



MADISON COUNTY

# MEDICAL SOCIETY

VOICE • ADVOCATE • RESOURCE

## President's Message



Amit Arora, MD

### The Many "Faces" of Telemedicine in Madison County

It has been interesting to see how different people react to a discussion about "telemedicine." Many people believe that it is here to stay in some format and that it improves our efficiency in providing health care by decreasing utilization of services. It also improves accessibility by providing services not normally available to patients in certain areas or particular hospitals.



**Tracy Lowery, MD**  
Vascular Surgery  
185 Whitesport Dr Ste 2  
256-429-5346

**Shivani Malhotra, MD**  
Family Medicine  
301 Governors Dr  
256-551-4500

**Austin Bourgeois, MD**  
Radiology  
2006 Franklin St Ste 200  
256-539-0457

**Rajesh Patel, MD**  
Gastroenterology  
119 Longwood Dr  
256-533-6488

**Ashkan Ghaneie, MD**  
Radiology  
2006 Franklin St Ste 200  
256-539-0457

**Kevin Michaels, MD**  
Occupational Medicine  
4100 Gross Rd  
256-955-8888

Telemedicine is not without skeptics. Some physicians are concerned that the impersonal and imprecise nature of telemedicine will lead to misdiagnosis and potentially unnecessary or inappropriate testing and treatments. They argue that this could lead to potential harm to patients. This was recently discussed at a Town Hall meeting in Huntsville where Primary Care Physicians expressed their concerns about dealing with complications of inappropriate treatments given by a "tele doc" over the phone.

As with any new technology, I suspect that the answer to these questions will be based on the way we approach the utilization of this technology. The benefits are more apparent if we focus on this technology as an augmentation to our practice instead of a substitute. While nothing can replace the face-to-face bedside interaction between a physician and patient, there seems to be momentum with telemedicine that will carry this technology into the future. Participating in the dialogue now helps us have a voice in shaping how this technology will ultimately be used in the future.

Listed below are some examples of telemedicine services currently provided in Madison County.

(1) Tele-Stroke -- The North Alabama Neuro-Stroke Network was established due to a shortage of in-patient Neurologists available in our community. It provides emergent ER Neurology coverage via video conferencing to patients presenting with acute neurological conditions (Status Epilepticus or Stroke). This allows for more accurate diagnosis and time-sensitive treatments. This has already made an impact on several patients in our community.

(2) Tele-Psych screening -- This is another area focused on improving accessibility due to the low numbers of inpatient Psych screeners. The Psychiatric exam seems to fit this telemedicine video model well. In fact, it may fit it too well. There are reports that patients have an easier time discussing their Psychiatric issues through a computer screen than in person.

(3) Tele-Doc Services -- This has been one of the more controversial uses of telemedicine. There has been some question as to how accurate a physician can be in making a diagnosis over the phone without seeing the patient. How much should the Tele-Doc physician be reimbursed? Why can't the patients Primary Physician be reimbursed for providing the same care after hours (or during hours)? This model is based on decreasing utilization of MD offices and ER visits and makes a case for providing access to care for patients that have to wait for a prolonged period of time to get an appointment or who don't have any Primary Physician.

Other potential future options include:

(4) CHF Clinic -- Patients can utilize video conferencing to check in daily with providers regarding medication and dietary compliance and weight checks. This may decrease CHF exacerbations and subsequently decrease ER visits and readmission rates.

(5) Tele-ICU care -- While this may not apply to Madison County, there is a potential benefit in some of our surrounding hospitals that don't typically have access to dedicated ICU physicians. There is discussion that having a tele-ICU video evaluation by an intensive care physician will improve overall outcomes and decrease length of stay.

This list is just a sample of the potential options available with telemedicine now. The future will only bring more and more possibilities, especially in a future environment of too few physicians for too many patients.



