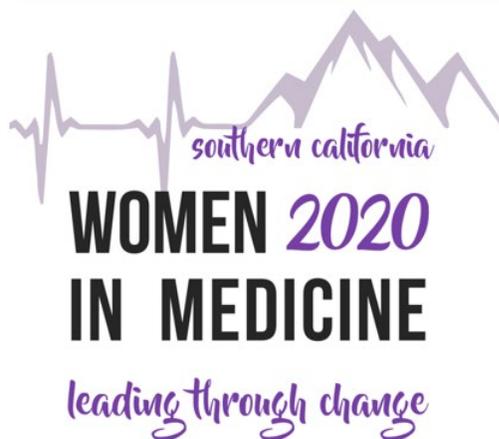




Welcome to the **September 2019** issue of *OCMA Connect*, our monthly publication focusing on issues specific to Orange County physicians. We hope you enjoy our newsletter and we welcome your input. Please send your comments, ideas or questions to Holly Appelbaum at [happelbaum@ocma.org](mailto:happelbaum@ocma.org).

Save the Date



Friday, March 20, 2020  
Hotel Irvine, 17900 Jamboree Road, Irvine, CA

In November 2018, the **first "Women in Medicine"** conference was a **big success** and attended by more than 115 women physicians, residents, medical students and even some high schoolers interested in a career in medicine. **Mark your calendars** now for the **"Women in Medicine 2020"** conference scheduled for **Friday, March 20th at Hotel Irvine**. More information with details to come!

### Vaping-Associated Pulmonary Injuries (VAPI)



Federal, state, and local health departments are investigating a multi-state outbreak of severe pulmonary disease associated with e-cigarette products (devices, liquids, refill pods, and/or cartridges) use. This investigation is ongoing and has not identified a cause, but all reported cases have a history of using e-cigarette products.

E-cigarettes are devices that deliver an aerosol to the user by heating a liquid that usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. E-cigarettes can also be used to deliver cannabis or other substances.

The Orange County case count is now at 6 hospitalizations (and no deaths). **Orange County medical providers are asked to report any suspected cases of VAPI within one business day to the OC Health Care Agency Communicable Disease Control Division at (714) 834-8180.** Clinicians are asked to have the patient or their family hold onto any product and/or devices that are still available for potential collection and testing by public health.

### Additional resources:

- 1) Orange County Health Care Agency:  
<http://www.ochealthinfo.com/phs/about/epidasmt/epi/dip/prevention/vapi>
- 2) CAHAN Alert - Vaping-Associated Pulmonary Injury:  
<https://files.constantcontact.com/921e04bb601/d6f320a7-5c10-4f0d-94a3-ed31070f8f6e.pdf>
- 3) CDC: [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html)

## CalOptima's website gets a new look, and a self-service member portal



**CalOptima recently launched our new member portal.** The member portal is a secure online website that gives members 24-hour access to health information.

CalOptima's new member portal can be accessed in English on a computer, tablet or smart phone device. Additional languages will begin rolling out in fall 2019.

### The new self-service options make it easier and faster for members to:

- Update personal information
- Request a new ID card
- Print a copy of ID card
- Change health network or primary care provider (PCP)
- Ask CalOptima Customer Service a question
- Complete annual Health Assessment Survey

Help our members take an active role in their health care. Register at <https://member.caloptima.org> today!

To make changes online, go to the member portal on the CalOptima homepage at [www.caloptima.org](http://www.caloptima.org).

## Sudeep Kukreja, M.D. Receives Ethnic Physician Leadership Award

Physicians for a Healthy California and the Network for Ethnic Physician Organizations (NEPO) presented the **Ethnic Physician Leadership Award** to OCMA Past President Sudeep Kukreja, M.D.



The Ethnic Physician Leadership Award goes to someone who has demonstrated **extraordinary contributions toward improving the health of ethnic communities in California**, consistent with the mission of Physicians for a Healthy California and the Network for Ethnic Physician Organizations. **Dr. Kukreja is a very well reputed member of the medical community in Orange County. He is very highly respected by his patients and colleagues.** He has been recipient of multiple accolades from his colleagues and patients as evidenced by him being selected as Physician of Excellence by OCMA. He is also a recipient of the Teacher of the Year award by pediatric residency program at CHOC Children's Hospital. He is passionate about eliminating health disparities and promote diversity in healthcare. Congratulations Dr. Kukreja.

## New and Noteworthy: Books by OCMA Members

Many OCMA members are physicians who write more than prescriptions. OCMA has dedicated this space to promote new releases by OCMA members.



If you are a member of OCMA who recently has released a book that you would like to announce here, please forward your name, the title of your book and website for the book to Holly Appelbaum at [happelbaum@ocma.org](mailto:happelbaum@ocma.org).

## Welcome New OCMA Members

### Jay Lee, M.D.

Family Medicine  
Huntington Beach

### Steven Mills, M.D.

Colon and Rectal Surgery  
Orange

### James Lindberg, M.D.

Internal Medicine  
Newport Beach

How Much Can Your  
Practice Charge  
Patients for Copies of  
Medical Records?  
Find out now!



## Charging for Patient Medical Records What are the Acceptable Fees?

Presented by the Cooperative of American Physicians, Inc. (CAP)

**Short answer:** It's complicated.

We all know patients in California have a right to review their medical record and/or obtain a copy. It is also no surprise that healthcare providers are typically allowed to charge a fee for this service. However, with all the different rules and exceptions, copying fees can be confusing. [Read more](#).

Learn more about how CAP can support your practice by downloading our free guide [The Physician's Action Guide to Reducing Risk and Improving Business](#), which includes resources and tips to help physicians and medical staff solve common practice problems associated with seemingly routine tasks. Request it here: [www.CAPphysicians.com/solve9](http://www.CAPphysicians.com/solve9)

## Business Partner Profile

### Universal Financial Systems



**Universal Financial Systems (UFS) is a Southern California based financial services company** specializing in medical billing and collections, consumer and commercial collections, litigation and judgment collections, accounting

services, and general business consulting. UFS excels in servicing all specialties and software platforms, EHR implementation and transition, and credentialing with all payers. Our billing and recovery efforts typically capture thousands of dollars in unprocessed or denied insurance claims as well as uncollected patient balances.

**Benefit:** OCMA members receive a complimentary Insurance & Patient Collection Performance Analysis (\$300 value), as well as bundled pricing for billing and collection services.

**Contact:** George Christidis, 310-502-3580, [georgec@ufsworks.com](mailto:georgec@ufsworks.com); website: [www.ufsworks.com](http://www.ufsworks.com)

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