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President's Message

This article was written the week prior to the winter storm that affected chapter & national ACEP business in Texas.

Iowa ACEP Members,

Almost a year into the pandemic and we have learned quite a bit, and dare I say it - we have really gotten into a COVID groove. I am sure that you all can diagnose COVID from across the room, likely even from triage. With this experience comes fatigue. I feel it, I am sure you do too. The lack of personal interactions. And,

too many zoom meetings and virtual learning for our children. So many trips that have been cancelled or rescheduled. This year has been exhausting. Unfortunately, it is not over, and now more than ever we all need to lean in, step up, and continue to fight for our patients, ourselves, and our specialty.

The Iowa Physician on the Hill Day is going to look differently this year than it has in the past. Yes, it will be virtual. It is a weeklong event. Hopefully, that means more of you can log in and participate. We still need bodies, even if they are over a computer or iPad screen, to show our legislators what we stand for and how to improve access to care, protect lowans, and protect ourselves through tort reform.

Go to www.iowamedical.org to sign up for this year's event. Schedule a meeting with your representatives. Iowa Physician on the Hill "day" was Wednesday, February 17th and IMS encouraged you to schedule meetings with your legislators on that day; however, any day that week was better than no meeting.

This year it is possible to get a hard cap on medical liability in Iowa. Last year was a big step, and the reform measures supported by IMS did pass the Senate but did not make it through the House. We all can help change that this year. Across all specialties. IMS

has created a Tort Reform Toolkit to help you speak with legislators. Additionally, there was a virtual advocacy briefing held on Tuesday, February 16th to help you prepare followed by a keynote address by Senate Majority Leader Jack Whitver. Remember to encourage your legislators to visit your hospitals and Emergency Departments - if COVID and administration is allowing visitors at your site of course.

Did you know that in the last 4-years there were 5-cases in Iowa with \$85 MILLION awarded in damages? This is what the rest of the nation is seeing when they look at Iowa. Attorneys see easy targets and no hard cap on non-economic damages. They fly in from other states, literally. In three of these cases the attorneys did not even attempt to get economic damages - which can be easily calculated - but rather look to exploit physicians in the only state in the area without a hard cap on non-economic damages.

So, let us keep fighting the good fight.

Hopefully, you all have been vaccinated.

There are Still Going to be Some Very Difficult Times Ahead As told to Emily Blobaum

I have always been hopeful. I have never been super pessimistic. I have always felt like we are going to get through this eventually, it is just a matter of when, and what cost. But there's obstacles and barriers along the way, like how much we can affect the public's perception and get people to change their day-to-day lives. As things drag on for months, we have fatigue with dealing with how this virus has changed our lives.

The hardest part is treating patients who are younger and do not have other medical conditions and seeing them suffer. There is also the burden on the elderly population. There is a whole generation of elderly patients that we have lost to this disease. My grandmother died of COVID; she was in her 90s. I was not able to go and be with her or have an in-person funeral service.

There are still going to be some very difficult times ahead of us in the next few months, but I have always felt that this is just like running a marathon. You have got to keep a consistent pace. You do not want to be out of the gate too fast. You do not want to start sprinting to the finish line too soon.

I think we are at mile 17. Hopefully, we are not going to hit the wall, where we run out of hospital resources throughout the country and then there would be nowhere else to care for patients. People in the ER have been worried about that all along. We mostly operate near capacity in a normal year anyway. We are always walking a fine line every winter when influenza pops up. We are always facing bed situations for patients in December through early March anyway, so this just adds a whole other level.

Sydney Leach is an emergency department physician and associate director of the emergency department at MercyOne. She is also the medical director for the Johnston-Grimes Metro Fire Department, where she oversees medical protocols.



Sydney Leach in the emergency department at MercyOne Medical Center. Photo by Emily Blobaum.

Adriana's Corner

Would you like to contribute an article for the chapter newsletter? Although any article and topic are welcomed by any chapter member, we are particularly looking for articles from Residents and Medical Students.

This year, I would like to highlight a chapter leader or member in at least two-2 quarterly newsletters. Please [reach out](#) if you would like to highlight one of your colleagues and/or are interested in this new section for your chapter newsletter.

Please note a few potential, additional topics for your chapter newsletter: an interesting case and an inspiring COVID-19 story.

Articles do not have to be a particular length (usually 2-paragraphs) and can include images, links, or any references. Please refer to your chapter website under the [About Us](#) tab and click on the Newsletters tab to see examples of past articles. For more detailed information, please reach out via [email](#).

Welcome New Members!

A special welcome to the new members of the Iowa Chapter and to those that renewed their membership with the chapter. We are excited to have you.

Andrew Douglas Smith, RN
Brian L Edeker, MD, FACEP
Caitlin H. Bakke
Chris Martin
Jeremiah Kerry Bean

Miranda Kramer
Nathan Garner
Nicholas Lee Huth
Peter Francis Ma, Jr
Risham Singh, BA

Kristin Renee Schroeder, DO

Sarah L Miller, MD, FACEP

You may wonder if you should get involved with Iowa ACEP or EMRA or at the national level? We encourage you to please get involved!

If you are unsure about how to get involved, feel free to contact the chapter [directly](#).

FROM NATIONAL ACEP



Stay current with the [COVID-19 Center](#). It's your one-stop-shop for clinical and legislative updates.

