

# PENNSYLVANIA GERIATRICS SOCIETY WESTERN DIVISION



AN AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN GERIATRICS SOCIETY

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## Fall Program Highlights *"Healthy Brain Aging and Cognitive Fitness Later in Life"*

The Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society - Western Division (PAGS-WD) welcomed guest presenters Judith L. Cameron, PhD, professor of psychiatry, Clinical Translational Science Institute; Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Medicine; director, Working for Kids; director, Pitt Science Outreach, University of Pittsburgh; and Caterina Rosano, MD, MPH, professor of epidemiology, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh, at the annual fall program held Tuesday, Oct. 27, at the University Club in Oakland. Neil Resnick, MD, Thomas Detre Professor of Medicine; chief, Division of Geriatric Medicine; associate director, Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services and University of Pittsburgh; director, Hartford Center of Excellence in Geriatrics; served as moderator for this exceptional program. Charles Reynolds III, MD, UPMC Endowed Professor in Geriatric Psychiatry, University of Pittsburgh, organized and planned the well-received program.



From left are Fred Rubin, MD, PAGS-WD president; Caterina Rosano, MD, MPH, guest presenter; Judith Cameron, PhD, guest presenter; and Neil Resnick, MD, moderator and PAGS-WD board member.

"Healthy Brain Aging and Cognitive Fitness in Later Life" was presented to an audience of 70 health care professionals. The panel presentation addressed how physical activity promotes healthy brain aging and cognitive fitness into the later years of life. The program was made possible through generous sponsorship from the Aging Institute of UPMC Services and the University of Pittsburgh, Aspire Health and Presbyterian SeniorCare.

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# President's Message

Our Society continues to remain an important resource for healthcare professionals in this region who are dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all older persons. This edition of the newsletter includes details on upcoming educational offerings and recognition of individuals who have made significant contributions to the education and training of learners in geriatrics, through the newly established Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award. This award serves to recognize outstanding teachers for their dedication and commitment to geriatrics education and practice across the health professions. I would like to congratulate this year's awardees, Daniel DiCola, MD, and Betty Robison, MSN, RN-BC.



Fred Rubin, MD

In association with UPMC/University of Pittsburgh Institute on Aging, University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, and University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Center for Continuing Education in the Health Sciences, the Society is proud to present the 24th session of our popular Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine on April 7-9, 2016. This is the largest ongoing CME event in Western PA and has been the recipient of a national award from the American Geriatrics Society.

Our program directors, Judith S. Black, MD, MHA, Shuja Hassan, MD, and Neil Resnick, MD, have worked tirelessly with our dedicated Planning Committee, which includes: Daphne Bicket, George Gleeson, Christine Herb, Lisal Hilal, Rachel Jantea, David Nace, Karen Powers, Charles Reynolds, Victor Rudkin, Heather Sakely, and myself, to assemble an impressive lineup of speakers to present the latest information about clinical problems in geriatric medicine.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to acknowledge and thank our partners: Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services; Allegheny Health Network - Department of Medicine, Internal Medicine Residency Program; Forbes Family Medicine Residency Program of AHN, Geriatric Education Center of Pennsylvania; Golden Living Centers; Heritage Valley Health System; Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield; UPMC Health Plan; Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC; UPMC McKeesport; UPMC Shadyside; UPMC St. Margaret; and Washington Health System.

Simultaneously, we will host the 14th annual International Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) conference. This co-programming has worked extremely well to enhance the quality of both programs. In June, we will sponsor the 2nd annual "Controversies in Geriatric Medicine" program. The program, which is in the planning stages, features a complex case discussed by a panel of experts with audience interaction. Last year's event received very favorable evaluations, and we look forward to offering another exceptional program.

Your membership provides support to continue our program and award offerings, and strengthens our commitment to fulfill our mission of improving health care for all older persons. Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming program.

*Fred Rubin, MD*

# Fall Program Highlights

From Page 1

Dr. Resnick opened the program with remarks and an overview of the recent Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on cognitive aging, and underscored its recommendations and key messages: The brain ages, just like other parts of the body; Cognitive aging is not a disease; Cognitive aging is different for every individual; Some cognitive functions improve with age; Patients can take steps to protect their cognitive health.