MCMS Quarterly Newsletter



Summer 2016

# Inside Look

# Membership Spotlight



Name: W. Alan McCrory, M.D. FCCP  
Specialty: Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine

Practice Name:  
Pulmonary and Sleep Associates of Huntsville (PSA)

## Member Spotlight

2

## MASA Annual Meeting

3

## NAMRC / MCMA News

4

## AMA / S.W.I.M.

6

## Upcoming Events

8

**What do you like best about your current practice?** I have always envisioned myself practicing medicine as part of a team, and I knew that when I joined Pulmonary and Sleep Associates eight years ago that the physicians shared a common vision of caring for patients. As our practice has grown, we have managed to find associates who also share this vision and, as a result, I believe we have formed a group that works well together. We trust one another to provide compassionate care for our patients and their families, and we are confident that the quality of that care is consistent throughout the group. Furthermore, we each have our individual strengths that we bring to the practice, and I believe that in complementing one another that we provide better care than we would as individual physicians.

**What advice would you give to someone just entering the profession of medicine?** Despite the challenges facing today's physicians, I believe we are blessed to have the opportunity to practice medicine. The best advice I could offer a new doctor is to strongly embrace the patient-physician relationship, as this bond is unique to the practice of medicine and is critical to a successful practice. Regardless of the ever-changing landscape of healthcare, the relationship between a physician and patient is consistent, and those moments in your exam room or at the bedside will ultimately reward you and will convince you that you chose the right profession.

**Who or what has had the most influence on your professional career?** My family has undoubtedly had the greatest influence on my professional career. Initially, it was my parents who nurtured the idea that I should become a physician, and they sacrificed much of themselves to assure that I had the opportunity to pursue that dream. Secondly, my Aunt Ellann served as an inspiring role model for me. She was not only a well-respected radiologist, but she was also a tireless advocate for the practice of medicine through her work with MASA. Finally, I could not practice medicine without the support of my wife and children, who often have their lives disrupted by my professional obligations. Their patience and willingness to understand missed functions and late-night calls has provided the stability needed for me to be successful.

**Tell us about yourself- anything you'd like to share...** Perhaps the greatest tragedy and gift in regards to my career was Hurricane Katrina. I was a partner in a very successful practice in a suburb of New Orleans, and I suspect I would still be there if not for the storm. My wife, in-laws, and I spent some stressful days in the hospital during and after Katrina, and the landscape for the practice of medicine in greater New Orleans was forever changed. We decided to leave our home and the Gulf Coast, and we chose to relocate to my birthplace, Huntsville, AL. The community here embraced us, and we will always be grateful for the warm welcome that we received here. We have made Huntsville our new home and have been thankful for the opportunities to meet new friends and to be part of a strong medical community. The tragedy of a natural disaster like Katrina has ultimately been a blessing for our family, and the people of Huntsville should be applauded for the charity and hospitality they displayed to us and everyone affected by the storm.

### Executive Board

PRESIDENT: Amit Arora, MD VICE PRESIDENT: James Gilbert, MD  
SECRETARY: Debbie Kolb, MD TREASURER: W. Scott Lynn, MD

### Board of Trustees

Greg Bouska, MD / William Brix, MD / James Byrd, MD Michael Conrad, MD  
Deason Dunagan, MD / Daniel Fox, MD / Sharon Gardepe, MD / Akram Haggag, MD  
Heather Haley, DO / Matthew Hunt, MD / Dawn Mancuso, MD / Alan McCrory, MD  
Libby Nord, MD / Brad Rice, MD / Sherrie Squyres, MD  
Paul Tabereaux, MD / Alex Talalight, MD / Tarak Vasavada, MD

### Ex Officios

PAST PRESIDENT: Jeremy Russell, MD  
COUNTY DISASTER LIAISON: John Higginbotham, MD / Norman Sabio, MD  
MASA FIFTH DISTRICT CENSOR: Brad Rice, MD / MASA PLACE 2 CENSOR: Tim Stewart, MD  
REDSTONE ARSENAL LIAISON: David Cole, MD  
IM RESIDENT REP: Ashley Jackson, MD / FP RESIDENT REP: Tate Hinkle, MD  
MEDICAL STUDENT REP: Matthew Carlisle / NAMRC DIRECTOR: Brooke Rawlins

### Board of Censors

Jeremy Russell, MD / Irma de Leon, MD / Amit Arora, MD / James Gilbert, MD / Debbie Kolb, MD

### MCMS Administrative Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Laura Moss / ADMIN ASSISTANT/ MEMBERSHIP: Amy McDonald

## Our Mission

The Madison County Medical Society has been organized to serve its members as an advocate for the physician/patient relationship, and to promote and preserve the highest standards of professional, educational, and moral conduct.

