



KIDney NOTES

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Colleagues,

Thanks to each and every one of you who attended the ASPN business meeting and the committee meetings at the ASN in San Diego. The committee meetings were very productive in developing plans for the next several months. At the business meeting each of the chairs of the task forces presented updates on their progress. Over the next several months, the committees

and task forces plan to survey the membership about specific needs and practice patterns so that we can best serve the membership. Data from an ongoing survey of Section Directors are being analyzed by the Workforce committee, and the findings will be posted soon on the ASPN website.

At the recommendation of the Governance task force, the council will be drafting a bylaws change so that councilors will be elected by the membership. The bylaws change will be circulated to the membership for comments and will likely be voted upon at the annual meeting to take place in Toronto.

The invited science for the ASPN annual meeting to take place in Toronto May 5 to 8, 2007 has been finalized. There are three workshops, several Joint Symposia with other PAS Alliance organizations, four ASPN Symposia, three platform sessions for abstracts presentations and two poster sessions. A record number of abstracts was submitted this year and we look forward to exciting sessions to highlight recent research developments in pediatric nephrology. Thanks again to the program committee chaired by Lisa Satlin, co-chaired by Robert Mak and committee members Carlton Bates, Deepa Chand, Susan Furth, Mary Leonard, Mark Mitsnefes, and Mike Somers. The 2007 Schedule-at-a-Glance is on page 3 and a preliminary schedule of the luncheons, committee meetings and other hotel-based events is on page 4 of this issue.

You recently received a copy of a letter to the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), drafted by the presidents of the RPA, ASN, and the ASPN, requesting that JCAHO cease and desist from implementing its CKD certification program. The RPA, ASN and ASPN are strongly opposed to this unnecessary level of certification. While JCAHO has agreed to exclude pediatric programs from this process, pediatric nephrologists who care for patients over the age of 18 still would be affected by this certification process.

World Kidney Day is March 8, 2007! It was first celebrated on March 9, 2006, by the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Societies (IFKS) to inform the public, governmental agencies, physicians, and allied health professionals about kidney disease. The message is that kidney disease is common, harmful, and treatable. An editorial by the presidents of the ASPN, ASN, NKF and RPA about World Kidney Day will be published jointly in several kidney journals including Pediatric Nephrology.

Once again I would like to thank all of the council, committee chairs and members, task force chairs and members for your continued service to the ASPN. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. Don't forget the new ASPN Central office in The Woodlands opens for business January 1.

Happy Holidays!

Sharon Andreoli



Award Nomination Announcements

FOUNDER'S AWARD

Nominations for the 2007 ASPN Founder's Award are now being accepted.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, January 19, 2007.

Criteria for nominations are: 1) Must be an active or emeritus member of the ASPN; 2) Must be greater than 55 years of age; 3) Must have made significant clinical, scientific and/or leadership contributions to the field of pediatric nephrology; 4) Must have made a significant contribution to the ASPN by promoting its activities to assure a continuing role for its members in science as well as in specialized health care for children with kidney disease. **Previous year awardees can be found at <http://www.aspneph.com/founders.html>**

Nominations should include a curriculum vitae from the nominee and a letter describing the individual's contribution. Mail to: ASPN Founder's Award, American Society of Pediatric Nephrology, 3400 Research Forest Drive, Suite B The Woodlands, TX 77381

TRAINEE TRAVEL AWARD PROGRAM

2007 ASPN/PAS ANNUAL MEETING

The ASPN will once again sponsor residents and selected other non-fellow trainees to attend the upcoming 2007 ASPN/PAS meeting from May 5-8, 2007 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Travel awards of \$400.00 per trainee will be given on a competitive basis. In addition, the ASPN will pay the trainee registration fee for the meeting. Applicants may be medical students, 1st or 2nd year pediatric residents (PL1-PL2), or 1st, 2nd, or 3rd year med-peds resident (PGY1-PGY3) in an ACGME-accredited pediatric residency program.

