

# Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Ophthalmologist to Be Next President of the UC System

On July 7, The University of California Board of Regents named Academy member Michael V. Drake, MD, as its 21st president. Dr. Drake will oversee the entire University of California (UC) system.

Since earning his medical degree as well as completing his ophthalmology residency at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), Dr. Drake has served the UC system in several positions. He spent 20 years on the faculty of UCSF's School of Medicine, where he was the Steven P. Shearing Professor of Ophthalmology. He later served as the UC vice president of Health Affairs and the chancellor of the University of California, Irvine. Now, after six years as president of Ohio State University, Dr. Drake will return to the UC system for his new appointment on Aug. 14.

### Academy Members Run for Congress

Earning 47.7% of the vote, Academy member and Iowa State Senator **Mariannette J. Miller-Meeks, MD**, won the June 2 Republican primary for Iowa's open 2nd District seat in the House of Representatives. She will be on the ballot in the general election Nov. 3.



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESIDENT.** *This month, Dr. Drake takes the helm at the UC system, which consists of 10 campuses and more than 280,000 students.*

She's not the only Academy member seeking a congressional seat in 2020. Academy Board Trustee-at-Large and Air Force veteran **William S. Clifford, MD**, is running for Kansas' open 1st District seat, and the primary election will be held Aug. 4. Dr. Clifford, who has been a Finney County commissioner since 2014, is one of four Republican candidates vying for the "Big First" spot, which has come to be known as a valuable stepping-stone for politicians seeking higher offices. Both of Kansas' current senators, Jerry Moran and Pat Roberts, previously represented the 1st district, as did former Senate Majority Leader and 1996 Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole. The House seat is open because incumbent Rep. Roger Marshall has made a bid to fill retiring Sen. Roberts' seat. If Dr. Clifford wins the Aug. 4 primary, he will be on the Nov. 3 general election ballot.

To find out more about the two candidates, visit [millermeeks2020.com](http://millermeeks2020.com) and [cliffordforcongress.com](http://cliffordforcongress.com).

## FOR THE RECORD

### Board Nominees

In accordance with Academy bylaws, notice is hereby given of the following nominations for elected board positions on the 2021 board. These nominations were made by the Academy Board of Trustees in June. If elected, the following individuals will begin their terms on Jan. 1, 2021.

#### President-Elect

Robert E. Wiggins Jr., MD, MHA

#### Senior Secretary for Advocacy

George A. Williams, MD

#### Trustees-at-Large

Anna Luisa

Di Lorenzo, MD

Aaron P. Weingeist, MD

**Board appointments.** During the June Board of Trustees meeting, the following individual was appointed to the 2021 Board of Trustees and will begin her term on Jan. 1, 2021.

#### International Trustee-at-Large

Alison Blake, MPH, MBChB  
Dublin, Ireland

**Nomination procedures for the Academy Board.** Elections to fill the four open elected positions on the 2021 Board of Trustees will take place by ballot after the November Annual Business Meeting. To nominate a candidate by petition, submit a written petition to



*Dr. Wiggins*



AMERICAN ACADEMY  
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the Academy's CEO no later than Sept. 16. The petition must be signed by at least 50 voting Academy members and fellows.

**To suggest a nominee for the 2022 board**, watch for the call for nominations that will be published in the January *EyeNet*.

**To read the rules in full**, visit [aao.org/about/governance/bylaws/article5](https://aao.org/about/governance/bylaws/article5).

## Notice of the Annual Business Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Business Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology will be held during the AAO 2020 virtual meeting.

**For more information**, visit [aao.org/2020](https://aao.org/2020).

## TAKE NOTICE

### Get Credit for MIPS and MOC

If you have an electronic health record (EHR) system and have integrated it with the IRIS Registry, you can use data from your IRIS Registry dashboard to design and implement an improvement project that can earn you credit for both Maintenance of Certification (MOC) and the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS). For the 2020 MIPS performance year, this project would count as a medium-weighted improvement activity.

**Submit your plan to the ABO no later than Aug. 31.** Using the IRIS Registry dashboard, select one or two quality measures in which to improve your performance. Then, set goals for those measures and submit your plan for achieving those goals to the American Board of Ophthalmology (ABO).

