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United in Advancing Physiatry

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With transformation in healthcare and the world around us, I believe we have grounding solace in the interconnectedness of our professional passion as physiatrists. As physiatrists, we provide essential patient care that has a massive positive impact on the patients we treat, as well as the communities where we live and practice. Through these individual actions, we are all clearly promoting and advancing our specialty. Additionally, when we combine our efforts as a collective group through the AAPM&R, we unite to have even more of a global impact.

Thus, amid the current political whirlwinds and the ever-changing landscape of guidelines, reporting measures and practice requirements, the Academy, for me, has served as a beacon of unity, with an unwavering commitment to promoting and advancing physiatrists and our specialty. To accomplish these goals the Academy has multiple active endeavors including involvement on the Hill, in Industry and even at the Olympics.

One of our key initiatives in 2023 was the creation of a new Quality and Research Committee. Led by James Sliwa, DO, FAAPMR, the committee is laser-focused on quality improvement, patient safety, guidance and research. Driving transformative advancements in PM&R patient care through a culture of excellence, high standards and data-driven partnerships is part of our mission. To keep our members abreast of the latest developments in quality and research, we launched a dedicated e-newsletter in 2024. This quarterly resource brings you updates on our AAPM&R Registry, guidance statements and other pertinent news.

A cornerstone of our efforts to promote and define our specialty is the AAPM&R Registry. As patient-reported outcome measures become increasingly important for assessing clinical care, our Registry is playing a pivotal role. It enables us to capture the patient perspective, providing a more comprehensive picture of rehabilitation care.

The AAPM&R Registry is not just a data repository; it will be a crucial tool for the future of our specialty. As the volume of data grows, so does our collective strength and ability to demonstrate the value of physiatry and the care we provide. The Academy is currently recruiting individuals, practices and institutions committed to quality improvement to join our Registry, which currently is focused on ischemic stroke and low-back pain.

Participating in the Registry has numerous benefits including:

- Advancing the specialty by providing concrete data to underline the value of physiatry in today's value-based payment models.
- Connecting with like-minded professionals committed to improving patient care.
- Sharing quality improvement strategies and expanding professional networks.
- Identifying practice strengths and weaknesses through comparative data.

I am proud to personally participate in the Registry through Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and I encourage you to discover more about the nine current data collection champions currently involved in the Registry and how you can participate, by visiting www.aapmr.org/registry. Together, we can drive transformative advancements in PM&R while also helping prove our value in today's healthcare system.

aapm&r Registry

Better Practice. Better Outcomes.



Academy in Action

AAPM&R is Defending the Role of Physiatrists Against Encroachment from Non-PM&R Physicians and Non-Physicians

• Monitored by your Academy's State Advocacy Committee (SAC2) and opposed by the New York Society of PM&R (NYSPM&R), NY Senate Bill 3361 failed to advance in the 2023-2024 legislative session. The bill would have removed limits on physical therapists treating patients without referral from a physician. NYSPM&R President and SAC2 Chair, Richard G. Chang, MD, MPH, FAAPMR, shared concerns directly with the Medical Society of the State of New York.



• Your Academy joined a coalition letter to Congress led by the American Medical Association (AMA) opposing the *Equitable Community Access to Pharmacist Services Act* (H.R. 1770/S. 2477), federal legislation that would inappropriately allow pharmacists to perform services that would otherwise be covered if they had been furnished by a physician, test and treat patients for certain illnesses, and expand Medicare payment for pharmacists.



Academy in Action

Fighting to Reduce Physiatrist Burden by Removing Prior Authorization Barriers

• Academy Advocacy staff began meeting directly with Congressional offices to urge support for the recently reintroduced *Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act* (H.R. 8702/S. 4532), bipartisan legislation that would help protect patients from unnecessary delays in care by streamlining and standardizing the prior authorization process under the Medicare Advantage program.