Applications must include the following:

- Recommendation by a member of the ASPN who agrees to accompany the trainee to the meeting.
- Statement from the Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the applicant's institution, indicating his/her intent to support the costs of attending the meeting not met by the Travel Award.
- Applicant's curriculum vitae along with a 1-page statement from the candidate describing his/her interest and possible career plans in pediatric nephrology.

It is important that all of the requested documents accompany the application. Applicants must commit to attend the 3-day meeting if selected. **Applications must be submitted by Friday, January 26, 2007.**

Before 1/1/07, please send electronic applications to aspn@northwestern.edu or hard copy applications to: ASPN, Resident Travel Program, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine; Pediatrics, MS W140; Ward 12-128; 303 East Chicago Avenue; Chicago, IL 60611.

After 12/31/06, please send electronic applications to info@aspneph.com or hard copy applications to: ASPN, Resident Travel Program, 3400 Research Forest Drive, Suite B, The Woodlands, TX 77381

ASN REQUESTS NOMINATIONS FOR ITS 2007 AWARDS

The winners in 2006 were:

The John P. Peters Award	Gerhard H. Giebisch, MD
The Belding H. Scribner Award	Joel Kopple, MD
The Homer W. Smith Award	Terry Strom, MD
The Young Investigator Award	Thomas Benzing, MD

New Award: [The Robert G. Narins Award](#)

Learn more about each award by visiting <http://www.asn-online.org/awards/awardsindex.aspx> and clicking on the underlined award title. If you would like to nominate individuals for these awards, you can submit the nominations directly as described on the website or make suggestions to the ASPN Awards committee at aspn@northwestern.edu. **The deadline for all ASN awards nominations is Wednesday, January 31, 2007. Nomination letters should be faxed to 202-659-0599 or emailed to sowens@asn-online.org.** *Note:* Awards nomination letters will be limited to a total of 3 letters/per candidate. Additional letters will not be considered.

Important Reminder: ASPN Central office will move as of January 1, 2007.

The information for the new office is

3400 Research Forest Drive, Suite B7; The Woodlands, TX 77381

281.419.0052 (phone); 281.419.0082 (fax); Email: info@aspneph.com



ASPEN Annual Meeting
May 5-8, 2007
 Metro Toronto Convention Centre and Fairmont Royal York

