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A Message from the Chair

The AACC Annual meeting in Atlanta is less than one month from now. I hope that many of you will be able to attend.



The joint meeting with the New York Metro Section at Mount Sinai Hospital was a great success. The presentations from the Students who won the Ezra Levy awards were of exceptional quality. It was impressive to hear what research these High School Students have been doing.

Our Section meeting with Dr. Sharon Ehrmeyer was well received. Four of the students from the QA program at Bergen Community College accepted our invitation to attend and were accompanied by Dr. Judith Fitzpatrick, the head of the program. We are planning two additional meetings around September and November.

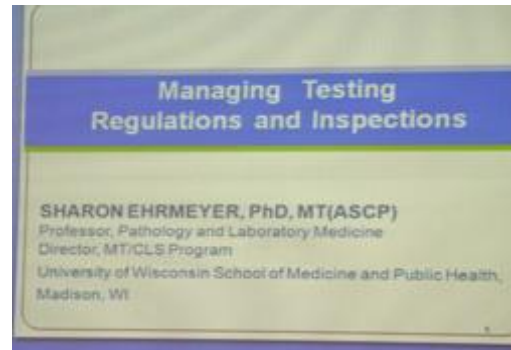
The New Jersey AACC Section has existed for many years and its history has been forgotten. Please view the article on the formation of the New Jersey Section in this issue. We are also planning to reinstitute our award program and will be presenting these at our final meeting this year. Do review the details for selection of candidates for these awards and send your recommendations in to the Executive Board.

Discussions are underway regarding student memberships and we hope to award some free student AACC student memberships for our section to students in New Jersey Medical Technology programs. In addition, feel free to invite Medical Technology students to our programs. There will be no cost or membership requirement to attend. Also, attendees will receive continuing education credits.

Again, I like to urge new members from the Clinical Medical Laboratories, Medical Laboratory Corporations and other scientific industries, and University Research departments to become active in our NJAACC Section.

Ingo Kampa, Ph.D.

Dinner meeting at Holy Name Hospital kicks off the 2011 Program



On April 26, our 2011 Local scientific program was hosted at Holy Name Hospital, in Teaneck. Dr. Kampa welcomed the attendees who included AACC, CLMA, ASCLS members and students from Bergen Community College.

He introduced our speaker Dr. Sharon Ehrmeyer who is the Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and Director of the Clinical Laboratory Science/Medical Technology Program at the University of Wisconsin's Medical School in Madison, Wisconsin.



She has served on CLSI's (NCCLS) Board of Directors and on the Joint Commission's Technical Advisory Committee. Dr. Ehrmeyer also chaired AACC's Government Relations Committee and is currently the Regulatory Affairs Section Editor of the Point of Care Journal of Near Patient Testing and Technology.

Dr. Ehrmeyer's research areas focus on laboratory quality issues, laboratory regulations impact on laboratory practices, and POCT. She has written numerous book chapters and journal articles and has presented these interests, nationally and internationally.

Her lecture "Managing Regulation and Inspection" was well-received and stimulated much discussion. She pointed out the areas to which laboratorians should pay special attention so that they do not fall short at inspection. If manuals and SOPs are updated and laboratory staff certified as having read and understood the regulations set forth, AND are seen to be following said procedures, then inspections will follow smoothly without problems. She briefly reviewed the regulations and procedures essential for a well-controlled and well-run laboratory.

Dr. Ehrmeyer also outlined the steps to be taken during an inspection: who's responsible for showing the Inspectors around the Lab, what documents need to be made available to the Inspectors, whose signatures should be on the manuals and other documentation, who should sit in on any discussions with Inspectors, and errors to avoid.

Even the most seasoned laboratorian in the audience came away with new insights or was reminded of the necessary factors for maintaining a well-run laboratory and overcoming the fears of inspections.

Students from the QA program at Bergen Community college learned firsthand how QA applied to the clinical laboratory and the difference between QA and QC in the laboratory setting.

Our thanks go to IL for sponsoring Dr. Ehrmeyer's travel arrangements.

The AACC New Jersey Section and How We Came Into Being

At the 1969 National Meeting of the AACC in Denver, Colorado, a group of Clinical Chemists from New Jersey informally discussed the possibility of forming a new section.

