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SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF NEUROLOGY

AAN NEWS & NOTES

WWW.ALNEUROLOGY.COM

2018 AAN Conference set for Birmingham

We are excited about our upcoming conference and stellar line up of speakers for 2018. The one-day conference will be Aug. 18 at the Hyatt Regency Birmingham - The Wynfrey Hotel.

The conference will provide approximately 5.25 hours of instruction and will feature a resident/student poster contest. Abstracts will be posted soon on AAN's website www.alneurology.com. See the complete agenda and registration information on pages 5 and 6.

2018 AAN Conference Faculty



David G. Standaert, MD, PhD, is the John N. Whitaker Professor and Chair of Neurology at the University of Alabama - Birmingham. Prior to that, he was appointed the John T. and Juanelle D. Strain Endowed Chair by the Board of Trustees of the University of Alabama system, which he held for five years.

After completing medical school at Washington University in St. Louis, he completed a one-year internship in medicine at Jewish Hospital of St. Louis and a three-year neurology residency at the University of Pennsylvania. He then completed a three-year research and clinical fellowship in neurology (movement disorders) at Harvard Medical School Massachusetts General Hospital.

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AAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE
AUGUST 18, 2018
Hyatt Regency, The Wynfrey Hotel, Birmingham



CMS overhauls office visit pay in proposed 2019 Physician Fee Rule

Medical Association of the State of Alabama

CMS is proposing to overhaul how Medicare pays for office visits and how doctors document those visits in what Administrator Seema Verma said would be "one of the most significant reductions in provider burden ever taken by any administration." The change, which is included in the proposed 2019 Physician Fee Schedule released Thursday, July 12, would simplify coding and create a single payment amount for "evaluation and management" visits, or E/M visits, and some specialists could see payment reductions as a result.

In what industry lobbyists said would be another significant change, the proposed rule also seeks to establish new payment codes for two new virtual services: telephone "check-ins" between clinicians and beneficiaries, and the remote evaluation of photos or videos that a patient submits to a clinician.

In addition, the proposed rule would enact provisions of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to expand telehealth services for beneficiaries with end-stage renal disease receiving home dialysis and beneficiaries with

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AAN 2018 Conference continued

Dr. Standaert serves as director of the Center for Neurodegeneration and Experimental Therapeutics, director of the Division of Movement Disorders in the Department of Neurology, director of the American Parkinson Disease Association Advanced Center for Parkinson Research, and director of the UAB Bachmann-Straus Dystonia and Parkinson's Disease Center of Excellence.



Harrison Walker, MD, is an associate professor of neurology and medical director for surgical movement disorders at the University of Alabama – Birmingham.

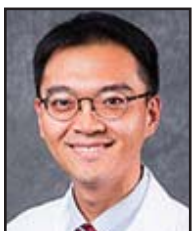
He attended medical school at the University of Alabama at Birmingham where he participated in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Research Scholars Program at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Following medical school, Dr. Walker pursued his neurology residency and movement disorders fellowship training at the University of Alabama at Birmingham

He is a member of the American Neurological Association, Movement Disorders Society and Society for Neuroscience.



James A. Stroud, CPA, has been with Warren Averett since 1988 and is a member of the firm's Healthcare Consulting Group. With more than 40 years of accounting and consulting experience, Stroud specializes in working with medical practices. His support to physicians and their practices includes strategic planning, profitability improvement, staff motivation and physician compensation formula enhancement.

Stroud has also assisted medical practices with physician conflict resolution, planning for physician retirement, new physician recruitment and merger negotiations.



Ikjae Lee, MD, is an assistant professor of neurology at the University of Alabama – Birmingham. He received his medical degree from the Seoul National University College of Medicine in 2008. He completed internships and residency at the University of Cincinnati.

His research interests include Myasthenia Gravis, ALS and clinical neurophysiology.



David Geldmacher, MD, is director of the UAB Division of Memory Disorders and Behavioral Neurology, and Patsy W. and Charles A. Collat Endowed Professor in Neuroscience. He received his medical degree (with certificate in academic research) from the State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse. He undertook his training in neurology at Case Western Reserve University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in behavioral neurology at the University of Florida.

His research interests include Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.



Elizabeth Minto, MD, is assistant residency director and assistant professor of neurology at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. She graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine in 2003 and completed an internship in internal medicine and neurology residency at Vanderbilt University.