Saturday, May 5	Sunday, May 6	Monday, May 7	Tuesday, May 8
<p>8:00am – 10:00am ASPEN Workshop Renal Biopsy Short Course</p> <p>10:30am – 12:30pm ASPEN Symposium I Endothelial Dysfunction in Kidney Disease</p> <p>12:00pm – 1:00pm ASPEN CPC Fellows Luncheon</p> <p>1:00pm – 3:00pm ASPEN/PAS Original Science Abstracts Nephrology Platform Session (Hypertension)</p> <p>3:15pm – 5:15pm ASPEN/LWPES/PAS Topic Symposium Diagnosis and Treatment of Bone Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence</p> <p>5:15pm – 7:15pm ASPEN/PAS Posters I, Exhibits and PAS Opening Reception Nephrology (Hypertension)</p> <p>7:15pm – 8:30pm PAS Presidential Reception</p> <p>8:00pm – 10:00pm ASPEN Social Event/Dinner Fellow Awards Welcome Residents</p>	<p>7:00am – 8:00am Meet the Professor Breakfast Nephrology (for trainees and junior faculty)</p> <p>8:00am – 10:00am ASPEN Symposium II Pathophysiology of Obstructive Uropathy</p> <p>10:00am – 12:00pm ASPEN/ASPHO/PIDS/PAS Topic Symposium Models for Improving Pediatric Oncology and Tertiary Care in the Developing World</p> <p>10:15am – 12:00pm APS Presidential Plenary and Awards</p> <p>12:15pm – 1:45pm ASPEN Presidential Address, Business Meeting & Luncheon</p> <p>2:00pm – 4:00pm IPHA/LWPES/NASPGHAN/PAS Topic Symposium Mechanisms and Management of Co-morbidities of T2DM in Children and Adolescents</p> <p>2:00pm – 4:00pm ASPEN Workshop Academic Pediatric Nephrology—Advocating for Yourself</p> <p>4:15pm – 6:15pm ASPEN/IPHA/PAS State of the Art Filling in the Gaps in Pediatric Drug Therapy Under the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act: The Example of Antihypertensive Medications</p> <p>4:15pm – 6:15pm ASPEN/PAS Original Science Abstracts Nephrology Platform Session</p> <p>4:15pm – 6:15pm ASPEN/PAS Topic Symposium Ischemic Preconditioning</p>	<p>8:00am – 10:00am ASPEN/IPHA/LWPES/NASPGHAN/PIDS/PAS Topic Symposium Mechanism and Management of Dyslipidemia in Children and Adolescents</p> <p>10:15am – 12:15pm ASPEN/PAS Original Science Abstracts Nephrology Platform Session</p> <p>10:15am – 12:15pm SPR Presidential Plenary and Awards</p> <p>12:30pm – 1:30pm ASPEN Awards Luncheon</p> <p>1:00pm – 2:45pm March of Dimes Prize in Developmental Biology Lectures</p> <p>1:00pm – 3:00pm ASPEN/IPHA/PAS Mini Course Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring in Children: Do We Really Know What We Are Doing?</p> <p>3:00pm – 5:00pm ASPEN Symposium III Pediatric Nephrology in Non-kidney Organ Transplantation</p> <p>5:15pm – 6:45pm ASPEN/PAS Posters II and Exhibits Nephrology</p>	<p>8:00am – 10:00am ASPEN Symposium IV Pathobiology of Pediatric Nephrotic Syndrome</p> <p>10:00am – 12:00pm ASPEN Workshop Pediatric Dialysis—Not Just Little Adults</p> <p>1:45pm – 3:45pm ASPEN/PIDS/PAS Topic Symposium Infectious Complications After Renal Transplant</p>



Housing and Registration for the 2007 PAS Annual Meeting are now open!

For substantial savings REGISTER BEFORE MARCH 6, 2007 for the ASPN Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada

For additional meeting information and to register, visit the PAS web site at:

www.pas-meeting.org

Be sure to indicate when you register and make your hotel reservation that you are an ASPN member. This will automatically place you in our headquarters' hotel - Fairmont Royal York.

Preliminary Schedule of 2007 Hotel-Based Events Fairmont Royal York

Function Name	Date	Day	Begin
Stone and Bone Club	5/5/07	Saturday	12:00PM
Clinical Affairs/Public Policy Combined Committees Meeting	5/5/07	Saturday	12:00PM
Clinical Affairs Committee	5/5/07	Saturday	7:00AM
Member Reception	5/5/07	Saturday	8:00PM
Business Meeting, Luncheon and Presidential Address	5/6/07	Sunday	12:15PM
Research Committee	5/6/07	Sunday	6:30PM
Training & Certification Committee	5/6/07	Sunday	6:30PM
Public Policy—Being heard above the din: Advocating in a changed political landscape	5/6/07	Sunday	6:30PM
Public Policy Committee	5/6/07	Sunday	7:30PM
Workforce Committee	5/6/07	Sunday	7:00AM
Awards Luncheon	5/7/07	Monday	12:30PM
pFeNa	5/7/07	Monday	7:00PM
Training Program Directors	5/7/07	Monday	7:00PM
Program Committee	5/8/07	Tuesday	12:00PM

Meeting Announcements

Pediatric Dialysis Meeting

The Fundamental of Dialysis in Children course,
followed by the *18th Annual Symposium on Pediatric Dialysis*
part of the *Annual Dialysis Conference*
Denver, Colorado
February 17-20, 2007

