



Welcome to the **September 2020** 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.

Opinion

Step therapy: Harmful delays and the patient may suffer

By: **Rimal Bera, M.D.**



It's never a good idea when insurers cut costs by interfering in the decision-making process between patients and their doctor. But during a national pandemic, it's a particularly bad idea.

I am thinking specifically of an insurance strategy called step therapy. It happens when insurance companies require patients and their providers to prove that insurer-preferred alternatives don't work before covering the physician-prescribed medication.

Frustrated patients and health care providers knowingly refer to this as "fail first." That's because it asks patients to suffer through the ineffectiveness or unnecessary side effects of a medicine picked by their insurer rather than the one their health care provider thinks is a better fit. Only after patients complete an often-lengthy process of trying and failing multiple medications does the insurer agree to cover the physician's recommendation.

[Learn more](#)

O.C. Health Care Agency Announces Star-Studded Positive Vibes Ad Campaign



Surfing legends, professional skateboarders, restaurateurs, comedians and more are on board

By: **Clayton Chau, MD, PhD**
Agency Director
County Health Officer
Orange County Health Care Agency

The O.C. Health Care Agency (HCA) is launching a new public service campaign designed to save lives by spreading positive vibes - not COVID-19 throughout the community.

HCA is sponsoring **KFI's Gary and Shannon radio talk show** to interview local celebrities who **represent different parts of O.C. culture** that people here know and love - like the food, the music, the art, the surfing and the fun - iconic personalities who join us in **spreading life-saving messages about basic COVID safety in a positive, feel-good way.**

Starting August 24, KFI's Gary and Shannon will interview a stellar line-up of well-known OC celebrities at 11:50 a.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. The schedule will be posted on the [O.C. Health Care Agency website](#)

- * **Food** - Wing Lam and Ed Lee (Wahoo's Fish Taco)
- * **Surfing** - Pete Townend
- * **Surfing** - Courtney Conlogue
- * **Skateboarding** - Tosh Townend
- * **Art** - Melissa Murphy
- * **Music** - Jim Quealy
- * **Comedian** - Chad & JT (Chad Goes Deep)

Huntington Beach muralist Melissa Murphy designed two artistic masks based on her paintings - one of a surfer and the Huntington Beach pier and a second featuring three dolphins - both with the message, "**Spread Positive Vibes.**" The County will be giving away 45,000 of these masks.

In addition to the weekly radio broadcast, participating local celebrities will be sharing their interviews and messages about spreading positive vibes on their social media channels. **Downloadable social media assets for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter will be available for anyone to use and share.**

Audio and in some cases Zoom videos of the interviews will be posted on the website and on the **O.C. Health Care Agency's YouTube channel**. A :30 video PSA will be made using excerpts of the interviews.

To find out more about how you can get a free mask and get on board to help spread positive vibes in Orange County, go to ohealthinfo.com/positivevibes



Prepare Your Patients for Flu Season



Although flu epidemics happen every year, the timing, severity and length of the season varies. **Please encourage your patients to get a flu shot** and explain the benefits of why it is important to get the vaccine.

Who Should Get Vaccinated This Season?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older. It is the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease. It's especially important for certain people to get vaccinated, including people who are at high risk of developing serious complications like pneumonia if they get sick with the flu. **These include:**

- * People who have certain medical conditions like asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease
- * Pregnant women
- * People 65 years and older
- * People who are morbidly obese

People who live with or care for others who are at high risk of developing serious complications, such as:

- * Household contacts and caregivers of people with certain medical conditions like asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease
- * Caregivers for infants less than 6 months old

Thank you for your continued support in providing quality health care services to our members.

Please visit www.caloptima.org/en/ForProviders/Resources/HealthEducation.aspx for additional member health education materials.

[Learn more](#)

Welcome New OCMA Members

Roula Creighton, MD

Psychiatry
Irvine

Anna Galyean, MD

Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Irvine

Morris Hasson, MD

Internal Medicine
Aliso Viejo

Dharini Patel, MD

Anesthesiology
Huntington Beach

Aalap Shah, MD

Anesthesiology
Orange

Ethan Egan, MD

Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
Corona del Mar

Theodore Gregorius, MD

Orthopedic Surgery
Newport Beach

Joanna Kopacz, MD

Infectious Disease
Mission Viejo

Tanya Phares, DO

Internal Medicine
Newport Beach

Daniel Yanni, MD

Orthopedic Surgery
Newport Beach

Alexis Furze, MD

Facial Plastic Reconstructive Surgery
Newport Beach

Nguyen Ha, MD

Obstetrics/Gynecology
Long Beach

John Maurice, MD

Thoracic & Cardiac Surgery
Orange

Sonya Rasminsky, MD

Psychiatry
Newport Beach

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.



FREE
ON-DEMAND
WEBCAST

**Risk Management and the Pandemic:
Tips for Managing Medical Liability Risk**

COOPERATIVE OF
AMERICAN PHYSICIANS

Risk Management and the Pandemic: Tips for Managing Medical Liability Risk

The Cooperative of American Physicians, Inc. (CAP) is pleased to offer you free access to our latest on-demand **webcast, Risk Management and the Pandemic: Tips for**

Managing Medical Liability Risk. In this one-hour webcast, a panel of CAP's risk management experts discuss **strategies for navigating the unique challenges resulting from the pandemic**, such as developing new in-office procedures, implementing telehealth visits, and keeping up with ever-changing regulations.

[View the Webcast](#)

Discussion topics address important issues such as how to:

- * **Identify** common areas of liability and the steps your practice can take to reduce patient error and risk in those areas
- * **Set up** safe and regulatory compliant in-office visits for an optimal patient experience
- * **Establish** best practices for telemedicine visits
- * **Develop** tools to adapt office practices to the ongoing COVID-19 issues

CAP's experienced team of risk management and patient safety professionals offer a robust menu of exclusive risk reduction programs, such as these webinars, to help minimize professional liability exposure. These free services are just one of the many benefits included with CAP membership.

To learn more about becoming a CAP member, please **contact Tom Mortimer** at **213-473-8790**, or via email at TMortimer@CAPphysicians.com. **Request an Instant Quote** today to learn how much you can save on medical malpractice coverage with CAP.

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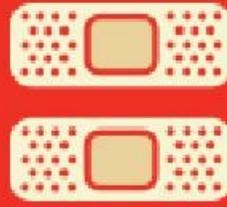
Union Bank

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The Private Bank's Medical Specialty Group is focused on supporting the financial requirements of medical practices and physicians. Your practice can benefit from the experience and knowledge of our relationship managers and the full suite of banking solutions that we offer. Give us a call to discuss the extensive selection of depository products and services, as well as customized credit solutions we can offer you, your practice, and your employees.

Contact: Laura Dang, Director, Private Wealth Advisor,
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