

Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

WHAT'S HAPPENING

AAO 2020 Opening Session: Don't Miss These Lectures

Mark the Opening Session on your calendar. Highlights will include talks by Malcolm Gladwell and Michael X. Repka, MD. The AAO 2020 Opening Session starts at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 15, in Las Vegas.

Malcolm Gladwell will give the keynote speech. He is an internationally known journalist, writer, and cultural observer. He has been included in the *Time* 100 Most Influential People list and has appeared in *Foreign Policy* magazine's list of Top Global Thinkers. His work, which focuses on human psychology and sociology, appears in *The New Yorker* where he has been a staff writer since 1996. He is also the author of six *New York Times* bestsellers: *The Tipping Point*, *Blink*, *Outliers*, *What the Dog Saw*, *David and Goliath*, and his recently published book, *Talking to Strangers*.

Mr. Gladwell is also the cofounder of Pushkin Industries, an audio content company that produces podcasts, such as *Solvable*, *Against the Rules*, and *The Happiness Lab*. He also hosts *Revisionist History*, which "reconsiders things both overlooked and misunderstood," and cohosts *Broken Record*, where he interviews musicians.



OPENING SESSION. Mr. Gladwell's keynote will be one of many highlights at AAO 2020. For information on the Subspecialty Day program, course passes, and ticketing, see page 64.

Michael X. Repka, MD, will present the Jackson Memorial Lecture. His talk is titled "Improving Amblyopia Outcomes Through Clinical Trials and Practice Measurement."

Dr. Repka is internationally recognized for his contributions in the fields of pediatric ophthalmology, strabismus, retinopathy of prematurity, and pediatric neuro-ophthalmology. His clinical practice includes an interest in the management of strabismus and amblyopia.

Dr. Repka is the David L. Guyton, MD, and Feduniak Family Professor of Ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins University's Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore. He is also the Academy's medical director for Governmental Affairs and the ophthalmology advisor on the American Medical Association's CPT Advisory Committee.

Register for AAO 2020 and Book Your Hotel

Starting April 8, Academy and American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives members can register and make hotel reservations for Subspecialty Day (Nov. 13-14), AAO 2020 (Nov. 14-17), and half-day AAOE Coding Sessions (Nov. 14) in Las Vegas. Nonmembers can do so starting April 22. Find more information at aao.org/registration and aao.org/hotels.

Remember: Registration for AAO 2020 is free if you are a member and your 2020 membership dues have been paid. Join or renew today at aao.org/member-services.

Avoid scams: Book hotel rooms and register only through links provided by the Academy. Several fraudulent companies pretending to be associated with the Academy and AAO 2020 may appear in web searches or may have already contacted you via email. They claim that they can book hotel rooms or register you for the Academy's annual meeting, but they are unaffiliated with the Academy. The official hotel reservation provider for AAO 2020 is Expovision.

If you are ever in doubt, email meetings@aao.org, call 1-415-561-8500, or contact Expovision at aaohotels@expovision.com or toll-free at 1-866-774-0487.

Mid-Year Forum N

This year's Mid-Year Forum (MYF) takes place April 15-17 and puts the focus on politics, and practice management. Hear the keynote speech



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by U.S. Surgeon General Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH, meet your legislators during Congressional Advocacy Day (see Volunteer Opportunity below), attend the Academy Council meetings (April 24 and 25), pick up a range of discussion sessions and more. For the full schedule, visit aao.org/myf.

Not registered yet? The deadline for advance registration is April 6, but you can also register onsite. Learn more at aao.org/mid-year-forum/registration-travel.

Get the latest news. Reports from the Mid-Year Forum will be posted at aao.org/mid-year-forum/news.

TAKE NOTICE

MIPS—Are You on Schedule With Your 2020 Reporting?

There are several ways to report MIPS quality measures this year, but no matter which option(s) you choose, you should have already made a start on reporting quality.

Reporting via Medicare Part B claims. Reporting via claims needs to be done in real time. If you plan to meet the 70% data completeness criteria, you probably should have already started reporting quality measures.

Reporting manually via the IRIS Registry. Have you already entered your quality measure data from January, February, and March into the IRIS Registry? If not, you should start catching up. Although manual reporting via the IRIS Registry doesn't have to be done in real time, reporting throughout the year—even each day, on a patient-by-patient basis—will make the process much more manageable.