The Fundamental of Dialysis in Children course, followed by the *18th Annual Symposium on Pediatric Dialysis* will take place as part of the Annual Dialysis Conference in Denver, Colorado on February 17-20, 2007. The Fundamentals course is a day-long program taught by a faculty of international experts designed to provide a complete review of the major issues involved in the management of pediatric hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis patients, and is the only course of its kind currently available. The Pediatric Symposium builds upon the Fundamentals with a program that includes sessions specifically designed for physicians, nurses, dietitians and allied personnel, as well as combined sessions for all attendees which reflect the multidisciplinary nature of pediatric dialysis care. The complete program is available on the meeting website (www.muhealth.org/~dialysis). Questions pertaining to the meeting may be directed to Steve Alexander (sralex@stanford.edu), Brad Warady (bwarady@cmh.edu) or to the meeting office at (573-882-4105) or <mailto:dialysis@health.missouri.edu>

Meeting Announcements—continued

One-Time Event—MR Urography in Children Workshop

February 24-25, 2007

Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport

Presented by The Society for Pediatric Radiology

Featured Sessions: MRU Technical aspects, Obstructive Uropathy, Renal Dysplasia, pyelonephritis and renal scarring, Hands-On

Objectives: The MR Urography in Children Workshop will provide an opportunity to do the following:

Understand MR techniques for MR urography in children.

Understand renal pathophysiology underlying MR findings for pediatric MR urography.

Post-process MR images to provide functional renal information in children.

Describe the findings of MR urography in renal disorders in children

The program will commence on Saturday, February 24 at 8:00 a.m. and will conclude Sunday, February 25 at 2:00 p.m.

Saturday Lecture Registration Fees

Physicians \$300

Residents/Fellows/Technologists \$75

Sunday Hands-On Registration Fees

Physicians \$150

Residents/Fellows/Technologists \$ 50

Rooms will be available at the Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport at a rate of \$165 plus tax. Go to <http://www.pedrad.org/associations/5364/files/MRUBrochurePDFFinal.pdf> to download the program.



SAVE THE DATE! MARCH 3-6, 2007

THE MIAMI PEDIATRIC NEPHROLOGY SEMINAR (FOUNDED BY JOSE STRAUSS M.D.) IS COMING AGAIN— “THE LEGACY GOES ON...”

Dear friends and colleagues:

We are happy to invite you to attend the XXXIV Pediatric Nephrology Seminar which will take place March 3-6, 2007 in beautiful Miami Beach at the Miami Beach Resort and Spa (formerly Wyndham Hotel). The Miami Pediatric Nephrology Seminar is an international gathering of Pediatric and Internal Medicine Nephrologists from all over the United States and the world, sponsored by the University of Miami, Leonard Miller School of Medicine and Jackson Memorial Hospital. This coming year we will have an exciting scientific program with a variety of topics including Sessions devoted to Pediatric Nephrology for The Practitioner, Tubulopathies, Glomerulopathies and Vasculitis, Progressive Nature of Kidney Diseases, Renal Replacement Therapies, Bone and the Kidneys, Challenges of the Failing Kidney and Issues on Transplantation. In addition there will be 2 Workshops: Pediatric Renal G-U Disorders and Critical Care Nephrology (CRRT and Acute Dialysis) and one special Clinico-Pathologic Case Presentation. A total of 20 Guest Faculty and 20 Local Faculty will provide expertise and cordial exchanges including several panel discussions.

In order to facilitate attendance by physicians in training and medical students we will continue to provide a limited number of Partial Travel Grants (Applications must be received prior to December 31, 2006). Additional details about the Seminar Program, Faculty, Registration and Grant Applications Forms can be found and downloaded at <http://pediatricnephrology.med.miami.edu/seminar> To register by phone: 305-243-3993/800-622-4453 Fax 305-243-4050

We look forward to seeing you in Miami Beach in March 2007!

Cordially,

Gaston Zilleruelo M.D.; Program Chairman



National Kidney Foundation

**National Kidney Foundation
2007 Spring Clinical Meetings (CM.07)**

**Save the Date!
April 10-14, 2007**

Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Hotel
Orlando, FL

Meeting Announcements—continued



Fourth International Conference on Children's Bone Health June 21-24, 2007 —Montreal, Canada

Autumnal greetings to our bone-conscious friends!

