



June 10, 2010

ENDOExpo Attendees Can Advocate for Their Profession at the Society's Booth

To increase awareness of issues important to the Society's membership, Government & Public Affairs staff will be in The Endocrine Society's booth to provide attendees with an opportunity to participate in grassroots advocacy by writing to policymakers about two critical issues: increasing funding for NIH in FY2011 and repealing the elimination of consultation code billing policy changes. The Endocrine Society's booth (#2133) is located in the heart of ENDOExpo, the newly redesigned exhibit hall with exciting new features such as the Expo Theatre, Collaboration Zone, and World Cup Lounge. Attendees are encouraged to stop by the booth to send a letter to their members of Congress or to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid administrators. Sample letters are already written and require only that a name and address be entered, though attendees may edit and personalize their letters if they so choose. Each participant will be entered into a drawing for free registration to ENDO 2011 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Medicare Payments on Hold Pending Senate Action on 19-Month Physician Payment Fix

The House passed a tax extenders bill, the "American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act of 2010" (HR 4213), on May 28, 2010 prior to adjourning for the Memorial Day recess; the Senate is expected to vote on the bill next week. The bill includes provisions to update the flawed sustainable growth rate (SGR) and freeze the 21.2 percent payment cut that went into effect on June 1. The bill would provide a 2.2 percent update to physician payments for the rest of 2010 and a 1 percent increase for 2011. In 2012, the SGR formula would resume, with an estimated 33 percent payment cut taking effect that year. Congress has passed multiple short-term freezes to physician payment this year in the anticipation of a longer-term fix in the near future.

Because the Senate did not take up the bill before adjourning for the Memorial Day recess, CMS has announced that it will hold payments for 10 days, allowing time for the Senate to act on the bill before the cuts are implemented. However, with the projected timetable for final passage of the bill, it is likely that this hold on payments will expire before the bill is signed by the President.

Subcommittee Scheduled to Mark-up NIH Budget

It is unlikely that the budget committees of the House and Senate will pass a budget resolution in this fiscal year. The budget resolution provides the allocations to appropriations subcommittees establishing how much money they have to distribute among their relevant agencies. However, a resolution is not required for the appropriations subcommittees to start the bill mark-up process. The mark-up schedule has been set, and the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, which funds NIH, is at the end of the schedule.

Society Provides Opportunity for CME with Updated Guideline on Androgens in Men

In the June issue of the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* the Society published its revised guideline *Testosterone Therapy in Men with Androgen Deficiency Syndromes*. In this first revision of a Society

clinical practice guideline, the guideline task force, chaired by Shalender Bhasin, MD, revisited all of the 2006 recommendations, identifying those that were out-of-date or in need of revision. Among the revised recommendations were prostate-specific antigen (PSA) exclusion criteria, PSA follow-up guidelines, and guidance on treating older men with testosterone therapy. Information on new testosterone formulations and on emerging causes of androgen deficiency is also included in the revised guideline.

With the revised guideline, The Endocrine Society introduces a new opportunity for continuing medical education (CME) credits. Readers who study the guideline's content and complete the CME post test and evaluation may earn up to 2.0 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*.™ The Society will make the CME version of this guideline available both electronically and in print in mid-June. The non-CME version is currently available for free download on the Society's website (<http://www.endo-society.org/guidelines/Current-Clinical-Practice-Guidelines.cfm>).

Questions regarding this and other Endocrine Society clinical practice guidelines may be addressed to Lisa Marlow at lmalow@endo-society.org.

***Los Angeles Times* Calls Upon Society Experts for Sound Science on Bioidenticals**

Last week, The Endocrine Society was approached by *The Los Angeles Times* to provide expert information on bioidentical hormones and hormone therapy. Despite calls for caution and federal regulation, bioidentical hormones continue to be promoted as safe and beneficial by a number of proponents. Having taken the lead with the development of its October 2006 [position statement](#) on bioidentical hormones, The Endocrine Society remains a leading resource to the media and policymakers for the scientific perspective on the issue.

The Endocrine Society relied on its position statement and on its network of volunteer experts to respond quickly to the reporter's request. Vice President – Clinical Science Nanette Santoro, MD, provided expert comment and insight for the article, which ran Monday, June 7 in the [Los Angeles Times](#). In addition to Dr. Santoro, the reporter also interviewed Cynthia Stuenkel, MD, a member of The Hormone Foundation's Women's Health Task Force.

The Society's 2006 position statement, developed by the Clinical Affairs Core Committee in response to rising concerns about the efficacy and safety of bioidentical hormones, calls for increased regulatory oversight of all bioidentical hormones. In November 2006, the AMA unanimously and enthusiastically passed a resolution introduced by The Endocrine Society and other concerned organizations supporting this position, and it stands today as AMA policy. In April 2007, Society President Leonard Wartofsky, MD, testified before the [Senate Special Committee on Aging](#) regarding the use and regulation of bioidentical hormones (link to April 19 2007 EI). In January 2008, the [FDA issued a warning](#) to seven compounding pharmacies making false claims about the safety and efficacy of bioidentical hormones.

ICD-10 Implementation Call Scheduled for Providers

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has scheduled a national provider conference call for Tuesday, June 15 from 12:00 – 2:00 pm ET to cover the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition (ICD-10) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act version 5010 (HIPAA 5010) implementation. The agenda will feature the U.S. health care industry's change from ICD-9 to ICD-10 medical diagnosis and inpatient procedure coding. ICD-10 codes must be used on all HIPAA transactions on and after October 1, 2013, including outpatient claims with dates of service and inpatient claims with dates of discharge.

Specific topics to be addressed on the call include:

- ICD-10 implementation for services provided on and after October 1, 2013
- Benefits of ICD-10
- Differences between ICD-10 and ICD-9-Clinical Modification (CM) codes
- Tools for converting codes – General Equivalence Mappings (GEMs)
- Proposal to freeze ICD-9-CM and ICD-10 code updates except for new technologies and diseases
- General Overview HIPAA version 5010 and version D.0. (pharmacy claims) and who is affected
- Compliance dates
- Benefits
- 5010 scope versus ICD-10 scope
- Timelines and how to prepare
- Medicare FFS implementation of HIPAA version 5010 and D.0
- Impact on paper claim forms

For more information and to register for the call, please go to http://www.cms.gov/ICD10/02c_CMS_Sponsored_Calls.asp#TopOfPage on the CMS website.

National Osteoporosis Foundation Offers Free Patient Education Materials

National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) has partnered with Health Monitor Network to create and distribute a patient education poster and informational booklet in conjunction with NOF's Healthy Bones, Build Them For Life® campaign. NOF will also be offering other free materials as part of this new initiative. The Exam Room Poster and Booklets can be ordered free of charge at <http://www.healthmonitor.com/doctors/order.html>). Questions may be addressed to 1 800-422-4112.

For questions regarding articles listed in *Endocrine Insider* or information on advocacy and policy activities within The Endocrine Society, contact the Government & Public Affairs department:

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