Reporting via IRIS Registry-EHR integration. Although the IRIS Registry uses an automated process to extract quality measure data from your electronic health record (EHR) system, it is still your responsibility to check your measures at least quarterly to look for potential problems. For example, are the correct patients being pulled for a measure? Are staff entering data into the correct field of the EHR? If there are issues with your data mapping or workflow, they need to be identified and addressed as soon as possible.

Start reviewing improvement activities. New this year: Groups only get credit for an improvement activity if at least 50% of the clinicians meet the reporting requirements of that activity.

Start reviewing the promoting interoperability measures. Make sure you understand the measure requirements.

For detailed descriptions of those measures, plus the Academy guide to understanding their specifications, visit aao.org/medicare/promoting-interoperability/measures.

Who in your practice is taking the lead on MIPS? Given the amount of money at stake, you need to make sure that your practice has at least one staff point person and has named a physician as its MIPS champion.

Is your staff point person signed up with the AAOE? The AAOE is the practice management arm of the Academy. AAOE members enjoy access to all the Academy's MIPS resources (see below) and, just as importantly, they are part of an active community that frequently uses its listserv to share MIPS tips.

Use the Academy's resources:

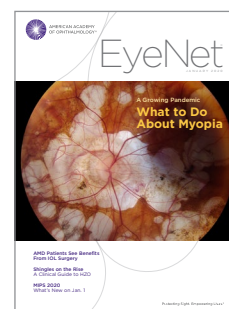
- The MIPS hub page at aao.org/medicare, which includes the "Small Practice Roadmap" and "Large Practice Roadmap."
- The IRIS Registry User Guide at aao.org/iris-registry/user-guide/getting-started.
- *EyeNet's MIPS 2020: A Primer and Reference*, which has been posted online ahead of print at aao.org/eyenet/mips-manual-2020. (When the print edition arrives, make sure to give it to your MIPS point person.)

Check your email each week. Get the latest MIPS news in Washington Report Express (Thursdays) and, for AAOE members, Practice Management Express (Sundays).

If you haven't started yet, begin soon. You can sign up for the IRIS Registry at aao.org/iris-registry/sign-up. If you are already signed up with the IRIS Registry, make sure your practice and provider information is up to date.

A Request From EyeNet

You may have received an email invitation to participate in a magazine readership survey conducted by Kantar



publications enables *EyeNet* to secure funding for projects that help you in the clinical realm and in your practice, like the MIPS manual (aao.org/eyenet/mips-manual-2020).

Volunteer Opportunity: Become a Congressional Advocate

Participate in the Academy's Congressional Advocacy Program and help drive a pro-ophthalmology legislative and regulatory agenda.

Become an effective physician advocate. With assistance from the Academy, you'll develop relationships with lawmakers to provide important constituent input and represent the Academy's key priorities. As a Congressional Advocate, you will communicate with members of Congress and congressional staff through email as well as face-to-face meetings in both Washington and their congressional district. Join this national network of ophthalmologists, which has the power to influence legislation.

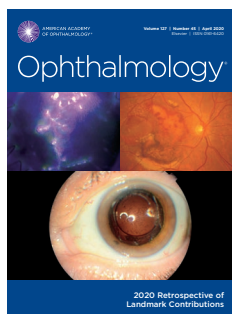
Start this month at Congressional Advocacy Day (CAD). The Academy's Mid-Year Forum (April 24-25) kicks off with a dinner banquet on April 23 appointed by the House of Congress. Advocacy Day for the Mid-Year Forum (aao.org/myf) closes on April 6, but you also will be able to register onsite.

More on volunteering. Learn about dozens of Academy volunteering opportunities aao.org/volunteering.

Year of the Eye: Watch for the Ophthalmology Special Supplement

In celebration of the year 2020, *Ophthalmology* has published a commemorative supplement that will arrive in the

mail with your April issue of the blue journal. Titled *2020 Retrospective of Landmark Contributions*, the supplemental publication includes 12 studies published over the history of the journal that have had a major impact on the field, including “Prevalence of Age-Related Maculopathy: The Beaver Dam Eye Study” by Klein et al., “Herpetic Eye Disease Study: A Controlled



Trial of Topical Corticosteroids for Herpes Simplex Stromal Keratitis” by Wilhelmus et al., and others. These articles were selected by the *Ophthalmology* editorial

board. Companion commentaries accompany each article; these are written by well-known experts in the field, including Emily Y. Chew, MD, Joan W. Miller, MD, and others. The supplement is available online at aaojournal.org.