New Resource: COVID-19 Data Visualizations

ACEP's newest resource provides visualizations of U.S. emergency department data across three categories: total visits, COVID-like illness visits, and influenza-like illness visits. The data are available at both national and Health and Human Services (HHS) regional resolutions and across several timescales (e.g., 7-day, 30-day, 90-day). It's sortable by time and region. Data is updated weekly. [View the visualizations](#).

The February 10 edition of the [Capital \(30\) Minutes webinar](#) provided updates on COVID relief, physician mental health and more.

Quick Links: [COVID-19 Field Guide](#) | [COVID-19 Vaccination Toolkit](#) | [COVID-19 Microlearning Education](#)

The COVID-19 crisis is uniquely exhausting at work and home. ACEP's [Physician Wellness Hub](#) can help you find the right support.

Breaking Down President Biden's Executive Order on Strengthening Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act

Since taking office, President Biden has issued a plethora of [executive orders](#), mostly related to tackling the COVID-19 pandemic and reversing or adjusting policies implemented by the last administration. As a reminder, executive orders themselves do not effectuate new policies. Rather, in most cases, they call on federal agencies to examine or institute new policies—usually through regulations. On January 28, President Biden issued a broad sweeping [Executive Order](#) on "Strengthening Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act." [READ MORE](#)

Catch up on the latest federal regulatory news with ACEP's [Regs and Eggs](#) blog:

- [The New Medicare Add-on Code for Medication-Assisted Treatment in the Emergency Department—Got Questions? ACEP's Got Answers](#) - February 11
- [X-ing the X-Waiver: The Fight Continues!](#) - January 28, 2021
- [At the Buzzer! CMS' Last Minute Regulatory Actions](#) - January 21, 2021
- [Major Crisis Averted \(for Now\): Rather than Medicare Payment Reductions, a Raise May be Coming Your Way In 2021](#) - January 7, 2021

ACEP Member Benefit

ACEP Wellness & Assistance Program: Did you know your ACEP membership comes with three **free** counseling or coaching sessions available through phone, text or online chat? And for a small extra fee, you can add on **financial and/or legal assistance**. [Learn more about this free member benefit.](#)

Prepare for your continuous EM board certification with ***Critical Decision's 2020 LLSA Literature Review*** issue (**free member benefit**). Get the highlights from each ABEM article to make your studying faster and more productive.

Podcast fans: [ACEP's podcast family](#) includes *Frontline*, *ACEP Now*, *Annals of EM*, *Critical Decisions* and *JACEP Open + EMergence*, a new EM innovation podcast launching soon!

Peer Support Resource: Theater of War

Have you heard of Theater of War? The format includes presenting dramatic readings of seminal plays—from classical Greek tragedies to modern and contemporary works—followed by town hall-style discussions designed to confront social issues by drawing out raw and personal reactions to themes highlighted in the plays. ACEP hosted two Theater of War performances in 2020 and recently partnered with the Infectious Disease Society of America on a [podcast](#) discussing how these performances can help EM physicians process the unprecedented hardships of working in the ED during a pandemic. [Learn more.](#)

ACEP's Latest Pain Management and Opioid-Related Resources:

- Latest *Frontline* podcasts: [ACEP Pain and Addiction Care in the ED \(PACED\) Program](#) with Dr. Alexis La Pietra and Cathlyn Robinson & [California Bridge Program](#) with Dr. Alicia (Kurtz) Gonzalez
- ACEP's **Managing Acute Pain (MAP) point-of-care tool** was recently updated. It's available on the [ACEP website](#) and within the emPOC app ([Mac App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)).

Save the Dates: Virtual PEM21 and LAC21

ACEP's [Annual Leadership & Advocacy Conference](#) is now scheduled for **July 25-27 in Washington, D.C.** This is your chance to advocate for your specialty, engage with new members of Congress and connect with your peers. Join the Interest List for updates.

While you're marking your calendars, make plans to join us for this year's [Virtual Advanced Pediatric Emergency Medical Assembly April 19-21, 2021](#). Learn what's new and gain the skills you need to take on your next pediatric emergency.

CORD 2021 Academic Assembly

CORD is excited to launch its '**Virtually Unstoppable**' Academic Assembly on April 12-15, 2021. Registration information coming soon! Visit www.cordem.org for updates.

Nomination Deadlines Coming Up in March:

[ACEP Board & Council Officer](#) nominations (March 22)

[Wellness Center of Excellence Award](#) (March 1)

*[ACEP Leadership & Excellence Awards](#) (March 1)

*Some of the newest ACEP Leadership and Excellence Awards include:

- Community Emergency Medicine Excellence Award
- Disaster Medical Sciences Award,
- Diane K. Bollman Chapter Advocate Award
- Policy Pioneer Award
- Innovative Change in Practice Management Award
- Pamela P. Bensen Trailblazer Award

[Check out all ACEP Leadership and Excellence Awards](#)

From the Emergency Medicine Foundation:

- **Show your love for EM research this Valentine's Day!** For every EM practitioner who watches [this video](#), VapoTherm will donate \$10 (\$20 per EM resident) to the Emergency Medicine Foundation.
 - [EMF and AFFIRM have announced a new \\$40,000 grant in honor of Dr. Tamara O'Neal](#). Apply by March 31.
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News from ABEM

ABEM Issues Statement on its Commitment to Maintaining Certification Standards

Feb 08, 2021

The American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) understands that this past year was particularly challenging for emergency physicians, especially early career physicians. Every physician member of the ABEM Board of Directors is clinically active and understands the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The disruptions affecting our specialty have also affected ABEM certification. [Read the full statement here](#).

Iowa Chapter

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