In October of 1969, Dr. Herb Spiegel, Ph.D. sent a letter to Dr. David A. H. Roethel, then Executive Director of the AACC, informing him of their intention to form the Section and that they wanted a temporary charter. There were 15 sponsors.

A series of organizational meetings were held in New Jersey in order to map strategy, to recruit the required number of members necessary to petition for the formation of a new section, and to draft a constitution. Between the months of October and December 1969, a slate of officers was selected. The officers were Herb Spiegel, President, Norman Kleinman, Vice President, and James Hamm, Treasurer-Secretary.

At the same time, delicate negotiations were going on between the Executive Committees of the New York Metro and Philadelphia Sections to agree on borders for our section. Some officers in the New York section wanted to retain the northern counties of New Jersey and Philadelphia wanted the southern counties of New Jersey.

In the end, in February 1970, the matter was resolved in a communication which read: “Be it resolved that the geographic limits of the New Jersey Section be the State of New Jersey. New members or members of the Metropolitan New York or Philadelphia Sections who reside or work in the aforementioned geographical area have the right or privilege of indicating their choice of section affiliation...”

The three sections concurred and for all intents and purposes the section was a reality.

While these discussions were occurring, the newly -elected President and other Officers of the section were working on the incorporation of the section. They were operating without a charter but the Executive Director of the National Organization provided them with a provisional charter so they could proceed with the incorporation application.

With the geographical boundaries having been resolved, the officers of the section added Dr. Robert Silber, Dr. Ernest Tucker and Mr. George Wein as Councilors, to solidify the executive committee.

Between January and February, 1970, the Section was issued a Certificate of Incorporation and the officers also appointed Dr. Paul Lenz as the first Program Chair.

There was one more hurdle; the section could not be represented on the National Organization's Council until it was formally chartered. Fortunately Dr. George Lewis, Council Chairman presented the petition before the council and the charter was approved on July 22, 1970. Subsequently, the section also received its 501 (c) 3 tax exemption.

Since its formation, the New Jersey Section has promoted continuing education as one of its prime endeavors. In addition to regularly scheduled scientific meetings, the section has sponsored seminars and workshops locally and at the Annual Meeting.

Dr. Bernard Gerulat was a charter member and one of the strongest supporters of the section. After his death, the section created an award in his honor for those individuals who have advanced the field of clinical chemistry.

Other awards include: the Certificate of Honor to those who have demonstrated exemplary service to AACC and the Distinguished Service Award to those who have given outstanding services to the section.

A list of past awardees will be published in the next issue of the newsletter.

This article has been excerpted from the article written by Dr. Herb Spiegel, in *Clinical Chemistry*, Vol. 23, No.2, 1977 (February, 1977)

Membership

As of June 2011, we have 264 members in the NJ section. These include:

Full Members:	211
Affiliate Members:	24
Student Members:	1
Emeritus:	28

Total:	264
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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Hanqing Xie, Labome

Maria Christina Furmonavicius, Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics

Salvatore Napolitano, Monmouth Medical Center

Joanne Abrams, Monmouth Medical Center

Titilayo Kazeem, Ortho Clinical Diagnostics

Anna Blanchfield, Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics

Debra G. Roth, Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics

Michael Anthony Locke, Immunostics

John Albanese, Becton Dickinson

Azim Saiffee, Hemocue

Karen Farner, Warwick

Trevor Adams, Ortho Clinical Diagnostics

Jennifer Power, Abbott Point of Care

Becky Roberts, Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics

Hui Liu, Johnson and Johnson



To our SYCL members: do let us know how we can help you succeed.

There are several members who have been instrumental in helping our Section to grow and maintain a reputation for significant contributions to AACC. Some of these members have served on various committees and executive boards both locally and nationally. They would love to help you create your own leadership skills by your involvement on the executive board and/or other committees within the section.

You also have an opportunity to share your expertise by presenting your research and other interests at a Section meeting and let's not forget the networking. Our program committee would be delighted to arrange a SYCL event if there is enough interest so please let the Section Chair know. This could take the place of one of our usual lecture meetings and feature short presentations from your members.