Advice From OMIC: Protect Against Giant Cell Arteritis Claims

A review of OMIC records shows that malpractice lawsuits for delay in diagnosis of giant cell arteritis (GCA) often involve ophthalmologists who had successfully treated patients with GCA in the past, knew its signs and symptoms well, and understood that emergent treatment is needed to prevent imminent, bilateral vision loss. What, then, led these ophthalmologists astray?

The OMIC article “Giant Cell Arteritis Claims Are Costly and Difficult to Defend” can be found in the 2015 *OMIC Digest* at omic.com/news-2/publications. It explores the reasons for these poor outcomes, the standard to which medical experts hold physicians who treat these patients, and the measures ophthalmologists can take to improve the likelihood of a correct and timely diagnosis. It also points to a downloadable checklist at omic.com/giant-cell-arteritis-checklist. *OMIC offers professional liability insurance exclusively to Academy members, their employees, and their practices.*

D.C. REPORT

Academy Members Call for Action on Prior Authorization

Earlier this year, Academy members from across the United States took part in the Regulatory Relief Coalition’s national “day of action” to press Congress to end prior authorization abuses by Medicare Advantage plans. More than 200 Academy members sent messages to their elected officials to urge support for the bipartisan Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act.

This bill aims to increase transparency and reduce costly burdens in Medicare Advantage’s prior authorization process. It would:

- streamline the electronic prior authorization process;
- minimize the use of prior authorization for routinely approved services;
- ensure prior authorization requests are reviewed by qualified medical personnel;
- require transparency from Medicare Advantage plans on the extent of their use of prior authorization and rates of delay and denial; and
- prohibit additional prior authorization requirements for medically necessary services performed during preapproved surgeries or other invasive procedures.

The bill is sponsored by Reps. Suzan DelBene, D-Wash., Mike Kelly, R-Pa., Ami Bera, D-Calif., and Roger Marshall, R-Kan. Since its introduction, more than 160 lawmakers in the U.S. House of Representatives have signed on in support as cosponsors.

For the latest Advocacy news, visit aao.org/advocacy.

ACADEMY RESOURCES

New: International Retina Journal Club Webinars

A new retina journal club is starting up at the Academy. These webinar-based discussions of important retina papers will take place quarterly.

The inaugural webinar, developed in conjunction with the Sociedad Panamericana de Retina y Vitreo, will take place April 29 at 8 p.m., U.S. Eastern Time, and is titled Treatment-Naïve, Non-Exudative Macular Neovascularization in AMD. Moderators Drs. Christopher Henry and Lihteh Wu will discuss three papers with authors Drs. Luiz Roisman, Joao Rafael De Oliveira Dias Sr., and Philip J. Rosenfeld.

Participation is free of charge.

Register at aao.adobeconnect.com/rjc04292020/event/event_info.html.

Benchmark Your Practice

Academy and AAOE members can access two key benchmarking tools and garner valuable analytics that have helped practices increase revenue,

justify new staff hires, and more.

Benchmarking Survey. The Academy/AAOE AcadeMetrics practice management benchmarking survey opens April 15 and closes July 31, so act quickly to benefit from this valuable tool. Enter your 2019 practice management data by the deadline and use the AcadeMetrics benchmarking tool throughout the year to compare your financial data to that of similar practices. Get valuable insight into optimal staffing levels, number of satellite offices, and more.

Ophthalmic Salary Survey. Another AcadeMetrics tool—the Ophthalmic Salary Survey—is open year-round and tracks specific benchmarks related to optometrist, midlevel provider, and staff salary data to help you benchmark compensation and benefits packages.

Get started at aao.org/academetrics.

Access Trusted Business Expertise

The Ophthalmic Advisors Group—composed of the Academy’s senior coding and practice management experts—offers a comprehensive suite of

consultation services to help solve your practice's complex business challenges. They'll set you up for success with chart audits, coding, claims, reimbursement, business management, and staff development. Available to Academy and AAOE members through the Academy Store.