Dr. Cameron presented information on pilot projects being conducted by the healthy brain aging workgroup. She and her team are studying the impact of planned exercise and everyday levels of physical activity on processes in the brain. Dr. Cameron's presentation featured video clips of monkeys which were trained to run on a human-sized treadmill. One group ran, while a second group of monkeys sat on the treadmills. The observations from studies of physical activity in monkeys showed exercise to have a protective effect against Parkinson's disease, as well as improving how the brain works.

Dr. Rosano's presentation explored resilience in older adults' cognitive capacities. Through her research, which included examining health data from older adults gathered over the course of decades, she found a segment of "outliers," elders who managed to stay relatively healthy despite the onset of aging and who fall outside the normal ranges of their group.

Dr. Rosano and Dr. Cameron concluded the program by informing the audience on how to better advise their patients on strategies to promote and preserve brain health.

The annual fall program provides PAGS-WD members the opportunity to network and attend a lecture encompassing relevant topics specific to geriatrics and the older population. Membership is open to all health care disciplines.

*Thank you to our  
program sponsors:*

**AGING INSTITUTE**  
of UPMC Senior Services and the University of Pittsburgh

**Aspire**  
Health

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**SeniorCare**  
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Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society - Western Division

Serving as a resource in providing information and educational programming among a society of professionals who are dedicated to advancing clinical care and quality of life for the elderly.

# Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine

The Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine will be held April 7-9 at the Marriott Pittsburgh City Center. This award-winning course has been a popular and respected resource for more than 24 years. It is jointly sponsored by the Society, UPMC/University of Pittsburgh Institute on Aging, University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, and University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Center for Continuing Education in the Health Sciences. The program is designed by course directors Shuja Hassan, MD; Judith Black, MD; and Neil Resnick, MD; along with the Society planning committee.

As our population continues to age, the number of elderly persons in our area hospitals, clinics and nursing homes has grown significantly. The fastest-growing segment of the population are those above the age of 85 years. The conference aims to provide an evidence-based approach to help clinicians take exceptional care of these often frail individuals.

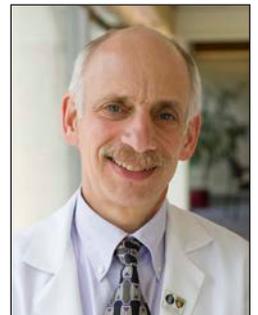
Highlights of the three-day conference include:

- Geriatric Pharmacology - helpful tips on managing medications in your complex older patients
- Acute Care of the Elderly - clinical pearls from a national expert on inpatient care of the older adult
- Symposium on Geriatric Syndromes - updated, evidence-based information on falls, delirium, osteoporosis, incontinence and depression
- Geriatric Cardiology - updated information on hypertension specific to the older patient, atrial fibrillation management along with using novel oral anticoagulants, and chronic heart failure
- Appropriate prescribing of antibiotics for older adults
- Symposium focusing on patient care at the end of life, and living with hospice care
- Advanced Practice Providers session

The conference continually attracts distinguished guest faculty. This year's exceptional guest presenters include: Daniel G. Blazer, MD, MPH, PhD, vice chair of Psychiatry, Duke University, Durham, N.C.; Sharon K. Inouye, MD, MPH, director of the Aging Brain Center at the Institute for Aging Research, Hebrew SeniorLife, Boston, Mass.; Lewis A. Lipsitz, MD, director, Institute for Aging Research, Hebrew SeniorLife, Boston, Mass.; Barbara



Dr. Blazer



Dr. Lipsitz



Dr. Palmer

Messinger-Rapport, MD, PhD, FACP, CMD, chief medical officer/Hospice Care at Hospice of the Western Reserve, Cleveland, Ohio; and Robert M. Palmer, MD, MPH, director, Glennan Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology, John Franklin Chair and professor, Internal Medicine, Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, Va. Local expert faculty, most of whom also are nationally renowned, will further enhance the program with key, evidence-based sessions.

## 14th Annual HELP conference

The 14th Annual International Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) conference will be held in conjunction with the Clinical Update conference April 7-8 at the Marriott Pittsburgh City Center. Designed by course directors Sharon Inouye, MD, MPH; Fred Rubin, MD; and Shin-Yi Lao, MPH, BSN, RN, this two-day international conference educates HELP teams regarding strategies for delirium prevention, using HELP to improve hospital-wide care of the elderly, and creating a climate of change.