It is an honor to invite you to attend the Fourth International Conference on Children's Bone Health, to be held June 21-24, 2007. Our host city of Montréal is truly an experience: Old World charm, a unique joie de vivre and yet a modern style all its own.

Our abstract submission period is now open! I invite you to **submit an abstract** showcasing your best work! As a special honor, the three highest-ranking abstracts submitted by Young Investigators will be presented at our opening ceremony. Be sure to bookmark our web site at <http://www.iccbh4.org/> and submit your abstract between now and December 15, 2006!

For more detailed information & meeting specifics, including our outstanding scientific program, visit our official conference web site at <http://www.iccbh4.org/>.

We look forward to seeing you in Montreal in June 2007! **Craig B. Langman, MD**, Conference Director

Jointly sponsored by Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine and International Conference on Children's Bone Health.

14th Congress of the International Pediatric Nephrology Association 31 August - 4 September 2007 Budapest, Hungary

For more detailed information, please visit

<http://www.ipna2007.com/index.html> and [this .PDF document](#)

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The ASPN wishes to continue to acknowledge the generosity of the following corporate and session sponsors for the 2006 annual meeting. Their unrestricted educational grants have significantly benefited the Society and its efforts.

Gold

Abbott
Amgen, Inc

Silver

Astellas Pharma, US, Inc.
Genzyme Corporation
Sigma-Tau Pharmaceuticals, Inc
Watson Laboratories, Inc

Bronze

American Society of Transplantation
Genentech

Friends of The Society

Q-Med Scandinavia, Inc.
Baxter Healthcare Corp.

Session Sponsors

International Pediatric Hypertension Association
Kidney & Urology Foundation of America, Inc.
NephCure
Ross Products Div., Abbott Laboratories

WASHINGTON UPDATE*Domenic Ruscio and Jennifer Shevchek, ASPN Washington Representatives****The 109th Congress closes its doors***

Criticized for its meager accomplishments, the 109th Congress closed its doors slightly shy of 5:00 a.m., December 9. Just before the pre-dawn finish, lawmakers passed a massive tax and trade bill and a raft of other measures, including legislation to block a planned Medicare physician pay cut, a reauthorization of the National Institutes of Health and measures to combat AIDS, pandemic diseases and premature births.

Medicare physician payment:

Through the advocacy efforts of ASPN and other physician organizations, Congress enacted legislation to block pending cuts to Medicare physicians. Specifically, the legislation prevents the scheduled 5.1 percent cut in 2007 Medicare physician payment rates by freezing the Medicare conversion factor at its 2006 level. Unlike previous Medicare packages, this provision does not add to the projected payment cuts scheduled for 2007 through 2015. Instead, this 2007 freeze is fully funded by using money from the Medicare Stabilization Fund, a set-aside fund created under the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act to help incentivize participation of Medicare Advantage plans. However, the legislation does not change base payment rates beyond 2007 and, therefore, physicians potentially face a cut of more than 5 percent in 2008. The Secretary of HHS is allocated \$1.35 billion to use for physicians' services in 2008, including helping to avert the 2008 cut, but this provision allows the Secretary broad discretion in determining how to use the \$1.35 billion.

New Medicare Physician Quality Reporting Program for 2007: The legislation establishes a Medicare physician quality reporting program using quality measures from the current Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Physician Voluntary Reporting Program (PVRP), for July 1, 2007 through December

31, 2007. Of the 66 PVRP measures now in effect, 56 were developed by the American Medical Association's Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement (PCPI). Currently, none of the 66 measures relate to the care and treatment of children with kidney disease. There is some ambiguity in the bill language regarding additional measures that would be eligible for inclusion in the 2007 PVRP, such as those that may be completed in early 2007. If these additional measures are permitted as part of the PVRP, more physicians would be eligible to participate in the program.

