

# Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Highlights of Mid-Year Forum 2019

From April 10-13, approximately 500 Academy members met in Washington, D.C., to discuss some of ophthalmology's key policy and practice management issues with legislators, regulators, and Academy leaders.

Three key sessions were:

**Controlling drug spending.** A discussion of new policies related to Part B drugs spanned administration, congressional, and industry perspectives. U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-Ore.), a member of the House Energy & Commerce Committee, discussed congressional initiatives to address the challenges, and Academy Secretary for Federal Affairs **David B. Glasser, MD**, highlighted the Academy goal of ensuring patient access to critical treatments while controlling costs and maintaining incentives to promote pharmaceutical innovations. Dr. Glasser also reviewed the Academy's interactions to date with CMS Administrator Seema Verma, MPH, and Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar II.

**Emergency planning.** This program addressed the prevalence of fires, hackers, shooters, hurricanes, and other types of disasters. Past President of the Puerto Rico Medical Association



**MID-YEAR FORUM 2019.** U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader (D-Ore.) provided insights on congressional initiatives to control drug spending. Denice Cora-Bramble, MD, MBA, shared insight on delivering culturally competent care.

**Natalio J. Izquierdo, MD**, detailed the devastating personal and professional losses the islanders experienced due to Hurricane Maria as well as the specific impact on Puerto Rican ophthalmology, including residency programs, clinics, ambulatory surgery centers, research projects, and access to pharmaceuticals. Dr. Izquierdo outlined the response to the disaster by the Academy, the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO), and members of PAAO's leadership development program. Some practices mentioned at the MYF are in the Academy's Emergency Planning and Disaster Preparedness Toolkit at [aao.org/MYF19-EPDP](http://aao.org/MYF19-EPDP).

**Creating an inclusive practice.** This session focused on how best to communicate with a diverse patient base to improve outcomes and maximize patient satisfaction. Academy Secre

tary for Online Education **Robert F. Melendez, MD, MBA**, encouraged attendees to consider millennial patients' preferences, such as digital access to ophthalmologists, online reviews, and affordable care. Later in the program, **Denice Cora-Bramble, MD, MBA**, Chief Marketing Officer and Executive Vice President of the Ambulatory & Community Health Services at Children's National, who spoke on cultural competence, gave advice for forming "relationships that supersede cultural differences."

**View the full Mid-Year Forum report at [aao.org/myf](http://aao.org/myf).**

### PubMed Approves *Ophthalmology Retina* for Indexing

The National Library of Medicine has accepted *Ophthalmology Retina* for inclusion in Medline/PubMed. This



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is the first time in 12 years that it has accepted a monthly, print U.S. ophthalmology journal.

“A big thank you to our authors who share their work with a new journal. Additionally, for helping us achieve scientific accuracy, I thank our reviewers and editorial board members,” said **Andrew P. Schachat, MD**, editor-in-chief.

**Learn more** about *Ophthalmology Retina* by visiting [www.opthalmologyretina.org](http://www.opthalmologyretina.org).

## ACADEMY RESOURCES

### How Does Your Practice Measure Up?

Your financial reports give you an important snapshot of your practice performance, but they don't tell you how you measure up against similar practices. Academy and AAOE members can access two key benchmarking tools that provide powerful comparative analytics for the practice: the AcadeMetrics benchmarking tool and the AcadeMetrics Ophthalmic Salary Survey.

The Academy/AAOE AcadeMetrics benchmarking tool compares your financial data to that of similar practices to help you assess your staffing levels, number of satellite offices, and more.

The AcadeMetrics Ophthalmic Salary Survey tracks specific benchmarks related to optometrist, mid-level provider, and staff salary data to help ophthalmologists benchmark their compensation and benefits packages.

**Access the AcadeMetrics tools** through links on [aao.org/practice-management/analytics](http://aao.org/practice-management/analytics).

### BCSC Self-Assessment Program Features 1,000 New Questions

Sharpen your clinical knowledge and decision-making skills online while earning Self-Assessment CME credits with the BCSC Self-Assessment Program, the only resource with questions and concepts derived directly from the Academy's *Basic and Clinical Science Course*. More than 1,000 new questions have been added since the program's launch last year. Subscribers will automatically receive access to the new questions at no additional charge.

## D.C. REPORT

### Nationwide Ophthalmic Drug Shortages Emerge

Over the past few months, U.S. ophthalmologists have reported difficulties obtaining the following drugs:

- erythromycin,
- prednisolone acetate,
- atropine, and
- dorzolamide.

Additionally, demand for fluorescein strips continues to outpace supply in the United States.

**Persistent drug shortages are among the Academy's top federal advocacy issues.** The Academy has been in regular contact with the FDA and drug manufacturers and has encouraged more than 130 lawmakers in Congress to urge the FDA Commissioner to act on this issue. Accordingly, the Academy expects an FDA-convened task force on drug shortages to suggest policy solutions to Congress before the end of the year.

**Experiencing a shortage?** Email Scott Haber, Academy governmental affairs representative, at [shaber@aao.org](mailto:shaber@aao.org).

Enhancements to the notebook and bookmark features are coming soon.

**Subscribe** at [aao.org/bcsc](http://aao.org/bcsc).

## TAKE NOTICE

### Support the New Truhlsen-Marmor Museum of the Eye

The Academy is building a new Museum of the Eye at its headquarters in San Francisco. Your donation will support an interactive showplace for ophthalmology and the science of vision in a high-traffic tourist destination. By giving to the museum, you are helping to educate, excite, and inspire the public about the importance of sight.

**Help make the museum a success.** If you'd like to support the new Museum of the Eye, consider making a one-time gift or a pledge over five years to help reach the \$12 million fundraising goal.

### In Private Practice? Grants for Peds Big Data Research

There is a June 21 deadline to apply for pediatric ophthalmology research grants supported by the Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF) IRIS Registry Research Fund.

Applicants must be Academy members who are in private practice. If your

application is successful, you will be able to use the Academy IRIS Registry database to investigate rare or common eye disease affecting children, and to uncover optimal, real-world approaches to prevention and treatment.

**More information online.** To learn how to apply for a research grant, visit [aao.org/iris-registry/data-analysis/knights-templar-iris-registry-research-fund](http://aao.org/iris-registry/data-analysis/knights-templar-iris-registry-research-fund).

### Advice From OMIC: Cataract Surgery Risk Reduction

Cataract surgery is the source of most medical malpractice claims reported to the Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company (OMIC).

Many patients undergoing cataract surgery have very high visual goals, especially if they invest their own money to upgrade to specialty IOLs. When the outcome does not match these heightened expectations, patients complain not only to their ophthalmologist, but also to acquaintances, insurance companies, regulatory agencies, and malpractice attorneys.

**Reduce your liability exposure.** OMIC has recommendations for reducing this risk at <https://www.omic.com/cataract-surgery-recommendations/>.