

Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Kansas Society Focuses on the Future

On Feb. 3 in Kansas City, Academy President Keith D. Carter, MD, FACS, and Associate Secretary for State Affairs Chris Albanis, MD, joined leaders of the Kansas Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (KSEPS) to discuss how KSEPS can best serve the needs of the state's ophthalmologists and their patients in the future. The meeting was designed as a strategic planning session in order to serve multiple purposes:

1. Engage KSEPS leaders in thinking strategically about the current and future state of the society
2. Work through a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats)
3. Create a few key action items for the year

Dr. Albanis said, "It was an honor and a privilege to join in this strategic planning session on how KSEPS can best serve the needs and goals of all Kansas ophthalmologists and their patients. Several topics were discussed at this meeting, including the importance of engaging young ophthalmologists, utilizing social media as a communication tool, and board structure."



KANSAS EVENT. From left to right: Dr. Carter, Michael J. Gilbert, MD, second-year resident at the University of Kansas; Dr. Albanis; John E. Sutphin, MD, Luther and Ardis Fry Professor and chairman of the University of Kansas Department of Ophthalmology and Kansas University (KU) Eye Center; Mary T. Champion, MD, KU faculty; Anne Berenbom Wishna, MD, KU faculty; Rich Paul, KSEPS executive director; Eric L. Fry, MD, KSEPS president; and William S. Clifford, MD, KSEPS past president and Academy Trustee-at-Large.

TAKE NOTICE

Follow @aaojournal on Twitter

Stay up to date on all the latest research from *Ophthalmology* and *Ophthalmology Retina* by following @aaojournal on Twitter. New content is posted every day, including articles in press, fascinating pictures and perspectives, thought-provoking editorials, and new issue alerts.

Check out the posts at www.twitter.com/aaojournal.

ACADEMY STORE

New: A Retina-Specific Coding Exam

In response to the unique challenges in coding for retina practices, the

Academy is launching the Ophthalmic Coding Specialist Retina (OCSR) exam, a unique testing opportunity for physicians and staff. The exam features 100 multiple choice questions that cover all aspects of retina coding, including the following:

- Fundamentals of Coding
- ICD-10 Selection
- E/M and Eye Visit Code Documentation
- Testing Services
- Modifiers
- Injections and Drugs
- Minor and Major Surgical Procedures

If you pass the test, you'll earn a 3-year certificate, plus the privilege of including "OCSR" after your name.

For more information and to register, visit aao.org/ocs.



AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF OPHTHALMOLOGY®

MEETING MATTERS

AAO 2018 Program Preview

AAO 2018 (Oct. 27-30) and Subspecialty Day (Oct. 26-27) will be held in conjunction with the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology at McCormick Place. Full program information will be available June 13.

Philip J. Rosenfeld, MD, PhD, will give the 75th Edward Jackson Memorial Lecture during the Opening Session on Sunday, Oct. 28. Dr. Rosenfeld embodies this year's meeting theme of "Art + Science" through his use of innovative imaging techniques and his contributions to our understanding of the basic pathophysiology, diagnosis, and treatment for age-related macular degeneration. The symposia planned for AAO 2018 include the following:

- "Medical Scribes in the Era of the Electronic Health Record," cosponsored by the Committee on Medical Information Technology
- "Telemedicine in Ophthalmology: Improving Our Care for Patient Populations and Reducing Healthcare Costs," cosponsored by the Ophthalmology Section of the National Medical Association.

PEOPLE

Passages

Matthew Dinsdale "Dinny" Davis, MD, pioneering retina specialist and researcher, passed away on March 5. He was 91.

Dr. Davis is best known for his role as chair of the groundbreaking Diabetic Retinopathy Study, which demonstrated the substantial effect that scatter laser photocoagulation had in treating diabetic retinopathy. Dr. Davis also chaired the follow-up trial, the Diabetic Retinopathy Vitrectomy Study, which demonstrated that vision was significantly better for some patients with very severe diabetic retinopathy if they had early vitrectomy surgery, as opposed to deferring surgery. These trials created standard-of-care treatments that are models of clinical research.

In 1970, Dr. Davis formed the Fundus Photograph Reading Center, the first independent center for random-

ized clinical trials of retinal diseases. Together with his collaborators, he developed the Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy Study Classification severity scale and the Age-Related Eye Disease Study scale for age-related macular degeneration, each still considered the gold standard.

For more than 60 years, Dr. Davis taught at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, where he elevated the ophthalmology division into an independent department and served as its first chair from



*Matthew Dinsdale
"Dinny" Davis, MD*

1970 to 1986. Dr. Davis received numerous honors and awards, culminating in the 2016 Laureate Award from the Academy. "Dr. Davis exemplified the quintessential 'quadruple threat' academician: innovative researcher, dedicated educator, skilled practitioner, and effective administrator," said **George B. Bartley, MD**, CEO of the American Board of Ophthalmology, who nominated Dr. Davis for the Laureate award. "His example of humble service inspired many who will carry his legacy forward."

D.C. REPORT

Academy Protects Part B Payments From Penalties, Helps Repeal IPAB

Congress's effort in February to fund the government became a vehicle for resolving several of the Academy's top federal advocacy priorities.

Part B drug payments protected from MIPS penalties. Ophthalmologists no longer face a 6-figure Medicare cut stemming from how the CMS was going to apply quality-program penalties. By making a necessary statutory change to the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, Congress clarified that physicians' Part B drug payments are exempt from Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) penalties. Retina specialists will welcome this relief, as they faced a 20%-30% cut to their Medicare revenue if they failed the MIPS program.

Misvalued code targets dropped. Federal lawmakers dropped plans to use misvalued code targets to pay for Medicare fixes. This avoids a potential \$1 billion cut to Medicare that these targets would have triggered—primarily to specialists. The Academy fought this proposal, with members sending more than 1,800 messages to Congress in 1 week to urge lawmakers to find another way to pay for Medicare programs. Congress instead reduced the expected 0.5% update in the 2019 Medicare physician fee schedule; it will now be a 0.25% update.

Congress finally repeals IPAB. After years of Academy advocacy, Congress finally repealed the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). IPAB was meant to be a 15-member agency tasked with achieving specified savings in Medicare without affecting coverage or quality, but with no accountability. This ends the threat of arbitrary, across-the-board cuts to Medicare payments to physicians and other providers. The Academy supported numerous congressional attempts at this repeal, which will protect every physician who sees Medicare patients.

Cost flexibility coming to MIPS. Congress is giving CMS the flexibility that the agency needs to reduce the MIPS mandated cost component. Instead of weighting cost at 30% by 2019 (vs. 0% in 2017, and 10% in 2018), CMS can now maintain the current 10% weight for 3 more years. CMS will also have more flexibility to adjust the MIPS pass-rate threshold, which will allow more physicians to succeed under the program.