Welcome to all and we look forward to seeing you at our Section dinner/lecture meetings.

Know Your Numbers

If you follow Dr. Oz, you'll hear this phrase repeatedly as he and others of his colleagues are passionate about us knowing the values of our blood test. While they generally focus on tests like cholesterol and other lipids, blood sugar and of course, blood pressure and weight, the one message that stands out is that most patients have no idea what their values or even worse, what they mean.

Dr. Michael Samoszuk (Ortho Diagnostics) brings this message to our attention and points out that not only are the patients ignorant, but many healthcare professionals are too. He graciously offered to share this recent manuscript with you, the AACC NJ Section members.

A Call to Action for Improving Health Literacy for Clinical Lab Tests

Abstract

Appropriate use of diagnostic lab test results can enable a more efficient and effective healthcare system by playing a major role in monitoring wellness, promoting disease prevention and managing chronic diseases. However, a leading impediment to progress is a lack of health literacy on the part of patients and healthcare consumers.

Health information is presented in a way that is not usable by most Americans, and nearly 9 out of 10 adults have difficulty using the everyday health information that is routinely available in our healthcare facilities, retail outlets, media and communities. With respect to lab tests in particular, there is a low level of consumer awareness of the value of lab tests, what the results mean and how to use them in wellness efforts or the prevention and management of disease. It is now time for the public health community to work together to increase consumers' understanding of and access to lab tests, and to facilitate consumers' ability to act on the information provided by these results.

Introduction

Clinical lab tests are an important component of comprehensive health care, playing a critical role in determining how we can keep people well or improve their condition if they are sick. Despite the obvious importance of lab tests in health care, there is currently only a limited

understanding of how lab tests are perceived by patients and how patients can make best use of lab test results in consultation with their doctors.

On January 13, 2011, the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors and Ortho Clinical Diagnostics convened national thought and advocacy leaders in Washington, D.C. to a summit titled *Fundamentals to Wellness*. The Summit hosted leaders from consumer advocacy, healthcare professional (HCP) groups, policymakers, insurers, research institutions, public health and clinical laboratory groups. At the conclusion of the summit, participants agreed that many Americans do not know how to obtain, understand and use their lab test results to make meaningful changes in their lives. Here we present a summary of some of the most notable findings presented at this summit. We hope that this report will serve as a catalyst for more in-depth research and a continuing national dialogue on the value of lab tests and how to use them for optimal prevention and wellness.

Summary of key findings

A recent omnibus survey of more than 1,000 healthcare consumers in the United States, (sponsored by Ortho Clinical Diagnostics and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors) found that there is a need to educate healthcare consumers about the value of personal medical information related to lab test results. Specifically, the findings suggest opportunities to improve awareness and knowledge in areas such as:

- How to interpret lab test results in consultation with a physician
- How lab test results can be associated with risk factors for disease
- What lab tests individuals should be getting based on age, gender and family history
- How lab test results can help to maintain wellness and/or prevent or manage chronic disease

Surprisingly, the survey found that only 52% of those consumers who had recently been tested for cholesterol level actually knew their cholesterol level, and only 35% of a recently tested group knew their glucose level. This compared to 74% of respondents who claimed to know their blood type and 69% of respondents who knew their blood pressure. After hearing their test results, 35% of those surveyed said they took some action or changed their behavior based on those results. Of those who changed their behavior, the most common changes were:

- Changes to eating habits (74%)

- Maintaining regular health care provider visits (72%)
- Paying more attention to results (69%)
- Starting or continuing taking medication (66%)
- Starting to exercise (56%)

Most consumers (88%) in the survey said it would be better if lab test results could be discussed during a doctor's visit. Yet, fewer than four in 10 reported discussing their results in person, primarily because:

- (1) results were either mailed or emailed to the patient after the visit; or
- (2) the provider told the patient to assume everything was okay if the patient wasn't notified of their results; or
- (3) the patient never received any follow-up.

A Call to Action

Advancing health literacy about lab tests will be an integral component of transforming our nation's healthcare system from one focused on a reactive treatment model of care to a model focused on wellness and prevention. To achieve this goal, there will need to be a national effort to promote increased awareness of the importance of lab tests as part of a person's individual health narrative. This will require a model that better informs consumers about how they should use lab tests in consultation with their physicians for health maintenance and improvement. Consumers should be encouraged to discuss their lab test results with their doctors and not to self-diagnose.