A bonus payment of 1.5 percent will be paid to physicians who report on at least one or more PVRP quality measure. It is unclear at this time whether the 1.5 percent bonus will be paid for all claims submitted by the reporting physician or only with respect to those claims for which data has been reported (during the July 1 through December 31, 2007 time period). Nevertheless, the payment methodology is subject to certain limits and may not offset physicians' administrative reporting costs.

Much uncertainty surrounds the legislation's quality reporting provisions. For example, the bill includes language allowing technical corrections on the 66 PVRP quality measures until April 2007, at which time CMS will work to publish a finalized

Program Memorandum in time for the 2007 PVRP July launch. Further, the distribution of the 1.5 percent bonus payment and how it relates to the number of quality measures reported is unclear. The legislation mandates that a physician report on one or more quality measures 80 percent of the time to receive the 1.5 percent payment. However, if a physician reports on more than one quality measure, the bonus payment remains the same. These, and other issues regarding this quality reporting framework, must be addressed with CMS in the coming months.

Medicare Physician Quality Reporting Program for 2008: The bill establishes a Medicare reporting program for 2008 under which physicians would report with respect to quality or structural measures, including those related to use of health information technology (HIT) and electronic physician prescribing.

ESRD Composite Rate: The bill increases the composite rate component of the basic case-mix adjusted payment rate for dialysis services by 1.6 percent for services provided on or after April 1, 2007. The Act also requires the U.S. Government Accountability Office to submit a report and recommendations to Congress on home dialysis treatment and payment by January 1, 2009.

Congress Adopts NIH Reform Act

Another measure passed during the pre-dawn finish was H.R. 6164, the National Institutes of Health Reform Act of 2006. This is a compromise product resulting from the advocacy of many science and patient advocacy groups, including the ASPN. The major changes are an increase in the amount of funds authorized for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 and an elimination of a funding cap in fiscal year 2009. The original bill, introduced by Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX), Chairman of the House Energy and Committee, and supported by a number of organizations limited funding to an annual increase of 5 percent for fiscal years 2007 through 2009. The original bill also created a Common fund that would have received money by taking 50 percent of each year's overall increase for the Institutes and Centers and placing it in the Common Fund. The final bill removes this funding link.

WASHINGTON UPDATE (Continued)***CMS ignores public comments; nephrology cuts remain***

In a Final Rule released on December 1, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) ignored recommendations from the kidney and health care communities to apply the Evaluation and Management (E&M) code work value increases to dialysis services. This decision, if not rectified, will cut reimbursement to nephrologists by one-percent in FY2007, and beyond.

In the way of background, E&M codes were the 'building blocks' of the original Monthly Capitated Payment (MCP) assigned to nephrology services. When CMS reformed the methodology of the MCP, adding a face-to-face visitation component in CY2004, the agency used the MCP reimbursement amount to develop the mid-level, or 2-3 visits per month G-code level. From this mid-level G-code, CMS allocated a proportionate increase and/or decrease to reflect the 4 or more visit G-code level and 1

visit G-code level.

During the CY2006 Correct Procedural Terminology (CPT) 5-year review process, a process convened by the AMA's Relative Value Update Committee (RUC), E&M codes were included for evaluation. The AMA RUC determined that the work component of the E&M codes deserved an increase.

The FY2007 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MFS) proposed rule adopted recommendations from the AMA RUC to increase the work values associated with E&M codes. These increases were also applied to the global surgical packages that included E&M work elements, and also applied these increases to the maternity care packages that include E&M work. However, the E&M increases were not applied to dialysis services. The AMA, Renal Physicians Association, Kidney Care Partners, and American College of Physicians

joined the ASPN in submitting comments calling on CMS to apply the E&M code increases to the monthly dialysis codes that, like the surgical and maternity packages, include and are even wholly based on E&M work values.

Despite our efforts, the MFS Final Rule did not increase the work values associated with dialysis services, stating the "descriptor for these codes are markedly different from what had been previously used for these services." To view and MFS final rule, please visit <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/pdf/06-9086.pdf>. The discussion of this issue can be found on page 105. ASPN will again submit comments asking CMS to re-visit its decision, and justly apply the E&M code increases to dialysis services.

Mid-term Election Overview

If there is any single message to come out of the November 7 elections it is that the voters prefer divided government. By a margin that was thought inconceivable only a few months ago, Democrats captured control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 12 years, and also hold a 51 – 49 advantage in the Senate. While it is generally believed that the defining issues were the Iraq war and economic security, the results indicate that the electorate simply feels more comfortable when the national parties share the power, if only to keep each others excesses in check.

It is important to underscore that while the balance of power shifted in Congress, neither party has a sufficient *margin* of power to force major policy changes. (As a proportion of total House seats, Democrats hold only a 2 percent margin; in the Senate, where 60 votes are needed to overcome a filibuster, they hold 51 seats.) Consequently, neither party is

in a position to effect policy change absent a willingness to compromise with the other side.

Furthermore, whatever agenda Democrats set out will have to take into account two important factors:

Appropriations Left in Limbo

Despite the flurry of activity, the outgoing Republican-controlled Congress left behind a political time bomb for Democrats who will take over January 4: lawmakers failed to complete work on nine of the 11 appropriations bills required to fund federal government programs, including veterans health, education, and fuel assistance for the needy. Instead, Congress adopted a continuing resolution that will keep the government operating at a bare-bones level through February 15—more than a quarter of the way into the fiscal year.

On December 11, the incoming Senate Appropriations Chairman Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) and incoming House Appropriations Chairman David Obey (D-Wis.) announced that

(1) any legislation they hope to pass must be approved by President Bush, and (2) budget realities stand in the way of any significant new spending without offsetting cuts.

they had decided to forgo passing the nine remaining fiscal 2007 spending bills and instead pass a "joint resolution" to keep the government funded until the new fiscal year begins on October 1, 2007. The statement added that all earmarks included in the nine bills would be scrapped. Confusion exists largely because even Democratic appropriators say they are not sure what the final product will look like.

The nine unfinished spending bills account for about \$460 billion worth of domestic programs. Under the terms of the continuing resolution, programs will be funded at the lowest of three budget amounts: the amount recommended by the full House or Senate, or the amount appropriated last year. In most cases, that will be last year's appropriation.

Committee Updates and Other News

The **Training and Certification** committee met at ASN and on conference call shortly thereafter. Two main issues discussed were the reorganization of the program directors group and enhancing support and activity of the fellows organization, pFeNA. The program directors group also gathered at the ASN to develop a leadership plan and begin the processes of setting a work agenda. The group desires enhanced information exchange, decision-making and standard-setting, and program director

support. Dr. John Mahan will lead this group, assisted by Drs. David Kershaw and Kevin Meyers. A number of topics likely to be addressed quickly include common offer/acceptance dates for fellowships, development of competency-based curricula, evaluation of the efficacy of ERAS, fellowship recruitment strategies, and educational materials for program directors. The fellow's organization, pFeNA, is currently led by Dr. Rene' VanDeVoorde and would like to expand from its current

role as social organization to one with educational, mentoring, and interactional roles within the ASPN. The group plans to meet officially during the PAS meetings in Toronto to determine a method of leadership succession and initiate a working relationship with the ongoing activities of the ASPN. We welcome our fellow members and look forward to their enhanced involvement with our activities. (*Vicky Norwood*)

Pediatric Fellows in Nephrology Association (pFeNA)

The pFeNA social gathering during ASN Renal Week was an overwhelming success with over forty fellows and residents in attendance at Moose McGillicuddy's. Although there was no formal agenda, several informal discussions took place regarding future directions for the group, including job searches, fellowship recruitment, and networking amongst fellows.