Expert clinicians and experienced members of the HELP sites will share evidence-based information and clinical insights on selected topics regarding the influence of HELP, delirium updates and the larger policy implications of care for the elderly. Updates on collaborative papers, expansion of the program and innovative site projects also will be presented.



Dr. Inouye

# Registration Information

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## Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine

Visit <https://cchs.upmc.com/liveFormalCourses.jsf>. For additional information, contact (412) 647-8232 or email [cchsconfmgmt101@upmc.edu](mailto:cchsconfmgmt101@upmc.edu).

## 14th Annual HELP conference

Contact Krystal Golacinski, UPMC Center for Continuing Education in the Health Sciences, at (412) 647-7050 or email [cchsconfmgmt101@upmc.edu](mailto:cchsconfmgmt101@upmc.edu).

# Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Award

The Awards Committee, chaired by Rollin Wright, MD, is pleased to announce the recipients of the Geriatrics Teacher of the Year Awards. Daniel DiCola, MD, is the recipient of the Physician Award and Betty Robison, MSN, RN-BC, is the recipient of the Healthcare Professional Award.

The award serves to recognize outstanding teachers for their dedication and commitment to geriatrics education and who have made significant contributions to the education and training of learners in geriatrics and to the progress of geriatrics education across the health professions.

Dr. DiCola and Ms. Robison will be honored at a ceremony during the dinner symposium at the 24th Annual Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine on April 7, 2016.

## Physician Award

DANIEL DICOLA, MD, Director of Geriatrics Education, Faculty Member, Latrobe Area Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program; Associate Professor of Family Medicine, Jefferson Medical College/Sidney Kimmel Medical College; Medical Director, IHS Mountain View Nursing Home



Dr. DiCola



Ms. Robison

Dr. DiCola's commitment is evident at the hospital, health system and community levels and despite the time involved in all of his clinical and teaching endeavors, he is invariably generous in sharing his time and knowledge with the community.

"Dr. DiCola represents our profession in the most positive light and serves as an outstanding role model for our residents, faculty, and the entire medical staff. Dan has also won numerous teacher of the year awards by residents, is actively involved in teaching third year medical students from Jefferson Medical College, and runs our morning reports every day. If there were such a position in a residency program as 'Designated Teacher,' Dan would be it.

"Our Geriatrics Curriculum is longitudinal, involving regular lectures, weekly nursing home rounds, journal clubs, board review questions, and patient cases - all of which Dan attends and leads. Dan is also present at every resident conference, often giving input from a geriatrician's perspective on whatever is discussed. Due to the robust geriatric education under Dan's guidance our residents receive, many of our graduates work in nursing homes. Dan has even recently inspired some of our recent graduates to pursue fellowships in Geriatrics."

(From the nomination by Michael Semelka, DO, FAAFP.)

"His inspiration ended up being the primary influence on my future as a clinician. I went on to pursue a fellowship in geriatric medicine at Stanford and am now a board certified geriatrician. I am doing my best to continue the mission of Dr. DiCola by helping fellows, residents and medical students learn more about the world of geriatric medicine as a fellowship faculty member and clinician at Stanford Senior Care. My story is similar to that of many other family medicine residents who have chosen careers in geriatrics after being influenced by him. Although many of us have left Latrobe to pursue these roles, he remains dedicated to the innovation and improvement of geriatric care and education in his community." (From the nomination by Mary James, MD.)

## Healthcare Professional Award

BETTY ROBISON, MSN, RN-BC, Gerontology Educator, Aging Institute (AI) of UPMC Senior Services  
Adjunct Faculty, Chatham University

Through her leadership and support, Ms. Robison formed the Western Pennsylvania chapter of the National Gerontological Nursing Association (NGNA), one of only three NGNA chapters statewide. She has worked closely with staff at UPMC McKeesport and through the contributions of her leadership, a core educational team was created at the hospital that worked to apply for and was awarded NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders).

"I have had the privilege to work closely with Betty Robison and am wholly inspired regarding her commitment to the older adult and her commitment to ensuring that professional caregivers are provided with the opportunity to learn and advance their knowledge and skills. She seeks to take learning to the next level and is constantly searching for the unmet needs and new and innovative ways to educate the front line." (From the nomination by Taafoi Kamara, MPH.)

