL Meeting</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 4-5</td>
<td>QPPR Meeting</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12-13</td>
<td>MEC</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 18-19</td>
<td>RPRC Spring Meeting</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14-17</td>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
<td>Loews Ventana Canyon Tucson, AZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28-30</td>
<td>Coding Regional Workshop</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 5-6</td>
<td>RPRC Summer</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 10-13</td>
<td>Coding Regional Workshop</td>
<td>Nashville, TN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>CAP Meeting</td>
<td>Loews Chicago O'Hare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 9-11</td>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
<td>Loews Chicago O'Hare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 18-19</td>
<td>Preconference Courses</td>
<td>Ernest N. Morial Convention Center/Hilton New Orleans, LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 19</td>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
<td>Hilton; New Orleans, LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 20-23</td>
<td>Annual Assembly</td>
<td>Ernest N. Morial Convention Center/Hilton New Orleans, LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>Board of Governors</td>
<td>Hilton; New Orleans, LA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4-5</td>
<td>MEC</td>
<td>National AAPM&amp;R Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 10-12</td>
<td>Coding Regional Workshop</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**RESEARCH**

- In February, the Foundation will present 3 research grant awards during the AAP meeting in Sacramento. This will bring our total grant awards to over one million dollars.
- May 1 is the application deadline for the spring grants cycle, offering $120,000 in grant support for young investigators (3 grants of $10,000 each); musculoskeletal research ($30,000); and grants of $10,000 each in pediatric PM&R, spinal bracing and pain management. Details and application forms can be found on the Foundation’s website (www.foundationforpmr.org).
- The Foundation is again partnering with the AAP on the Rehabilitation Research Experience for Medical Students program, which provides opportunities for medical students with strong research interests to interact with some of the most successful faculty members in the field of PM&R. Details can be found at www.physiatry.org.

**RESEARCH PRIORITIES**

- In 2015, a task force was created to develop research priorities to guide our funding, the development of new research programs, and to aid in soliciting support. A survey was sent to 7,307 PM&R physicians and 5 priority clinical areas were identified (chronic pain, musculoskeletal, spinal cord injury, stroke and traumatic brain injury) as well as overarching issues in the areas of health services, health policy and research capacity. Additional input will be sought from our sister societies this year.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES FUND (ADF): Rx FOR EXERCISE**

- The Foundation started the ADF in 2015 with a restricted gift made in honor of Dr. Henry Betts to provide physiatrists with the tools to promote exercise and sport for their patients with disabilities. We are currently applying to be a subcontractor to the Lakeshore Foundation on a CDC grant and will have more details by Q2.

**FUNDRAISING**

- This year, we're adding a spring campaign to support the general operating fund, featuring an appeal by Mrs. Rosa Materson in honor of the 75th anniversary of Richard Materson’s birth. We also have a match grant of $15,000 pledged toward the Justus Lehmann Research Fund.
- The Foundation is supporting the AAPM&R’s evidence-based practice programs with the Prove It! Campaign. More information will be forthcoming.
- We thank the AAP for adding an optional Foundation contribution check-box to their member dues invoices this year.

**NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

- The Foundation for PM&R is proud to announce our new President, Dr. Dexanne Clohan, was named one of Modern Healthcare’s 50 most powerful health care executives for 3 years in a row. We also welcome new Board members: Dr. Michael Boninger (Endowed Chair and Professor with Tenure in the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, University of Pittsburgh); Dr. Alberto Esquenazi (Chair of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Director of the Gait and Motion Analysis Laboratory, Regional Amputee Center at Moss Rehab and Albert Einstein Medical Center, Philadelphia); and Dr. Jeffrey Palmer (Professor of PM&R, Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, and Functional Anatomy and Evolution, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine).