

# AMWA South Bay August 2011



Hope you are all having a fabulous summer. South Bay AMWA has become an affiliated branch of national AMWA. Laurel Waters, MD, has volunteered to take on the job of administrator for our group, maintaining the mailing list, and keeping track of who has paid her dues. Please contact Laurel concerning membership and mailing list concerns. This issue features information on upcoming events on the

local and national level, the membership survey results, and an article on opioid use in pain management, by our own Annu Navanni, MD, anesthesia and pain management specialist.

Sheri Bortz, MD, Newsletter Editor, AMWA South Bay Chapter

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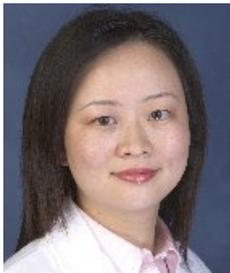
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At the Speaker Meeting California Cafe June 2011  
From Right to Left: Front row: Dr. Xu and Dr. Wu  
Middle row: Dr. Waters and Dr. Khoo  
Back row: Dr. Madala and Dr. Bortz

## Conversion to Electronic Health Records(EHR)

AMWA Dinner Meeting 9/28, Cypress Hotel, Cupertino\_\_ Mark your Calendars!



Deciding to make the transition from paper records to an electronic medical record system can be a difficult decision, particularly with so many different applications available to physicians. There are many factors to consider; ease of use, patient confidentiality, accuracy of the electronic charges, and last, but not least, whether the program meets the government's "meaningful use" criteria so that you can get your EHR incentive money. How do you make the right choice?

Join our AMWA dinner lecture/discussion on Wednesday, September 28, 2011, 6 PM, at the Cypress Hotel in Cupertino, and you might find the answers you are looking for. Dan Carroll, regional manager from gloStream, the only Microsoft Office-based EHR company on the market, will discuss EHR selection. Mr. Carroll will provide an overview of the EHR market, talk about the advantages of gloStream products, and also explain the details behind the federal government's EHR Incentive Program.

We hope the location in Cupertino will be more convenient for the North County members. For future meetings we are looking at locations in Palo Alto and Mountain View. See you all on September 28!

Anlin Xu, Co-Vice President, AMWA South Bay Chapter

## Presidents' corner:

Dear fellow AMWA members,

It has been a privilege to serve you as co-presidents of AMWA South Bay. During our term as co-presidents we have affiliated ourselves to National AMWA and have been working to create a greater sense of community within the South Bay Chapter. We have purposely scheduled more time in our quarterly dinners so that we have time to chat, share professional stories, and intellectual discourse. To add more "fun" activities we have decided to start a tradition of a holiday party where we can bring a guest for an evening of socializing, dancing, and speakers. Date and more details on the holiday party to follow.



Gloria and Durga sign the National AMWA affiliation agreement!

Gloria Wu, MD and Durga Madala, MD, co-Presidents AMWA, South Bay Chapter

## News from National:



We are now affiliated with National AMWA. We encourage the members to increase their AMWA commitment to this level. The regular membership is \$225/yr with a discount membership of \$150 for retirees, part-time, and women taking time off to raise a family. I have a few special applications left from the \$100 special that we ran at the last meeting. Contact: LWatersMD@yahoo.com or 925.457.3664

Your membership dollars also go to work in the areas of gender equity, women's health and professional development. We support a strong medical student section, providing mentoring and a bed and breakfast program for interviewees.

One of the important projects of National AMWA is the American Women's Hospitals Service (AWHS). Through this organization we have assisted in medically underserved communities in the US and around the world since early in the twentieth century. To donate directly to AWHS go to the **Donate** section of the website ( [www.amwa-doc.org](http://www.amwa-doc.org)).

The national leadership is very excited to announce that we will be holding a national meeting April 13-15, 2012 at the Sofitel in Miami, FL, themed "Achieving Success as Women in Medicine." Gloria Steinem is the confirmed speaker at the banquet Saturday night. The didactic part of the program will focus on personal and career development as well as a few lectures on continuing medical education.

Check the website ( [www.amwa-doc.org](http://www.amwa-doc.org) ) for more announcements about the Annual Meeting and SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 13-15, 2012.

Laurel Waters MD, Treasurer, AMWA South Bay Chapter and AMWA National

## Results of the Survey

Sheri Bortz, MD, newsletter editor

Thanks to the 35 members who participated in the survey. This is a summary of the results.

The answers to the first question suggest that most of us are in this group to network and socialize with other women doctors. There is some interest in purely social events, including events that involve family and significant others. Many members who answered the survey would be willing to pay for an event that they wanted to attend, especially if it meant it would be free from corporate sponsorship. How much people would be willing to pay varied on the individual member, and the exact nature of the event. (See details in the survey results below, question # 4.)