"Betty's passion for geriatrics and education coupled with her natural leadership ability and creative methods of teaching shine through in this small sample of education projects she has developed and/or facilitated during her tenure as the AI Gerontological Educator:

- Ageless Wisdom - an interactive and experiential geriatric sensitivity program which assists participants to identify and experience sensory, cognitive, psychological, functional and social changes of aging
- The Gerontological Nurse Certification Review - prepares nurses to sit for the Gerontological Nursing board certification

"Betty is a highly motivated champion of geriatric education and a wonderful mentor of nurses and nursing students and it is my sincere hope you will choose her for the award." (From the nomination by Kelly Neal, DNP, CRNP-BC.)

# Membership

## 2016 Renewals

Dues notices for 2016 have been mailed! Society membership dues are renewed on a yearly basis. Your dues are instrumental in assisting the Society to continually provide quality educational program offerings to healthcare professionals in our region. Dues also support the David C. Martin Award, which provides financial support to qualified medical students who have an interest in the field of geriatrics.

Contact Nadine Popovich, administrator, at (412) 321-5030 to renew your dues by credit card or to inquire about your membership status.

## Election Results

The following have been elected to serve on the Board of Directors, serving a three-year term beginning January 1, 2016, and ending December 31, 2017:

John Delaney, MD, MPH, DrPH

Charles Reynolds, III, MD

Kawita Vichare, MD

Carey Vinson, MD, MPM

**In other Board news**, the society appointed and welcomed Lisa Hilal, CRNP. Ms. Hilal will replace Mary Ley, GNP-BC, who retired in December 2015.

# AGS News

## **American Geriatrics Society (AGS) - FREE resources (including CME Opportunities)**

The AGS is excited to share the following free resources. Both of the tools are available through [GeriatricsCareOnline.org](http://GeriatricsCareOnline.org), and each has free CME opportunities available for those who complete them.

### **Clinician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers**

Under a cooperative agreement with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the AGS has just published the Clinician's Guide to Assessing and Counseling Older Drivers, a free online guide that walks clinicians through key issues, opportunities, and challenges faced by older drivers and the healthcare professionals who care for them. A maximum of 4.0 AMA PRA Category 1™ CME credit(s) can be earned through completion of the program.

### **AGS Multimorbidity Toolkit & MCC GEMS Mobile App**

With support from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the AGS has developed the MCC GEMS Mobile App and the AGS Multimorbidity Toolkit to provide guidance to clinicians to help them effectively manage multimorbidity in the older adults they treat. Up to 1.5 AMA Category 1™ CME credits can be earned with the completion of the toolkit. The mobile device is available for both Apple and Android devices.

# Mark Your Calendar

## **American Medical Directors Association (AMDA)**

**AMDA: The Society for Post-Acute and  
Long-Term Care Medicine – 2016**

When: March 17-20, 2016

Where: Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention  
Center

Phone: 800-876-2632 or 410-740-9743

Website: [www.amda.com](http://www.amda.com)

## **American College of Physicians Internal Medicine – 2016**

When: May 5-7, 2016

Where: Washington, DC

Phone: 800-523-1546 x2600 or 215-351-2400

Website: [www.acponline.org](http://www.acponline.org)

Choose from more than 200 CME courses in  
internal medicine and the subspecialties pre-  
sented by distinguished faculty.

## **Society of General Internal Medicine 39th Annual Meeting**

*Generalists Engaged in Population Health:  
Improving Outcomes and Equity through  
Research, Education and Patient Care*

When: May 11-14, 2016

Where: Hollywood, FL

Phone: 800-822-3060

Website: [www.sgim.org](http://www.sgim.org)

Earn up to 12.5 AMA PRA Category 1 credits™

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## **24th Annual Clinical Update in Geriatric Medicine Pittsburgh Marriott City Center Pittsburgh, PA April 7-9, 2016**

The conference registration is  
available online at  
<https://ccehs.upmc.com/formalCourses.jsp>

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## **American Geriatrics Society 2016 Annual Scientific Meeting May 19-21, 2016 Long Beach, CA Phone: 212-308-1414 Website: [www.americangeriatrics.org](http://www.americangeriatrics.org)**

The AGS Annual Scientific Meeting is the premier educational event in geriatrics, providing the latest information on clinical care, research on aging, and innovative models of care delivery. The 2016 Annual Meeting will address the educational needs of geriatrics professionals from all disciplines. Physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, social workers, long-term care and managed care providers, health care administrators, and others can update their knowledge and skills through state-of-the-art educational sessions and research presentations.