In addition to a social gathering, there are tentative plans for official meetings of the pediatric fellows (both in an academic and organizational setting) at this year's Pediatric Academic Society's national meeting in May 2007. In order for pFeNA to properly address those issues concerning fellows, as well as to set an agenda for the meeting in Toronto, information is needed from

the fellows. Please look for e-mails regarding future fellows' surveys or conference calls to elicit information- but do not hesitate to contact us before then. If there are current issues/questions which need to be addressed, please contact the pFeNA Representative, Rene' VanDeVoorde, at rene.vandevoorde@cchmc.org. (*Rene' VanDeVoorde*)

Board Walk

What will constitute evidence of satisfactory performance in practice?"

This article continues our discussion from last month regarding new requirements for maintenance of certification for diplomates whose certificates in nephrology expire in 2010 and later. Part 4 of the Program for Maintenance of Certification in Pediatric Subspecialties[®] (PMCP-S[®]) will require successful completion of activities providing evidence of satisfactory performance in practice.

Beginning in 2008, in order to provide sufficient time for completion prior to 2010, an online educational module covering issues of patient safety will be available to all

diplomats. This module will be available to all pediatric subspecialists, not merely to pediatric nephrologists, and will be a general product designed to teach principles of quality improvement centered on the concepts of patient safety. This module is expected to be available for use by diplomates for a full seven year cycle of the program.

In the upcoming months and years, subspecialty-specific programs will be derived, and a task-force of the ASPN Training and Certification Committee is involved with this process. Possible programs for nephrology may potentially link to NAPRTCS, CMS, or USRDS as data sources with specific educational pro-

grams developed to provide documentation of performance improvement. Mechanisms will also be developed to credit diplomates with local activities in quality improvement in order to provide a menu of options for physicians with varying practice patterns.

This project is a challenging one and breaks new ground for linking practice improvement to maintenance of certification, a common goal around which we can all agree. If you are interested in participating in this exciting new educational and assessment opportunity, please contact me. (*Vicky Norwood*)

Other Announcements

A new trial for the use of Pyridoxamine in Idiopathic Kidney Stone Disease, and, especially for the aspn, Hyperoxaluria. We are seeking any patients with hyperoxaluria who have good kidney function, for a Phase II trial, to lower oxalate excretion. Physicians can simply ask their patient if it is OK for us to contact them, and communicate this to us. We will explain the study, arrange consent, and take care of everything. The trial does not require traveling, or local IRB approval. Jon Scheinman, M.D. jscheinman@kumc.edu, or 888-266-5133

A Magical Night: The 8th Annual RSN Renal Teen Prom

“Midnight at the Oasis: An Evening Among the Stars” is the theme of the upcoming Renal Support Network (RSN) Renal Teen Prom, to be held **January 14, 2007**, on the campus of Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks, Calif., a Los Angeles suburb.

The Prom is a *free* event for teenagers and young adults with chronic kidney disease (CKD). Set in the style of a senior prom, this gala draws more than 350 “kidney teens,” their guests, and volunteers from throughout Southern California, with kidney teens now attending from across the United States.

Convenient Diagnosis Coding Booklet document is now available in two different formats via a password-protected link on the ASPN website’s homepage (<http://www.aspneph.com>). The information contained in this document, which was created by Sharon Perlman, can be printed either as a booklet or as a continuous page document. Instructions for printing the booklet are provided.

Norman Siegel Pediatric Renal Career Enhancement Fund—Contributions to this fund are tax-deductible and can be sent to the Norman Siegel Pediatric Renal Career Enhancement Fund c/o Janney Montgomery Scott at 555 Long Wharf Drive 5th Floor, New Haven, CT 06511.

MARKETPLACE

If you would like to view the listing of jobs, you may visit the Marketplace webpage on the ASPN website by clicking on the following link: <http://www.aspneph.com/market.html>

KIDney NOTES

BI-MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PEDIATRIC NEPHROLOGY

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Program Committee: Carlton Bates, Lisa Satlin

Public Policy: Eileen Brewer, Sharon Perlman

(Washington Representatives: Domenic Ruscio and Jennifer Shevchek)

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Training/Certification: Kathy Jabs, Bruce Morgenstern, Vicky Norwood

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