Significant numbers of survey responders would like to be involved in community educational activities such as health fairs and sponsoring educational events or classes at schools. There is a passionate minority interested in keeping abreast of political activities and maybe connecting with AMA and CMA in these areas. Interesting ideas suggested were looking into group insurance (medical?) through AMWA and starting a subgroup for women doctors with children. (Questions #5, #6, and #10)

With respect to speaker programs, several members asked for some programs to be located in north county, having women as speakers, and having programs with a focus on women's issues. (Question #10)

There is interest in a hard copy referral booklet, member's contact information on the website for members only, and a page on the web site where community members can search for women doctors. (Question #8) The board will be exploring how this can happen.

The majority of members are not interested in formally selecting the board. (Question #9)

I plan to discuss the survey results at our next speaker meeting . I see us forming three special interest groups: 1. Political, 2. Community health education, and 3. Doctors who are mothers. Each group would have a chairperson who would report to the board. If you are interested in any of these special interest groups, email me and I will share your contact information with people of like interest. Email: [askdoctorbortz@aol.com](mailto:askdoctorbortz@aol.com).

See appendix A, pages 6,7 to see the raw data from the survey, or email me at [askdoctorbortz@aol.com](mailto:askdoctorbortz@aol.com) for a link to the actual survey results at [monkeysurvey.com](http://monkeysurvey.com).

## Featured Article: Chronic Pain Management: Opioid Prescription Guidelines and Compliance Monitoring-Annu Navani, MD



Annu Navani, MD serves as the Medical Director of Comprehensive Pain Management Center, an interdisciplinary Pain Management practice specializing in Spine and Sports Medicine with locations in Los Gatos-San Jose, and Cupertino.. She also serves as an Adjunct Faculty at Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Navani is board certified in both Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine by American Board of Anesthesiology. This article is written to increase awareness of the community physicians towards recommendations for safe and effective prescription of controlled substances.

You can contact Annu Navani, MD, for more information or to refer a patient at: [anavani@cpainmc.com](mailto:anavani@cpainmc.com) .

### Chronic Pain Management

Patients with chronic pain tend to experience better outcomes if they are managed using a comprehensive approach that integrates strategies to improve pain along with the ones that address functional impairment and psychosocial factors that are often concomitantly present. Whether the plan of care is limited or is designed to be more comprehensive, opioid therapy may be a useful component of the management plan. The selection of patients for an opioid trial and decisions about chronic opioid therapy must weigh potential benefits of opioids against the risk of significant harm including a wide range of adverse effects, addiction, diversion and dependence.

#### Risk Stratification

Before initiating chronic opioid therapy, it is recommended that clinicians conduct a thorough history, physical examination and appropriate testing including an assessment of risk of substance abuse, misuse or addiction. Clinicians may consider trial of chronic opioid therapy as an option if chronic pain is moderate or severe, pain is having an adverse impact on function or quality of life, and potential therapeutic benefits outweigh the potential harm. The factors that appear to be most strongly predictive of drug abuse or misuse are personal or family history of alcohol or drug abuse, younger age and presence of psychiatric conditions.

There are screening tools, such as **Screeener and Opioid Assessment for Patients with Pain (SOAPP)** and **Opioid Risk Tool (ORT)** that assess the potential risks associated with chronic opioid therapy based on patient characteristics. These are likely to be helpful for risk stratification, though more validation and prospective outcome studies are needed to understand how their use predicts and affects clinical outcomes.

Preexisting constipation, nausea, pulmonary disease and cognitive impairment probably predict risk for opioid-related adverse effects, though no studies have adequately evaluated the utility of these factors for use in risk stratification.

### **Informed Consent**

Before starting chronic opioid therapy, clinicians should inform patients about the risks and benefits associated with chronic opioid therapy and have them sign an informed consent. A detailed discussion with the patient regarding chronic opioid therapy should include goals, expectations, potential risks and other alternatives to the therapy. The goal of the consent process is to assist patients to make appropriate medical decisions that are consistent with their preferences and values.

### **Periodic Therapy Benefit Review**

In patients already on chronic opioid therapy, clinicians should periodically review risks and benefits of the therapy. Patients should be counseled on the common opioid-related adverse effects e.g. constipation, nausea, sedation as well as other serious risks such as abuse, addiction and overdose. Potential risks of long-term or high-dose chronic opioid therapy including hyperalgesia, endocrinologic or sexual dysfunction should also be discussed, though more evidence is needed to better understand and quantify these risks. Clinicians should discuss issues of tolerance, dependence and addiction with patients in addition to setting therapeutic and functional goals for the patient in order to maintain opioid therapy.

### **Compliance Monitoring**

Clinicians should reassess patients on chronic opioid therapy periodically and as warranted by changing circumstances. Monitoring should include documentation of pain intensity and level of functioning, assessment of progress towards achieving therapeutic goals, presence of adverse events and adherence to prescribed therapies. In addition, monitoring should include intermittent random urine toxicology screening and if necessary, patient activity reports (PAR) from Department of Justice website (CURES). Clinicians should take note of patterns of aberrant behaviors such as early refill requests, frequent requests to change opioid medications and lost prescriptions, all of which should result in appropriate action. For example, more frequent and stringent monitoring parameters, discontinuation of opioid medication, or referral to mental health or addiction specialist.