Further research and discussions will need to take place among all stakeholders, including consumers, healthcare providers, health plans, hospitals, government agencies and consumer advocates in order to better understand how to lower barriers to improving health literacy around lab tests. Equally important will be a paradigm shift so that consumers begin to see that they can take action to positively improve their overall wellness based on the results of their lab tests.

Creating informed patients who appreciate the importance of knowing and understanding the trends in their lab test results will require involvement and alignment from employers, as well as other healthcare purchasers and healthcare practices, as they work together to motivate patients to get tested and to provide context for the results. In addition, consumers will need improved access to their lab test results, resources to help interpret these results in consultation with their

doctors, information about how these results are associated with their risks for chronic diseases, and access to strategies for behavior changes that can drive improved health and wellness.

AACC's Lab Tests Online, which is averaging two million visitors each month, has already demonstrated that there is a significant audience that wants to learn about lab testing. The website's success suggests that it should be a cornerstone of future efforts to expand awareness of the importance of testing and an understanding the tests and test results.

In summary, lab tests – and healthcare consumers' ability to obtain and understand the results – are fundamental to maintaining wellness and preventing or managing disease. Breaking down barriers to health literacy and maximizing the appropriate use of lab tests can help create a more efficient, effective healthcare system that ultimately results in better care and better outcomes for American healthcare consumers

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Acknowledgements

We thank the following organizations for participating in the *Fundamentals to Wellness Summit*:

- AdvaMedDx
- American Association for Clinical Chemistry
- American Academy of Physician Assistants
- American Clinical Laboratory Association
- American College of Preventive Medicine
- American Hospital Association
- American Medical Association Foundation
- American Public Health Association

- Association of Public Health Laboratories
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
- Center for Advancing Health
- National Consumers League
- National Urban League
- Partnership for Prevention

The organizations listed do not necessarily support or endorse the recommendations presented in this report.

New Jersey Section Awards

The NJ Section presents three awards to deserving and renowned scientists from the National and Local Organization. Members may send suggestions for awardees to the Executive Board to be considered by the Awards Committee.

Guidelines for selection are as follows:

Bernard F. Gerulat Memorial Award

This award is given in recognition of outstanding achievement in clinical chemistry by elevating its practice, encouraging and stimulating the professional development of clinical chemists at all levels of application, and promoting the free exchange of scientific concepts and information.

Certificate of Honor Award

This award is given in recognition for raising the level at which clinical chemistry is practiced, encouraging the professional advancement of clinical chemists and promoting professional goals and education.

Distinguished Service Award

This award is given in recognition of continuous involvement in the scientific, educational and professional activities of the association and your contributions to the New Jersey Section.

A list of past awardees will be published in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Photo Gallery



Dr. Kampa Welcomes Attendees



Attendees from AACC, ASCLS, and Industry

Dr. Ehrmeyer and the NJ AACC Executive Board



Government Affairs Headlines

FDA Released Draft RUO/IUO Guidance on June 1st, 2011

*Senator Lieberman working on Medicare reform legislation (includes a laboratory copayment)
Representative Paulson drafting bill to reform the FDA

House Energy and Commerce Panel Explores Regulatory Reform

Please refer to the AACC website for full details on these and other issues.

<http://www.aacc.org>

**The AACC strongly opposes laboratory copayment and solicits your comments to help fight this issue. Complete details are on the AACC website.*

Obituary

Dr. Rosalyn Yalow, the Pioneer of Radioimmunoassay died at the age of 89 on May 30th. Dr. Yalow was the second woman to win the Nobel in physiology or medicine. She lived in the Bronx for most of her life most notably at the Bronx VA.

Submitted respectively by:

OliveJoy Wolfe, MS
Editor
[photos by OJWolfe]

The Editor is particularly interested in items for the newsletter especially those pertaining to NJ State Dept. of Health regulations or other information as they pertain to healthcare and the practice of medicine and other scientific affairs.



Please direct comments to the Editor at: clincon1@optonline.net