Learn more at aao.org/consultation-services.

OPAL Helps Practice Managers Become More Effective Leaders

AAOE's Ophthalmic Practice Administrators Leadership (OPAL) Program is designed especially for practice managers to move to the next level of professional growth. Program participants work one-on-one with a mentor, develop a unique capstone project, and showcase their leadership skills at a special event during the Academy's annual meeting. Applications for Cohort 2020-21 are due April 30.

For more information about OPAL, visit aao.org/practice-management/leadership-program or email aaoe@aao.org.

MEETING MATTERS

Course Pass and Tickets: Buy Them Early

Registration for AAO 2020 gives you access to sessions, papers, Poster Theater presentations and Poster Discussions, e-posters, videos on demand, coffee and conversation at the Academy Cafés, and more. For even greater access, consider purchasing the Academy Plus course pass.

Academy Plus. Academy Plus is a course pass that offers unlimited access to all Academy and AAOE instruction courses, including Skills Transfer didactic lectures. No need to plan or preselect courses. Pass holders can float among all available courses.

You can purchase the Academy Plus course pass after you have registered for AAO 2020 online. Academy Plus will also give you access to the Meetings on Demand, which highlights presentations recorded during the annual meeting.

Ticketed events. Tickets for Skills



GET READY FOR VEGAS. On April 8, members can register and book their hotel rooms (see page 61).

Transfer labs, special meetings, and AAOE Practice Management Master Classes will be available for purchase starting June 17.

Visit aao.org/registration for more information.

Submit an AAO 2020 Abstract Online by April 14

Contribute your expertise to the world's most comprehensive ophthalmology meeting. The online submitter for AAO 2020 paper/e-poster and video abstracts opened on March 12 and closes April 14.

The online abstract submitter for instruction courses and Skills Transfer labs closed Jan. 14.

Learn more at aao.org/presenter-central.

Register for Subspecialty Day 2020

Subspecialty Day meetings feature world-renowned ophthalmologists presenting the latest developments and pearls. Dates are as follows:

- **One-day meeting on Friday, Nov. 13:** Refractive Surgery
- **Two-day meeting on Friday, Nov. 13, and Saturday, Nov. 14:** Retina
- **One-day meetings on Saturday, Nov. 14:** Cornea, Glaucoma, Ocular Oncology/Pathology, Oculofacial Plastic Surgery, Pediatric Ophthalmology, and Uveitis

Subspecialty Day registration provides attendees the flexibility to float among meetings. One-day meeting registrants can attend any of the meetings taking place that day; two-day registrants are free to attend any

Subspecialty Day presentation taking place on Friday or Saturday. In addition, those registered for a Subspecialty Day meeting taking place on Saturday will have access on that day to the AAO 2020 Exhibition.

Meetings on Demand is complimentary. All Subspecialty Day meeting attendees receive access to the All-Subspecialty Day 2020 Meetings on Demand product, which captures presentations from all eight Subspecialty Day meetings.

Find more information at aao.org/subspecialty-day.

PASSAGES

Juan T. Verdaguer, MD

The influential Chilean ophthalmologist Juan T. Verdaguer, MD, passed away on Feb. 25, 2020, after a long illness. He was 86 years old.

Dr. Verdaguer attended medical school at the University of Chile, and at the University's JJ Aguirre Clinical Hospital, he studied ophthalmology under his father, Professor Juan Verdaguer Planas. He did postgraduate work in the United States at both Harvard and Columbia Universities.

Later he would become Professor of Ophthalmology and an Honorary Professor of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Chile. He also served as Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Los Andes and Academic Director of Los Andes Ophthalmological Foundation.

He was President of the Chilean Society of Ophthalmology from 1971-1972, and President of the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology from 1997-1999. He received the 2014 National Prize for Medicine and was the Guest of Honor at the XXXIII Pan-American Congress of Ophthalmology in Lima. In addition to receiving many honors and medals, he authored more than 200 papers on retinal diseases, ophthalmic oncology, and blindness prevention.

Dr. Verdaguer is survived by his wife, Martina, four children, and 14 grandchildren, including his granddaughter, Sofia, who is a fourth-generation ophthalmologist.