The 2016 Annual Meeting offers many continuing education sessions, including invited symposia, workshops and meet-the-expert sessions. Sessions will include information about emerging clinical issues, current research in geriatrics, education, health policy and delivery of geriatric health care.

# Members in the News

## PAGS-WD president receives award

Fred Rubin, MD, Society president, has been selected as the recipient of the Allegheny County Medical Society Foundation's (ACMSF) Richard E. Deitrick Humanity in Medicine Award. This prestigious honor is presented by the ACMSF to a physician who has improved the lives of patients by caring for them with integrity, honesty and respect of their human dignity, and serves as a role model for other physicians.

Trained as a general internist, Dr. Rubin developed an interest in care of the elderly in the late 1970s before the establishment of formal programs in geriatric medicine. Based at Massachusetts General Hospital, he participated in the pioneering work that created the new subspecialty. In 1983, he sat for the geriatrics board examination in Canada, becoming the first board-certified geriatrician in the United States. In 1988, when the ABIM created a new Certificate of Added Qualification in Geriatrics, he was in the first group to sit for the examination and has recertified every 10 years subsequently.

In 1987, he was recruited to Shadyside Hospital to become the founding chief of a new division of Geriatric Medicine. He created the Senior Care Institute, which has become a large outpatient practice dedicated to innovative care of the elderly, teaching, and clinical research. Dr. Rubin also created an ACGME accredited fellowship training program in Geriatric Medicine.

In his letter of nomination for Dr. Rubin, Shuja Hassan, MD, wrote, "A clinician at heart, Dr. Rubin still maintains an active practice, follows his patients when they become hospitalized, and even makes house calls."

Dr. Rubin was recognized during the award presentation at the ACMS Foundation Gala Saturday, March 5, 2016, at Heinz Field, East Club Lounge.



From left are Shuja Hassan, MD, and Fred Rubin, MD. Dr. Hassan nominated Dr. Rubin for the Richard E. Deitrick Humanity in Medicine Award.

## Society member honored at PMDA symposium

Congratulations to Tracy Polak, CRNP, MSN, recipient of the 2015 PMDA Long Term Care (LTC) Practitioner of the Year Award.

David Nace, MD, MPH, introduced and presented Ms. Polak with the award during the 23rd Annual PMDA Symposium held October 16-17 in Hershey, PA.

The award recognizes Ms. Polak's skillful care of residents and outstanding contributions to post-acute and long-term care.

The PMDA LTC Practitioner of the Year is nominated by an NHA, DN, Medical Director, or other clinician from an organization that provides long-term care. The recipient must be a PMDA member in good standing for at least three years, and the final decision is based on the clinician's role in any or all of the following achievements: quality improvement, annual state survey, patient satisfaction surveys, staff morale and retention, community/hospital relations and outreach, medication management, reduction in unnecessary hospitalizations, and overall impact of their role in their facility.



From left are Tracy Polak, CRNP, MSN, and David Nace, MD, MPH.

# Controversies in Geriatric Medicine

## June program planned

The 2016 Controversies in Geriatric Medicine program will feature a case study called "The Difficult Daughter." Presented by Syeda Arabi, MD, and moderated by Fred Rubin, MD, the program will focus on an 84-year-old frail woman with multiple severe medical problems who lives at home with her daughter, but is frequently hospitalized. We will review her major issues, and focus on effective management when every step must be negotiated with her daughter. An expert panel will discuss and comment based on their specialty area or expertise. An audience response system will be utilized during the presentation for maximum attendee engagement.

The final date for the program is TBD. Please check the Society website for updates, [www.pagswd.org](http://www.pagswd.org).

# National Healthcare Decisions Day 2016

In September 2014, the Institute of Medicine released the report *Dying in America: Improving Quality and Honoring Individual Preferences Near the End of Life*.<sup>1</sup> The report confirms what healthcare practitioners know, that most people are unable to make their own decisions about care when they're nearing the end of life, and recommends advance care planning as a strategy to improve care at that time.

National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) is fast approaching. Scheduled each year for April 16, this event marks the day in which all adults are encouraged to talk about their choices for future health care treatment and to document those choices in an advance directive. Evidence supports the fact that many patients are unlikely to discuss their choices with their doctor unless he/she brings it up. Physicians can support the concept of NHDD by developing a plan to engage in such conversations with patients.