If the ABO approves your plan, implement it for 90-120 days. Use the IRIS Registry dashboard to track your progress and fine-tune your processes as needed. Once the project is complete, review its effectiveness and send a summary to the ABO.

**Learn more** at [aao.org/iris-registry/maintenance-of-certification](https://aao.org/iris-registry/maintenance-of-certification) and <https://abop.org/IRIS>.

## Follow the Truhlsen-Marmor Museum of the Eye

Get to know the Truhlsen-Marmor

Museum of the Eye on Instagram and Twitter (@museumoftheeye) and [facebook.com/museumoftheeye](https://facebook.com/museumoftheeye). Learn about upcoming exhibits at [aao.org/museum-of-the-eye](https://aao.org/museum-of-the-eye).

## Submit a Mystery Image to Be Featured in *EyeNet*

Got an image that is perplexing or intriguing? Send your mystery ophthalmic image and its 150- to 200-word case description to the *EyeNet* editors for consideration in the Blink section (see page 54).

**To get started**, head to [aao.org/volunteering](https://aao.org/volunteering) and select "Submit a Mystery Image and Case Report" under "Write."

## Submit Your Research to *Ophthalmology Glaucoma*

The Academy and the American Glaucoma Society have collaborated in producing *Ophthalmology Glaucoma* to expand publishing opportunities for this booming subspecialty.

**Submit your research today** at [editorialmanager.com/ogla](https://editorialmanager.com/ogla).

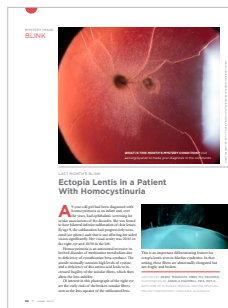
## OMIC Tip: Managing Equipment-Related Risk

Ophthalmologists regularly use equipment and medical devices (EMDs) while caring for their patients. Sometimes, things go wrong. In these cases, injured patients may allege that an EMD malfunctioned or was used improperly. They may sue the ophthalmologist, the surgery center, and the manufacturer of the EMD.

Using select closed claims, an issue of the *OMIC Digest* illustrates the initial steps that the ophthalmologist, staff, and surgery center should take to manage these EMD events.

**Visit** [omic.com/digest-vol-29-no-2-2019](https://omic.com/digest-vol-29-no-2-2019) to read the issue.

*OMIC offers professional liability insurance exclusively to Academy members, their employees, and their practices.*



## New ABN Form

CMS has updated its Advance Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage (ABN) form. What's changed? The form's expiration date now reads "06/30/23," but it is otherwise the same.

Until Aug. 30, you can use either the old ABN form or the new one. As of Aug. 31, you can only use the new form.

**Download the form** at [cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/BNI/ABN](https://cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-General-Information/BNI/ABN).

## ACADEMY RESOURCES

### Reopen Your Practice With Help From Academy Experts

In this new age of telemedicine, with hybrid exams and shifting E/M documentation requirements, the Academy's Ophthalmic Advisors Group is your first line of defense for avoiding claim denials, remaining HIPAA compliant, and safeguarding your practice's revenue. Consultations are now available with Academy senior coding and practice management experts via video conference.

**Learn more** at [aao.org/consultation-services](https://aao.org/consultation-services).

### New Academy eBook App Is Now Available

The Academy released an upgraded app for reading its eBooks, from the *Basic and Clinical Science Course* to the *Dictionary of Eye Terminology*.

The platform is designed to enhance your learning experience, and it improves upon the previous version. For example, the new app's search function now works across all Academy eBook titles.

Apple or Android device users need only download the free AAO eBooks app from the Apple Store or Google Play. If you access your eBooks via the Academy website, no updates are required to use the new functions.

Users who have logged into the app since March 30, 2019, will have their notes, bookmarks, and highlights automatically migrated to the new app. Other users can contact Customer Service for assistance in migrating their preferences to the new platform.

For help with the new app, contact Customer Service at [customer\\_service@aao.org](mailto:customer_service@aao.org).

## Reboot Your Health Routine During COVID-19

As ophthalmologists have started to tackle a backlog of eye surgery, their increased workload is putting them at a higher risk of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). This is compounded by the added anxiety of practicing during a pandemic, with physical and mental stressors potentially having a pernicious synergy. And while a workout or a yoga session can help to alleviate tension and avert MSDs, the COVID-19 crisis has forced people to look beyond their local fitness studio.