In conclusion, chronic opioid therapy can be an effective treatment for carefully selected and monitored patients with chronic pain. However, opioids are also associated with potentially serious harms including opioid-related adverse effects and abuse potential. Appropriate monitoring using tools described above as well as referral to pain management specialists to evaluate and incorporate comprehensive and interdisciplinary non-pharmacological tools is the key to effective management of patients with chronic pain.

#### **Links to Resources:**

Screening and Opioid Assessment for Patients with Pain (SOAPP) <http://www.painedu.org/>

Opioid Risk Tool (ORT) <http://www.opioidrisk.com/node/884>

Department of Justice Web Site California (CURES) <http://ag.ca.gov/bne/cures.php>

\*\*\*\*\*Raw Data From Survey-Appendix A\*\*\*\*\*

**1. Pick the three most important reasons you are an AMWA member.**

1. Professional networking-74.4%
2. Educational talks-54.3%
3. Socializing with other women doctors-88.6%
4. Getting support on issues particular to women in medicine-48.6%
5. Keeping current of political issues relevant to medicine-17.1

**2. Any other reasons you belong to South Bay AMWA?**

There were a series of responses here, many mentioning variations on topics in question 1. Mentioned as well were good food and a hope for CME.

**3. Would you be interested in more social events? Please check any events you might be interested in.**

1. Casual events at someone's home.-62.1%
2. Black tie dinner dance holiday event in December.-31.0%
3. Events that include spouse, S.O., and/or children.-65.5%

**4. Would you be willing to pay for an event beyond your dues? Comment and note how much per person you would be willing to spend for any of the types of events described above.**

24 of the 35 responders said yes to the first question, 5 maybes or depends, and 6 nos. For those who said yes, price depended on event and varied from \$5-\$100. One person was not interested in purely social events. One person mentioned raising money for a good cause. One person said she was willing to pay the price of the dinner. Several members mentioned being willing to pay for non-pharma events. Several members would be interested in a very nice event and would be willing to pay a reasonable amount, mentioning \$50-100.00 for a very nice event.

**5. As an AMWA members we could be involved in work that contributes to the community. Would you be interested in participating in any of these social service type activities?**

1. Raising money for a community or free clinic.-33.3%
2. Raising money for breast cancer research or research on other female-specific illnesses. - 18.5%
3. Raising money for organizations that support women in the community. - 40.7%
4. Volunteering at a community or free clinic.- 44.4%
5. Having a booth at health fairs educating the community on various health topics. - 63%

**6. Are you interested in activities that would educate you on issues of political interest to women in medicine or doctors in general? If yes any particular topics?**

13 answered, 22 skipped.

There were 2 nos, 11 yeses from the members who answered.. Several members mentioned participating with AMA and CMA when they have events that cover political issues. Specific subjects of interest mentioned were health insurance debate, insurance reimbursements, abortion, how to contact legislators, mental health initiative, and heart disease prevention.

**7. Anything else you are interested in doing as an AMWA member?**

11 answered, 24 skipped.

**Subjects mentioned were, getting more politically involved in terms of lobbying congress people or educating members on issues that affect the practice of medicine, supporting planned parenthood, doing programs for the schools, group insurance for AMWA members, programs abroad, networking group for women doctors with children.**

**8. We are considering upgrading our web page, creating a hard copy directory of the membership, and creating a Facebook page for the group. Would you be interested in any of these options? Check all that apply.**

1. Members only section on the web page with information on the membership, password protected. – 62.5%
2. “Find a woman doctor” section on the web page open to the public to promote our practices.- 59.4%
3. Facebook page for social networking. -31.3%
4. Hard copy membership directory for use in referrals from our offices. - 62.5%

**9. Would you like to be involved in nominating board member and participating in an email election process to elect the board?**

Yes- 43.8%

No- 56.3%

**10. Any other comments for the Board?**

13 responses 22 skipped question

1. 3 requests for meetings in North County.
2. 4 messages of appreciation.
3. A suggestion of 30 minute talk only with meeting over at 8:30 PM.
4. A suggestion of Dr. Bob Weinman, past President of Union of Physicians or Jim Hinsdale current President of CMA might be good choices for speakers for updates on political issues on the state level.
5. Desire to keep informed by AMWA on political issues.
6. Request for women speakers rather than male speakers.
7. Request for speaker programs focused on issues of special interest to women or health care of women.

Please email me if you are interested in seeing the original on [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) and I will send you the link.

Sheri Bortz, MD [askdoctorbortz@aol.com](mailto:askdoctorbortz@aol.com)