It is helpful for medical practices to make advance directives available. The Health Care Power of Attorney and Living Will form endorsed by doctors and lawyers in Pennsylvania is available free on the Allegheny County Bar Association website at <http://www.acba.org/public/livingwill>.

Medical practices can advise everyone age 18 and older to complete a Health Care Power of Attorney to name their medical decision-maker. It is also useful to convey the importance of patients having an ongoing conversation over the years with their healthcare decision-maker, family and healthcare provider about values and goals of care.

Discussions with older and sicker patients are more complex. The Serious Illness Conversation Guide can facilitate such conversations between doctors and their patients and families. Patients then have an opportunity to make informed choices that reflect their values, reduce suffering, enhance family well-being and improve quality of life.<sup>2</sup> These are patients who can be advised to document choices in a living will. For patients for whom you would not be surprised if they died within the year, a Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form can be completed. For information on POLST, contact the POLST coordinator at [PAPOLST@verizon.net](mailto:PAPOLST@verizon.net).

Since January 2, 2016, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is reimbursing physicians for conversations with Medicare patients about advance care planning. Payment is not limited to particular physician specialties. Nurse practitioners whose scope of practice allows independent billing to Medicare may also be reimbursed for such discussions. This service is billable in both facility and non-facility settings. More information is available on Page 13.

## References

1. <http://iom.nationalacademies.org/Reports/2014/Dying-In-America-Improving-Quality-and-Honoring-Individual-Preferences-Near-the-End-of-Life.aspx>
2. <https://www.ariadnelabs.org/programs/serious-illness-care/>

# Advance Care Planning Services

The 2016 Medicare Fee Schedule allows for payment for Advance Care Planning Services. Although advance care planning was available in the past, it was only covered when included with the IPPE. Most beneficiaries were not likely to discuss advance care planning at the time of that visit. This enhancement will allow for greater flexibility for scheduling advance care planning services for both beneficiaries and providers.

CMS defines advance care planning as a face-to-face meeting with the patient, family members, and/or surrogate for "the explanation and discussion of advance directives such as standard forms (with the completion of such forms, when performed), by the physician or other qualified health professional." CPT code 99497 is used for the first 30 minutes, and then add-on CPT code 99498 for 30 minute increments thereafter.

An advance directive is a document appointing an agent and/or recording the wishes of a patient pertaining to his/her medical treatment at a future time should he/she lack decisional capacity at that time. Some examples of written advance directives include, but are not limited to, Health Care Proxy, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, Living Will and Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment.

## CODING AND 2016 REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Name	Code	Philadelphia Area	Rest of Pennsylvania
Advance care planning; first 30 minutes	99497	\$90.56	\$83.91
Each additional 30 minutes	99498	\$78.72	\$73.33

For more information, visit <http://ow.ly/Z2aGT>.

## POLST update

### POLST Stakeholder Group

The POLST Stakeholder Group met on February 11, 2016, to develop legislation that would provide POLST a formal home and fully authorized oversight committee. The PAGS-WD strongly supports the existence of a POLST Program in the state of Pennsylvania. The POLST Stakeholder Group work and commitment are to be commended on finalizing a set of parameters on key issues to enact the proposed legislation. The PAGS-WD supports the proposed POLST legislation presented by the POLST Stakeholder Group and has sent a formal letter of acknowledgement to the committee chair, Daniel Kimball, Jr., MD, FACP.

### POLST Cue-Cards Available for Download

POLST cue cards may be accessed and downloaded by visiting [www.pagswd.org](http://www.pagswd.org).

Cue Cards include:

- POLST Cue Card
- POLST Cue Card with Documentation
- Advance Care Planning/ POLST Discussion/ Documentation Note

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## National POLST Paradigm Conference

A national conference was held in February in Chicago and included attendees from across the country. The following highlights some of the more significant discussion.

