Medical Society of Sedgwick County members attended medical schools in more than 40 countries, making Wichita and Kansas a rich, well-rounded community of physicians.

On Oct 1, the MSSC is holding a special event to celebrate its International Medical Graduates (IMGs). All physicians – not just MSSC members – are invited to attend. The event will feature specially curated international food and a panel of IMG physicians discussing their medical school and residency experiences.

“I expect a very interesting evening that will give everyone a chance to learn more about each other,” MSSC President Michael Lievens, MD, said.

According to a 2015 study, international medical graduates – who must pass a U.S. medical licensing examination, be certified by an educational commission and go through a U.S. medical residency program in order to practice medicine here -- make up about a quarter of the physicians in the MSSC.

PANELISTS

Dr. Samuel Akidiva, Kenya
Dr. Usha Challa, India
Dr. Estephan Zayat, Lebanon
Dr. Claudia Wendell, Columbia

October Membership Meeting: Celebrating IMGs
WHEN: 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 1
WHERE: Botanica, 701 Amidon St.
COST: Free. All physicians and spouses invited.
RSVP: By Thursday, Sept. 26. E-mail Denise Phillips at denisephillips@med-soc.org or call (316) 683-7558.

Med-mal among issues discussed at KMS annual meeting

Kurt Scott, president and CEO of KAMMCO, reviewed the status of medical malpractice liability in Kansas at the Kansas Medical Society annual meeting Sept. 6-7 at the Wichita Hyatt.

The Kansas Supreme Court ruled earlier this summer in the Hilburn case that the state cap on non-economic damages was unconstitutional. But, as Scott explained, it is unclear whether the ruling applies to medical malpractice cases. A press release from the court at the time of the ruling said it didn’t apply to medical malpractice cases. Also, one of the justices said at a forum this summer that Hilburn was an automotive case and didn’t apply to medical malpractice.

KAMMCO is taking the position that Hilburn doesn’t apply to medical malpractice, Scott said, but it is hoping to get formal clarification from the court. In the meantime, KAMMCO is working with KMS and the Kansas Hospital Association to develop potential legislative strategies.

“It is complicated,” Scott said. “I don’t know if there is a clear path.”

Rachelle Colombo, director of governmental affairs at KMS, also provided an overview of what happened in this year’s legislative session and what is likely to happen next year.

The 2019 session was particularly challenging, with bills to allow for the corporate practice of medicine and independent practice for APRNs. KMS was able to significantly alter the corporate practice of medicine bill, and the APRN bill ended up being replaced by a bill to expand Medicaid.

Colombo expects both Medicaid expansion and independent practice to be back next year. Other likely issues include medical marijuana, tobacco and vaping restrictions, and possibly an attempt to address the Hilborn decision.

Kevin Hoppock, MD, chairman of both the KMS and MSSC legislative committees, encouraged members to get involved by helping develop policy positions, participating in grassroots advocacy, and contributing to KaMPAC, the Kansas Medical Political Action Committee.

The annual meeting concluded with the inauguration of a new KMS president, LaDonna Schmidt, MD. Board certified in family medicine, Schmidt currently practices at Lawrence Memorial Hospital.
How should docs take on overwhelming challenges? Together.

Dr. Michael Lievens, MD
September President’s Message

These monthly columns are a unique experience in my career in medicine.

On one hand, it is another task to perform. One more job that has to be done. On the other hand, it is a great opportunity to think about medicine as a whole. To think about the career of medicine, and how it has changed and evolved since I entered medical school in 1985.

I have done more than my share of whining and complaining about many of those changes. I can especially get on a rant about the electronic health record, and how it is taking so much of the joy out of the daily practice of medicine.

However, I always come back to the same thought: I still love it. I still find it a challenge. I still love talking with patients and helping them to feel better, be healthier and, hopefully, live longer.

I still find it an “adrenaline rush” to scope a brisk GI bleeder, or to drain pus from a bile duct. I love the feeling when patients and their family trust and respect me because of the help I have been lucky enough to provide to them.

One of the greatest joys in my practice is seeing chronic liver disease patients – whom I have followed for years as they fought a steady decline in their quality of life – on their first follow-up visit after receiving a liver transplant. It is truly a new life for them that must be witnessed to believe.

I still get excited about the future of medicine, from the patient care side of things. But there are many difficulties facing medicine as well. Locally, we have a physician shortage. It is a critical shortage in many specialties. The international medical graduates are a tremendous asset in addressing this, but despite their participation, we still have many holes to fill.

We have a local medical school, which helps. We have local GME programs, which clearly help. But, alas, these have not been enough.

As many of you are aware, a new osteopathic medical school is planned for downtown Wichita. Lots of work still needs to be done and obstacles overcome before this will bear fruit in providing more doctors for our community.

Many practices have incorporated mid-level providers, which also has helped. But despite all of this, many of us are feeling great pressure to see more patients, and add more on to the day. Waiting lists in some specialties are months long.

I don’t have any easy answers to resolve this shortage. In fact, it is likely to worsen. Baby boomers are turning 65 at a rate of 10,000 people per day in the U.S. Those people need care, and many in our workforce are members of that generation.

Like many problems that face us now, and like so many problems that have been overcome in the past, the answer will require considering ideas and actions outside the usual way of doing things. Doctors, mid-level providers, hospitals and community leaders will need to work together, perhaps with a different paradigm.

The business side of medicine, and the money, is an entirely different subject, which I am not qualified to discuss in any intelligent manner. However, the way the work of patient care is carried out currently is placing great strain on many pieces in the system. We as doctors need to play a big role in finding a new paradigm.