## *Congratulations!*

to Richard "Dick" Lester, Jr. M.D., FAAP, who received the Medical Association's highest honor - the Samuel Buford Word Award, presented in recognition of service to humanity beyond the usual scope of medical practice and often rendered at some personal sacrifice.

Dr. Lester, a Navy veteran, one was one Huntsville's first pediatricians. He served the Huntsville community for more than 40 years, joining with another pediatrician in the area to form Huntsville Pediatric Associates. He was chair of the Huntsville Hospital Medical Education Committee, the Continuing Medical Education Committee

and the Department of Pediatrics. He developed the Neonatal Ethics Committee for the hospital in the 1980s, which expanded into the Medical Ethics Committee, and he remained the chair until his retirement. In 1970, he co-authored an article about otitis media treatment for pediatricians, which was named one of the Top 20 most important articles in the journal's 50-year history.



MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
OF THE STATE OF ALABAMA™

2016

## *Annual Meeting*

Members of the Madison County Medical Society gathered in Montgomery, for the Medical Association of the State of Alabama's 2016 Annual Meeting "Always On Call." Physicians representing MCMS at the State level this past year include Brad Rice, 5th District Censor; Tim Stewart, At Large Censor; Jay Suggs, Council on Medical Education; Jeremy Russell & Patrick O'Neill, Council on Medical Service. Dr. O'Neill also served on the Nominating Committee. Ashley Jackson served as the AMA Representative on the Resident Fellow Section; Bill Schneider served as an AMA Representative on the Young Physician Section; and Tarak Vasavada served on the Reference Committee. Thank you to all of these Madison County physicians for donating their time and talent to the Medical Association of the State of Alabama!



Congratulations to the Medical Association's new president, Dr. David Herrick.

"Being a member of your State and County organizations is just the  
**RIGHT THING TO DO!**"



## *50 Year Members!*

MASA/MCMS 50 year members were honored including Dr. Prasada Rao Kakani, pictured with wife Bhavani. Also recognized, Drs. Peter Booher, Thomas Griffith, and Robert Maynor, Jr.

MCMA members were also in Montgomery attending State Alliance events, as well as joint MASA/AMASA activities. Congratulations to Lindsay Rice, AMASA's 2016-17 President; and Ashley Clarke, 2016-17 Treasurer. Left to right: Molly McCrory, Christina Tabereaux, Stephanie McCarthy, Lindsay Rice, and Ashley Clark.



## *Caucus Time-*

Prior to the commencement of the Medical Association's 2016 Annual Session, Fifth District physicians met to discuss issues and candidates. Pictured left to right: Drs. James Thacker, Alan McCrory, Paul Tabereaux, Jay Suggs, Brad Rice, James Chambers, III, Patrick O'Neill, Deason Dunagan, and Bill Schnieder.



Connect on Facebook

# NORTH ALABAMA medical reserve corps



The mission of the North Alabama Medical Reserve Corps is to recruit and train medical and non-medical volunteers to supplement existing community organizations in preparing for and responding to an emergency or disaster and to provide community education in disease awareness and prevention during non-crises times.

## 2 Volunteer Orientations

Volunteer orientations are for individuals interested in volunteering or existing volunteers that may have missed previous orientations.

At the NAMRC orientation, attendees will be provided with vital information to prepare themselves and their families for potential dangers in our community.