**Home fitness tips from the physical wellness professionals.** When gyms and yoga studios closed, athletes and professional dancers started fine-tuning their own home-wellness routines. Not only has this helped them to stay in shape, but, just as importantly, it is also helping them to cope with the anxiety of living through a pandemic.

**For their perspective on physical and mental wellness,** and to get their tips on home-based fitness routines, visit [aao.org/wellness](http://aao.org/wellness).

## MEMBERS AT LARGE

### Illinois Society Hosts First Virtual Town Hall

On June 10, Sohail J. Hasan, MD, PhD, president of the Illinois Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (ISEPS), hosted the first ever ISEPS International Virtual Town Hall for ophthalmologists across Illinois, its neighboring states, and beyond.

Featured speakers included Ngozi O. Ezike, MD, director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, who provided a public health perspective and spoke to the challenges of COVID-19. Nguyen Xuan Tam, director of the Community Development Fund in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam, and friend of ISEPS, discussed how eye care in Vietnam is adapting to the challenge of COVID-19. Academy President-Elect Tamara R. Fountain, MD, covered the national outlook for restoring the prac-

tice of ophthalmology in the United States.

Then Dr. Hasan presented results from the ISEPS membership survey about how Illinois practices are faring in the COVID-19 era. Dr. Hasan also provided updates on ongoing projects aimed at reopening practices in the state. In addition, he reported the accomplishments of the ISEPS outreach program for communicating with key Illinois state legislators during the pandemic.

**Anna Luisa Di Lorenzo, MD,** who is a regional member of the Academy's Secretariat for State Affairs covering the states of Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin, summed up her ISEPS International Virtual Town

## D.C. REPORT

### Battling Cuts to Surgical Codes

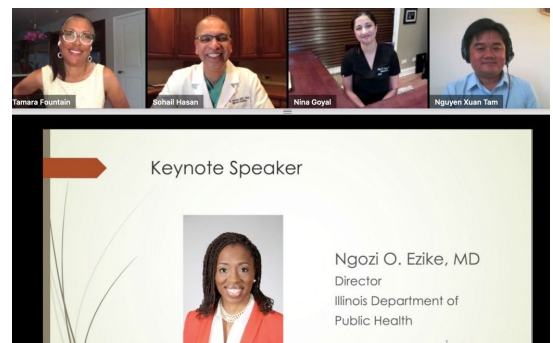
An Academy priority is to battle policy changes that would—if implemented as planned—result in an estimated 7% reduction in reimbursement for ophthalmology.

**E/M payments and Medicare's unjust zero-sum game.** Starting in January, evaluation and management (E/M) services will receive a welcome boost in payment. However, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is obliged to administer the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule in a budget-neutral manner. This means that unless Congress intervenes, payments for other services will take a hit, resulting in drastic reductions in reimbursement for many specialties, with surgery-based specialties hit particularly hard.

**Amid COVID-19, a broad base of opposition to the cuts.** This summer, medical organizations opposed to the reimbursement reductions came together to form a 53-society coalition, including societies that represent nonsurgical specialties such as radiology and dermatology. The coalition has warned Congress that many practices have been rocked by the current public health emergency, and reimbursement cuts would undermine their prospects for recovery. This makes it more urgent than ever for legislators to release CMS from its budget-neutrality mandate.

**Signs of progress.** In the House of Representatives, a bipartisan group of legislators introduced a bill that would avert the cuts. But because this bill includes other provisions that might hamper its progress, the Academy and its allies have been working with legislators to develop a simpler bill that would command more widespread support.

**Stay up to date.** For the latest advocacy news, check your email each Thursday evening for *Washington Report Express*.



**VIRTUAL TOWN HALL.** The Illinois Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (ISEPS) held its first ever Virtual Town Hall. Host and ISEPS President Dr. Hasan welcomed ophthalmologists from across Illinois, its neighboring states, and an international guest from Vietnam to talk about COVID-19 and more.

Hall experience by noting, “I was lucky to be on the call, and it was a great webinar full of excellent and essential information.”