The problem with that statement is that we don’t have time. It is the classic riddle of the swamps of the southeast U.S.: How do you get rid of an alligator infestation? Answer: Drain the swamp. But how do you drain the swamp when you are constantly slapping alligators off of your backside?

I strongly believe the answers have the best chance of developing when doctors know one another and communicate with one another. This has grown as a theme in my experience in MSSC leadership. It is what makes the MSSC as important as ever.

If we all stay in our own little worlds, without talking to one another face to face, the answers to our problems will be developed and implemented by others – and the practice of medicine, and the experience of medicine by patients, will suffer as a result.

► You won’t want to miss this: IMG celebration!

The MSSC general membership meeting on Oct. 1 at Botanica is a great opportunity to interact with other physicians. It will be a night to honor our local doctors who are originally from other nations and to learn more about their original cultures and their experiences here in Wichita. Please come. You will be glad you did.

IMGs CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

United States.

These physicians are particularly needed in rural or other underserved areas and in certain specialties. They make up more than 40 percent of the primary care work force in the United States, and more half of those caring for older Americans.

The MSSC has 182 members who graduated from medical schools in 39 different foreign countries. Retired MSSC members bring the country total to 49.

The most-represented countries among practicing MSSC physicians are Lebanon and India, with 43 and 39 members respectively. Syria is next with 14, followed by Pakistan, China, Philippines, Jordan, Kenya and Mexico, which have five to eight members each.

The celebration’s featured speakers are Dr. Samuel Akidiva, Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya; Dr. Usha Challa, Rangaraya Medical College, Kakinada, India; Dr. Estephan Zayat, American University of Beirut Medical School, Beirut, Lebanon; Dr. Claudia Wendell, Universidad Industrial de Santander, Bucaramanga, Columbia.

Lievens underscored the value of MSSC general membership meetings and the opportunity to interact with fellow physicians.

“Each time I leave a meeting, I find myself wondering why I didn’t attended more often in the past, before I became more involved,” he said. “It is always enjoyable.”

Food will be provided by Café Maurice (Mediterranean) and Kababs (Indian and Pakistani). Juarez Bakery is supplying dessert.
MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Society who know a good and sufficient reason why any of the following applicants are not eligible for membership are requested to communicate with the Medical Society of Sedgwick County, (316) 683-7557.


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Eric Price, MD – Moved out of state  
Thomas A. Scott, MD – Moved out of state

In Remembrance

MSSC extends its condolences to the families of Drs. Mosier and Knight.

Longtime family medicine physician Stanley J. Mosier, MD, passed away on Sept. 6. He was 76. Mosier earned his medical degree from the University of Kansas Medical School in 1968. Following an internship at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, he completed a family practice residency at Wesley Medical Center. His career was shaped by his deep concern for under-served people including drug addicts, Native Americans and rural Kansans, his family said. Mosier served as the co-director of Wichita Methadone Maintenance from 1971-72. He then became co-director of the Family Medicine Residency Program at Wesley Medical Center from 1972-80, where he was instrumental in adding a rural rotation to the curriculum. Mosier moved into private practice in 1980 where he worked until his retirement in 201

Retired surgeon Philip J. Knight, MD, died Sept. 6. He was 76. He served South Central Kansas from 1982-2012, the majority of that time as its only pediatric surgeon, his family said. Knight “departed happy, a little sooner than he had hoped, there was still so much more to see, do and dream,” his family said. “He is grateful to his patients and their trusting parents. He thanks his excellent pediatric colleagues who made his busy practice bearable.” His family also said Knight was most thankful for his late son, James, and wife of 50 years, Laura. “She brought him joy while trying to keep him in line,” his family said.

Project Access showcased at United Way event

Project Access was featured at the kickoff breakfast of the United Way of the Plains annual campaign on Sept. 5 at Century II. MSSC member Paul Uhlig, MD, spoke about the many community members who came together to create the program 20 years ago. United Way played a key role, Uhlig said, providing a “consistent voice of support and vision.”

In its 20 years of operations, Project Access has helped more than 14,000 Sedgwick County residents receive donated medical care valued at more than $220 million. That’s enough people to fill Intrust Bank Arena, Uhlig noted.
This month, we capture physicians, Wichita leaders and others as they go ‘Over the Edge’ for Project Access

Project Access held its 20th anniversary fundraising event on Aug. 29-30 where dozens of participants rappelled down the side of the Ambassador Hotel in downtown Wichita. Many civic and health care leaders, including Wichita Police Chief Gordon Ramsay and Wichita Fire Department Chief Tammy Snow, were among the VIPs to scale the 14-story building. “This incredible fundraiser helped support the generosity of our medical community who make health care possible for thousands of residents,” said Shelley Duncan, executive director. “The most important thing is to help sustain the future of Project Access and give people the help they need when they need it most.”

Health Insurance Now Available!

The Medical Society of Sedgwick County is now offering a new and exciting option for its members’ group health care coverage.

ProviDRs Care’s NexUS Health Plan is a value-based health care program designed to lower costs and improve health. It can be offered to groups down to 2 employees and depending on the size of your group, you can offer multiple options to your employees.

To learn more or to request a group quote, contact Bret Emberson at BretEmberson@ProviDRsCare.Net or (316) 221-9106.
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Interventional Cardiologist
Wichita, Derby and Newton clinics
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To learn more about our entire team, visit heartlandcardiology.com