Attendees will also learn the role of the NAMRC and the volunteers' roles in terms of preparing for and responding to disasters and emergencies in North Alabama.

busy schedule?  
**PICK ONE**

Wednesday, July 13th, 2016  
9 a.m. until 10 a.m.

Thursday, July 21st, 2016  
6 p.m. until 7 p.m.

NAMRC Office  
3330 L&N Drive, Suite I, Huntsville, AL

Please RSVP by sending an email to [director@northalabamamrc.com](mailto:director@northalabamamrc.com)

**GO ONLINE AND SUPPORT THE NAMRC BY VOLUNTEERING!**

### NAMRC STAFF

DIRECTOR: Brooke Rawlins  
[www.northalabamamrc.com](http://www.northalabamamrc.com)

## MADISON COUNTY MEDICAL ALLIANCE

Building Healthy Communities



Friday, August 26  
6-10pm  
The Ledges  
at the Clubhouse

The time for On Call! is fast approaching. The On Call! committee is striving to make this year's event a great success. By popular request, Dr. Kendall Black will return as the auctioneer. Please join the Pager Club to help support the event. The proceeds from On Call! will benefit the New Hope Children's Clinic, the Mobile Medical Unit, NAMRC and scholarships. This year we formed a new partnership with New Hope Children's Clinic. This clinic provides essential services to babies and children in the New Hope community. Register today at <https://madisoncountymedicalsociety.org/events>

We invite you to join us with your family and friends for the Walk With A Doc program. The walk is held on the second Saturday of every month. You can learn more details at: <https://madisoncountymedicalsociety.org/events>



2nd SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

## JOIN Today!

<https://portal.icheckgateway.com/MadisonMedicalAlliance/Default.aspx>

Our membership drive is underway! Membership is open to the physician and physician's spouse. We have a special rate of \$120 for a couple. We encourage you to become a member and join us in furthering our mission in the coming year.

Thank you,  
Stephanie McCarthy



Please welcome the new MCMA Board of Directors for 2016-2017  
TOP: Member at Large-Emily Hoffman, Immediate Past President-Michele Armstrong, Recording Secretary-Emily Bains  
MIDDLE: Treasurer-Melinda Holden, Historian-Teresa Chambers, Parliamentarian-Isabell Thomasson  
BOTTOM: Assistant Treasurer-Christina Tabereaux, President-Stephanie McCarthy, Corresponding Secretary-Kelly Davenport

*Sometimes life holds  
an endless list of challenges.  
Until you discover an*  
**ABUNDANCE of SOLUTIONS.**

If you have questions about senior living, we have answers. Aging is often difficult with a seemingly endless number of decisions and changes. Let us offer simple solutions. We'll share with you information on your many options and offer a helping hand to assist you on your journey.

**For more information, contact (256) 881-6111**



**BROOKDALE**  
— SENIOR LIVING SOLUTIONS —

**brookdale.com**

**Brookdale Jones Farm**

Independent Living

Assisted Living

Brookdale Hampton Cove

Alzheimer's & Dementia Care





Article by Ashley Jackson, MD  
IM Resident Representative



# Annual Meeting

In early June, several physicians from Alabama attended the American Medical Association's (AMA) annual meeting. The ever-changing legendary skyline of Chicago – a mixture of repurposed century old buildings intermingled with magnificent skyscrapers – served as a meaningful setting for this year's conference.

Although filled with seeing old colleagues & making exciting new connections as well as continuing medical education opportunities, the primary goal is debating & adopting policy in hopes to improve the lives of patients and physicians alike.

The AMA is the largest professional organization of physicians in the United States whose goal is "Helping Doctors Help Patients". However, during times of accelerated change in medicine and increasing demand on physicians beyond the care at the patient's bedside, it has rarely been more imperative than now that we maintain our unique position as doctors to champion updating recommendations, guidelines, and advocacy.

