

FROM THE REGIONS

Summary of 2014 SGIM Mountain West Regional Meeting

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The SGIM Mountain West Regional Meeting, which took place on October 10, 2014, at Denver Health Hospital Authority in Denver, CO, was a great success. Maria G. Frank, MD, meeting chair and president-elect; Amber Wobbekind, MD, president; and Danielle Loeb, MD, past-president led the organization of the meeting. We had our best attendance ever with 93 attendees—20 more than the previous year. This was a 25% increase from 2013 and a 75% increase from 2011. Not bad for a region with 98 members! Attendees represented most states from our region: Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada. States outside our region were also represented, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Michigan, Ohio, Texas, and New Jersey. Twenty percent of attendees who responded to the meeting evaluation survey described themselves as hospitalists. One resident answered the survey.

The theme of our meeting was “The Art of Practicing Medicine: the History Present and Future of GIM.” The practice of medicine is an art, influenced not only by the science and medical knowledge necessary to practice it but also by providers’ and patients’ culture, historical background, and social environment. In order to provide excellent health care, we need to not only update our medical knowledge but also recognize that we practice a human science—an art that requires appreciating medical humanities and a deep understanding of our profession’s past and present to steer health care to an optimal future.

Our keynote speaker was Bill Moran, MD, MPH, director of general internal medicine and geriatrics

at the Medical University of South Carolina and sitting president of the Society of General Internal Medicine. In his talk “The Evolution of Health Care in the United States,” Dr. Moran guided us on a journey that culminated with a description of practice changes being introduced in his institution.

Our two plenary speakers were David Tanaka, MD, and Daniel Heppe, MD. Dr. Tanaka, associate professor of medicine at the University of Colorado, gave “Updates in Primary Care,” and Dr. Heppe, a hospitalist at the Denver Health Hospital Authority and assistant professor of medicine at the University of Colorado, gave “Updates in Hospital Medicine.” Each reviewed impactful articles in his field focusing on current and future changes in clinical care.

Workshops were among the most popular and acclaimed sections of our meeting. Invited workshops included “Stump the Professor,” where an unknown clinical case was discussed in a “morning report” format. Valli Yegappan, MD, chief medical resident from St. Joseph Hospital in Denver, CO, presented a case to Richard Albert, MD, chair of medicine at the Denver Health Hospital Authority. This well-received case presentation truly showcased the “art of medical practice.”

“The Physical Exam Revisited: Teaching Ultrasound Alongside the Traditional Physical Exam” was presented by Cason Pierce, MD; Gerard Salame, MD; and Jack Cunningham, MD. This workshop explored the use of bedside ultrasonography as an aid for physical examination. Physical examination skills have been declining among US medical

graduates over the last several decades. Over the last 10 years, several medical schools have identified a need for refocusing on teaching physical exam skills. The Choosing Wisely initiative supports the use of examination to prevent unnecessary testing and provide cost-effective high-value care. The introduction of the stethoscope by Laennec in 1816 was initially controversial but widely accepted within five years. The use of ultrasound as a physical exam aid may represent the future of medical practice.

“Beyond First Glance: the Art of Observation and Description” was presented by Molly Medakovich. Ms. Medakovich is a master educator at the Denver Art Museum. In recent years, medical students and professionals have joined forces with museum educators to explore the intersection between the visual arts and medical practice. Some studies have shown that clinical engagement and diagnostic acuity are enhanced by participation in programs that encourage deep visual exploration of works of art. This acclaimed and extremely well-attended workshop revealed the artistic side of medicine and demonstrated a format that integrates medical practice, medical humanities, and art.

“Mirror, Lamp, and Lens: Art and Humanities in Patient Care and Provider Wellness” was led by Therese Jones, PhD. Dr. Jones is the director of the Department of Medical Humanities at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Imaginative works serve as both an instrument for connection with others (our patients) and knowledge of self. This workshop initially intro-

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duced participants to the materials and methods of medical humanities. Subsequently, literature and art were discussed as vehicles to explore the fundamental aspects of human experience and to give voice to unarticulated responses to clinical work. The workshop closed with a brainstorming session discussing opportunities to introduce arts and humanities in clinical life, which is so much needed in this time of patient-centered health care.

Evaluations were completed by 10% of attendees who ranked the meeting, keynote, and plenary ses-

sions and workshops as “truly above average” or “outstanding.” Comments included: “the art and humanities workshops were outstanding”; “oral presentations were great and very pertinent to our practice”; “amazing cases and research presented in poster session”; and “I really enjoyed the outpatient and inpatient review of new literature.”

In summary, our 2014 meeting set a new attendance record for our region. We would like to give special thanks to our outstanding speakers, Drs. Moran, Heist, and Schilling, as well as to all of the

SGIM members who contributed their expertise as workshop leaders and participants.

Please consider attending our 2015 regional meeting, “Controversies in Medicine,” which will take place on October 2, 2015, at the Fulginiti Pavilion, Anschutz Medical Campus, in Aurora, CO. The meeting will be chaired by David Tanaka, MD, with support from the regional leadership team: Maria G Frank, MD, president; Amber Wobbekind, MD, past-president; and Shakaib Rehman, MD, president-elect.

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