- The National POLST Paradigm Office and Task Force, initially created in 2004 and housed and supported at the Center for Ethics at Oregon Health and Science University, is establishing a national office in Washington D.C. in 2016. It is expected that this move will improve visibility of POLST and build a larger audience for POLST programs that can be leveraged for legislative advocacy. Executive leadership will continue to be provided by Amy Vandembroucke, JD, members of the task force and a small administrative staff.
- With the support of the Pew Charitable Trusts, a POLST Toolkit intended for national use and across the care continuum is under development. Goals for the toolkit are:
  - Show how POLST can be used to support patients through transitions across care settings
  - Increase implementation of POLST among key health care and facility administrators
  - Educate about benefits of, and how to implement POLST
  - Provide setting-specific resources for POLST implementation to address the specific needs to implement POLST in difference types of care facilities.

The kit will be shared in our state as soon as it is available.

- A national strategy to expand communication of POLST through the use of social and traditional media is underway. Here in Pennsylvania our use of social media has been limited. If any reader would like to volunteer to provide PA POLST messaging, please contact [PAPOLST@verizon.net](mailto:PAPOLST@verizon.net).
- Father Thomas Nairn, Senior Director, Theology and Ethics at the Catholic Health Association, presented an overview of POLST and Catholicism. He made the point that POLST can be consistent with Catholic theology. However, he warned that caution should be used and abuse avoided. Abuse would consist of:
  - Regarding POLST as just another form for physician to complete
  - Separating POLST from advance care planning
  - Executing POLST forms for patients who are not appropriate candidates for POLST
  - Treating POLST as mandatory rather than voluntary. This may be especially problematic in some long-term care facilities
  - Not providing appropriate education for health care professionals
  - Not monitoring and evaluating implementation of POLST

### **Patient Stories**

Also discussed at the conference was the value that patient stories can provide to help gain acceptance of the POLST process. As efforts progress toward POLST legislation in our state, patient and family stories may be able to help legislators, the public, health care professionals and others to more fully understand the issues around end-of-life decision-making and increase support of the paradigm. Please consider sharing any such stories with us. We assure that any use of these would be consistent with HIPAA regulations.

### **POLST: Doing It Right! Training Course**

The Pennsylvania POLST course has been slightly modified with the emphasis on the conversation and facilitator training. We learned that most previous attendees were not anticipating being trainers, so the modification addresses what is seen as a greater need. We are especially looking for POLST champion partners in eastern Pennsylvania to present this 8.0 credit program. All materials are provided, and guidance for associated administrative tasks is available. If you would like further information on how this course could be offered in your facility or region, send a request for information to [PAPOLST@verizon.net](mailto:PAPOLST@verizon.net).

### **POLST: Doing it Better Video**

A new video provides a clear overview of the National POLST Paradigm. This educational tool for health care professionals describes POLST, clarifies to whom POLST should be offered, emphasizes best practices for POLST and corrects some common misconceptions. Susan Tolle, MD, Chair, Oregon POLST Task Force, oversaw the creation of the video. Take a look at the video, share it widely, and help health care professionals understand the role and importance of POLST! It can be viewed at <http://www.polst.org/polst-doing-it-better/> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlqQgCBChn0>.

### **Your Feedback**

We are always interested in any comments on the use of POLST in PA. Please share your feedback with us.

Thank you,

Judith Black, MD, MHA  
National POLST Paradigm Task Force Member  
Medical Director, Geriatric Service Line of  
Allegheny Health Network  
[blackjs352@gmail.com](mailto:blackjs352@gmail.com)

Marian Kemp, RN  
POLST Coordinator  
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**Pennsylvania Geriatrics Society - Western Division**  
Promoting geriatric education to all healthcare professions.

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# PA GERIATRICS SOCIETY – WESTERN DIVISION

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Send completed application and payment to

Nadine Popovich, Administrator  
PA Geriatrics Society-Western Division  
713 Ridge Ave ♦ Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
Questions?

Email [npopovich@acms.org](mailto:npopovich@acms.org) ♦ Phone (412) 321-5030  
Visit [WWW.PAGSWD.ORG](http://WWW.PAGSWD.ORG)

Please check one:

- Student (\$10.00 / year)  
 Resident /Fellow (FREE) Resident/Fellow Year: Start date \_\_\_—\_\_\_ End date \_\_\_  
 MD, DO, PharmD, RN, CRNP or other healthcare professional (\$60.00/ year)

Checks may be made payable to “PA Geriatrics Society”

Credit Card information: Visa/Mastercard \_\_\_\_\_

Card Billing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp date \_\_\_\_\_ Last 3 digits on the back of card \_\_\_\_\_ Amount to be charged \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Address (Business / Home)? \_\_\_\_\_