Outgoing AMA President Dr. Steven Stack spoke on using his tenure to focus on regaining the joy of medicine amid physician burnout. Addressing issues that have arisen with the ushering in of a new era of medicine included improving continuity (such as telemedicine rules and EMR interoperability), increasing digital efficiency, and reducing opioid overuse. CMS Administrator Andy Slavitt called upon physicians to not only be engaged but also guide the direction of MACRA (Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act) by allowing physicians to design and participate in implementation, quality reporting, MIPS (Merit-Based Incentive Payment System), and APM (alternative payment models).

One of the defining moments during the meeting came the morning after the recent tragedy in Orlando, notably the same city as the AMA's next meeting in the fall. The AMA House of Delegates majority declared gun violence a public health crisis – a key step along the path for promoting federally funded research by the CDC. This potentiates the possibility that one day there will be an easier way to screen for exposure, particularly in communities where it is prevalent and comorbid with other sources of depression and trauma.

While ongoing efforts continue to ensure we all have access to high quality, affordable health care in a landscape where doctors can still glean satisfaction from their professional calling, there exists a resounding yet bold message: Never forget that you have an individual voice and we together have a collective voice best used to speak up for our patients, colleagues, and community.



Representing Madison County at AMA's Annual Meeting:  
Eric Melancon, MD, Ashley Jackson, MD,  
Lindsay Rice and Dr. Bill & Marie Schneider

# Are you coming?



FRIDAY  
August 26, 2016  
6-10pm  
The Ledges

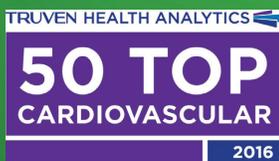
Register online now  
[www.madisoncountydoctors.org/events](http://www.madisoncountydoctors.org/events)

enjoy *bid* laugh *welcome*  
meet **celebrate**  
greet *eat toast*  
*dance*



Female physicians met at The Weeden House for a gathering of the Society of Women in Medicine. Guest speaker, Liana Hill - Forensic Nurse Examiner Program Director for Crisis Services of North Alabama, spoke about the programs and assistance that the center offers. Special thanks to Aruna Arora, MD, and Servis First Bank for hosting!

# Alabama's ONLY T♥P 50 Heart Hospital



*Exceptional care. Exceptionally close.*

 HUNTSVILLE  
HOSPITAL

[huntsvillehospital.org](http://huntsvillehospital.org)

Madison County Medical Society  
3330 L&N Drive, Suite I  
Huntsville, AL 35801

PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Huntsville, AL  
Permit No. 4

## Upcoming Events

RSVP: [www.madisoncountydoctors.org/events](http://www.madisoncountydoctors.org/events)

Monday, July 18 / Politics101: What Doctors need to know  
& MACRA Primer / Athletic Club Alabama / 5:30pm

Tuesday, July 19 / Office Manager Roundtable  
The Ledges / 11:30-1pm

Saturday, August 13 / Walk with a Doc  
Fleet Feet, Jones Valley / 8-10am

Wednesday, August 17 / Independent Physician  
Roundtable / Warren Averett / 5:30-7pm

Friday, August 26 / On Call! New Physician Reception  
Welcome / The Ledges / 6-10 pm

## Thanks 2016 Annual Sponsors!



**CRESTWOOD**  
MEDICAL CENTER



**HUDSONALPHA**  
INSTITUTE FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY



**HUNTSVILLE  
HOSPITAL**

**Keel Point**



**PROASSURANCE**  
Treated Fairly

The logo for Renasant Bank features a green leaf icon above the text "RENASANT BANK" in white on a dark blue background, with "Greater Service" in white below.

**RENASANT  
BANK**  
Greater Service

The logo for Servis 1st Bank features a blue square above the text "Servis 1st Bank" in white on a dark blue background.

**Servis 1st Bank**

OUR NAME IS OUR MISSION.

The logo for Snelling Medical Professionals features a blue diamond shape above the text "SNELLING" in blue, with "MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS" in a smaller blue font below.

**SNELLING**  
MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

The logo for Warren Averett CPAs and Advisors features a large blue 'W' above the text "Warren Averett" in blue, with "CPAs AND ADVISORS" in a smaller blue font below.

**Warren  
Averett**  
CPAs AND ADVISORS