



## Editor's Letter

David D. Vega, MD FFAEM

### Another Great Scientific Assembly

It's hard to believe that Scientific Assembly 2011 has already come and gone. As in past years, the meeting was an overwhelming success. The educational offerings were of the highest quality, with lecturers including some of the finest in our specialty. The record number of poster submissions allowed for an impressive array of abstracts and interesting photo presentations. All of this, and much more, is made available without the major support of Big Pharma and corporate mega groups that plagues other conferences. Combine all of this with the fact that this conference remains free for members, and I have no qualms about calling Scientific Assembly the best conference series in emergency medicine.

Attendance at Scientific Assembly continues to increase in a time when many organizations are seeing much more modest increases in any sort of member involvement. The enthusiasm of our members at this meeting was extraordinary. In talking with other members and in attending committee and section meetings, I heard some great ideas to advance the organization and its mission. Each of us needs to maintain that enthusiasm from Scientific Assembly and decide how we are going to contribute to the continued growth and success of AAEM. Serving on one of AAEM's committees is a great place to increase your involvement with the organization and give back to your specialty. A list of AAEM's committees can be found online at <http://www.aaem.org/committees>. We all have to remember that inaction is our adversary and will lead to the erosion of our rights as specialists in emergency medicine and lessen our ability to effectively care for our patients in the emergency department. If we do not take action, others will act on our behalf, often not having our best interests in mind.

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#### AAEM Mission Statement

The American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) is the specialty society of emergency medicine. AAEM is a democratic organization committed to the following principles:

1. Every individual should have unencumbered access to quality emergency care provided by a specialist in emergency medicine.
2. The practice of emergency medicine is best conducted by a specialist in emergency medicine.
3. A specialist in emergency medicine is a physician who has achieved, through personal dedication and sacrifice, certification by either the American Board of Emergency Medicine (ABEM) or the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM).
4. The personal and professional welfare of the individual specialist in emergency medicine is a primary concern to the AAEM.
5. The Academy supports fair and equitable practice environments necessary to allow the specialist in emergency medicine to deliver the highest quality of patient care. Such an environment includes provisions for due process and the absence of restrictive covenants.
6. The Academy supports residency programs and graduate medical education, which are essential to the continued enrichment of emergency medicine, and to ensure a high quality of care for the patients.
7. The Academy is committed to providing affordable high quality continuing medical education in emergency medicine for its members.
8. The Academy supports the establishment and recognition of emergency medicine internationally as an independent specialty and is committed to its role in the advancement of emergency medicine worldwide.

#### Membership Information

Fellow and Full Voting Member: \$365 (Must be ABEM or AOBEM certified in EM or Pediatric EM)

\*Associate Member: \$250

Emeritus Member: \$250 (Must be 65 years old and a full voting member in good standing for 3 years)

Affiliate Member: \$365 (Non-voting status; must have been, but are no longer ABEM or AOBEM certified in EM)

International Member: \$150 (Non-voting status)

AAEM/RSA Member: \$50 (voting in AAEM/RSA elections only)

Student Member: \$20 or \$50 (voting in AAEM/RSA elections only)

\*Associate membership is limited to graduates of an ACGME or AOA approved Emergency Medicine Program.

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Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Howard Blumstein, MD, FAAEM  
President, AAEM

(1) <http://www.aaem.org/commonsense/commonsense0110.pdf> (page 8)

Enclosures

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*Washington Watch - continued from page 3*

But Senate Finance Committee Chair Max Baucus (D-MT) issued a release saying that the increase in the number of Americans without health insurance is due to "egregious insurance company abuses." The increase in uninsured people "is clear evidence of how critical it was to take action to protect patients, and that's exactly what the [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA, Pub. L. No. 111-148)] will do," he said.

Robert Greenstein, executive director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, also issued a statement. Greenstein said the Census data "show a striking divergence between declines in private insurance and expanded

coverage through federally supported programs." He added, "Without the expansion the increase in the number and percentage of people who are uninsured would have been much larger." Both Greenstein and Ron Pollack, executive director of Families USA, credited government programs such as Medicaid, CHIP, and Medicare with preventing an even greater increase in the ranks of the uninsured; and they cited the further help coming from the new requirements of PPACA that will take effect soon.

The Census Bureau report is available at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>.

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One cannot overestimate the value of the social interactions and networking that comes as a result of meetings like Scientific Assembly. Besides meeting with peers and former residents, I've always enjoyed the opportunity to rub elbows with some of the "big names" in emergency medicine and talk with various experts after their lectures. In addition, every single member has easy access to AAEM's leaders and can have their voice heard on any aspect of the organization's activities. Meetings of the board of directors are open to all members, who can learn about and influence the direction of the Academy. Unlike some other organizations, the board is elected through a completely democratic process involving board certified emergency physicians.

As a democratic organization, your thoughts and ideas are highly valued by AAEM. If you have something to say to your fellow members of AAEM, you may want to start by sending some comments to us here at *Common Sense* as a letter to the editor or by submitting an original article for publication. Feel

free to contact me directly at [cseditor@aaem.org](mailto:cseditor@aaem.org) with your opinions about anything you read in *Common Sense*. In addition, direct communication with the leadership of AAEM is merely an email away (<http://www.aaem.org/boardofdirectors/boardlisting.php>). Through my own service on the board of directors, I can say that the board is completely dedicated to the promotion of AAEM's mission and willing to go far beyond what is necessary to respond to the needs of individual members.

Start planning now to attend next year's Scientific Assembly, February 8-10, at the Hotel Del Coronado in San Diego. This beachfront resort, designated as a National Historic Landmark, is sure to be a great location for the best conference in emergency medicine. And while you're looking at your schedule, don't forget that the Sixth Mediterranean Emergency Medicine Congress (MEMC VI) will be held September 10-14 this year in Kos, Greece. Co-sponsored by AAEM, this meeting is expected to see nearly 2,000 emergency medicine specialists from more than 75 countries converge on the island of Kos to share in academic and scientific exchange.