Dr. Minto directs the USA Multiple Sclerosis and Neuroimmunology Program. Her other interests include migraine, stroke and general neurology.



Mark Harrigan, MD, is a professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Alabama – Birmingham. His clinical practice includes the operative and endovascular treatment of cerebrovascular disease, as well as general neurosurgery and neurosurgical critical care.

His clinical and research interests focus on cerebrovascular disorders. He is the UAB Site Principal Investigator for five multicenter clinical studies. He is active in resident education and was a recipient of a Top Ten Award for Excellence in Resident Education from the Department of Radiology. He is also the coauthor, with Dr. John Deveikis, of the *Handbook of Cerebrovascular Disease and Neurointerventional Technique*, which is currently in press with Springer.



Victor Sung, MD, is director of the UAB Huntington's Disease Clinic, director of the Birmingham VA Medical Center Deep Brain Stimulation Program, and co-director of the UAB School of Medicine Medical Student Neuroscience Course.

Dr. Sung received his medical degree from UT-Southwestern in Dallas and completed his general intern year at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, where he was named Outstanding Overall Intern. He completed residency training in neurology at UAB in 2009, during which time he was elected to membership of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society and received the Argus Award for Best Neurology Resident.



George E. Knox Jr. is an attorney at Lanier Ford Attorneys at Law. He has experience representing clients before the trial and appellate courts of Alabama, as well as before the federal courts. His appellate practice includes oral arguments before the Alabama Supreme Court and the filing of briefs before the United States Supreme Court.

Although his practice is mainly devoted to professional liability litigation, he has experience in commercial and contract litigation, as well as products liability actions.

Knox has been selected by his peers for inclusion in the medical-malpractice section of *Best Lawyers in America* since 2007.

2019 Physician Fee rule continued

acute stroke. CMS was expected to use its 2019 pay rules to expand telehealth in Medicare.

Verma touted the proposed overhaul of the E/M payment system as a way to reduce the time that doctors spend “copying, pasting, and clicking” to comply with the current system’s onerous documentation requirements.

“Doctors should not be spending time typing in information strictly to bill a certain level of code,” Verma said on a conference call with reporters.

The proposed rule would change the current system, which has four sets of documentation requirements for physicians, to a system with a single set of documentation requirements. It would establish a single, blended rate for E/M visits—a change that Verma said could result in a 1-2 percent pay reduction for doctors who typically bill at the higher rates under the existing system.

“We believe any negative payment adjustments will be outweighed by the dramatic reduction in administrative burden, allowing clinicians more time to spend with their patients,” Verma said.

The proposed rule also retains a so-called site-neutral policy under which certain off-campus hospital outpatient departments are paid 40 percent of what they would have received under the Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System. The American Hospital Association released a statement calling that portion of the proposed rule shortsighted.

The proposed rule includes a request for information on how CMS could make health care costs more transparent. In the 2019 Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System proposed rule, CMS said it would require hospitals to post their standard charges online, but the agency said Thursday that it thinks more can be done on price transparency and is seeking suggestions from the public on how it can better inform patients about out-of-pocket costs.

Other provisions in the proposed rule include:

- Reducing the level of physician supervision required for services provided by radiologist assistants.
- Allowing payment for communication

technology-based services and remote evaluation services furnished by rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers.

- Discontinuing functional status reporting requirements for outpatient therapy.
- Implementing a statutory pay reduction for services provided by therapy assistants.
- Seeking comments on how to combat opioid use disorder in Medicare.

Public comments on the proposed rule are due Sept. 10.

Summary of the key Medicare Fee Schedule proposals

- With the budget neutrality adjustment to account for relative value changes, as required by law, the proposed 2019 PFS conversion factor is \$36.05, a slight increase above the 2018 PFS conversion factor of \$35.99.
- CMS has proposed to collapse payment for office and outpatient visits. New patient office visit (99202-99205) payments would be blended to be \$135. Established office visits (99212-99215) would be blended to be paid at \$93. New codes would be created to provide add-on payments to office visits for specific specialties (\$9) and primary care physicians (\$5).
- To replace existing documentation guidelines, CMS proposes to allow use of (1) 1995 or 1997 documentation guidelines; (2) medical decision-making or (3) time. Documentation for history and exam will focus on interval history since last visit. Physicians will be allowed to review and verify certain information in the medical record entered by ancillary staff or the beneficiary, rather than re-entering the information.
- When physicians report an E/M service and a procedure on the same date, CMS proposes to implement a 50% multiple procedure reduction to the lower paid of the two services.
- CMS will implement new CPT codes and payment for remote monitoring and interprofessional consultations.
- CMS updated supplies and equipment pricing. The re-pricing of antigens has a significant impact on allergy and immunology payments, with an estimated 6% reduction for the specialty.

Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) proposal highlights

- Retain the low-volume threshold but add a third criteria of providing fewer than 200 covered professional services to Part B patients.
- Retaining bonus points for: care of complex patients, end-to-end reporting, small practices
- Allowing eligible clinicians to opt-in if they meet one or two, but not all, of the low volume threshold criterion.
- Consolidating the low-volume threshold determination periods with the determination period for identifying a small practice.
- Eliminate the base and performance categories and reduced the number of measures in the Promoting Interoperability category.
- Require Eligible clinicians to move to 2015 CEHRT.
- Providing the option to use facility-based scoring for facility-based clinicians.
- For 2019 performance year the weights are: Quality – 45%; Cost- 15%; Promoting Interoperability – 25%; Improvement Activities- 15%

As a reminder, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 provided additional flexibility for CMS on several MIPS issues including:

- Excluding Medicare Part B drug costs from MIPS payment adjustments and from the low-volume threshold determination;
- Allowing CMS to reweight the cost performance category to not less than 10 percent and not more than 30 percent for 2019-2021 performance years; and
- Allowing CMS flexibility in setting the performance threshold for performance years 2019-2021 to provide a gradual and incremental transition for physicians.

CMS has provided Fact Sheets on the major components of the rule which are available at the following links:

<https://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2018-Fact-sheets-items/2018-07-12-2.html>

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Payment-Program/Resource-Library/2019-QPP-proposed-rule-fact-sheet.pdf>.

Specialty Impact Table

AAN welcomes Meghan Martin

We are happy to introduce Meghan Martin as our new director. She is responsible for the overall management of the Alabama



Academy of Neurology, including membership recruitment and retention, and meeting planning. She comes to us from the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel and Spa where she specialized in sales and event management.

Meghan received a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism and public relations from Troy University. Her experience will be a welcomed asset to our academy.

While Meghan originally hales from Greenville, she currently lives in Montgomery with her husband, Jonathan, their 15 month old son Luke, and a rambunctious adopted shelter dog, Lyla. When Meghan isn't working or with family you can find her cooking up a new recipe or catching up on her reading list.

Meghan is filling the position left by Jennifer Hayes who resigned in January.

If you have not renewed your dues for 2018 or would like to join AAN, download a dues form at <http://alneurolgy.com/join-aan/>.

To arrange group billing for your practice, contact Meghan Martin at mmartin@alamedical.org or call (334) 954-2513.



Registration is open for the 2018 American Academy of Neurology Fall Conference

Oct. 26-28, Las Vegas, Nevada

Registration

Register online at <https://www4.cmrreg.com/aanFC2018/>. Early registration deadline: Aug. 22

Accommodations

The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas
3708 Las Vegas Blvd. S, Las Vegas, NV, 89109

The AAN room block rate is \$239 per night plus tax. A \$25 resort fee (plus tax) per room, per night, will be added. Call (855) 435-0005 and mention AAN Fall Conference and group code SANEU8 or [reserve online](#). **Hotel Reservation Deadline: Sept. 20**

AAN Thanks our 2018 Exhibitors

AAN depends on support from vendors to make our conference affordable for attendees. We are pleased to announce our 2018 Conference Exhibitors:

Abbvie	Liva Nova (VNS Therapy)
Adamas Pharmaceuticals	Neurocrine Biosciences, Inc.
Akcea Therapeutics	Novartis
Alexion Pharmaceuticals	Parkinsons Association of Alabama
Allegra Neurosciences	Promius Pharma
Amgen	Sanofi Genzyme
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama	Strongbridge Biopharma
Electrocore	Sunovion Pharmaceuticals
GE Healthcare	Supernus Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
Gene Dx, Inc.	Teva Neuroscience
Genetech	UCB
Grifols	Upsher-Smith Laboratories, Inc.
Kroger Specialty Infusion	US World Meds

AAN NEWS & NOTES

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two weeks in advance of printing.*

AAN News & Notes is published quarterly. The articles are meant to provoke thought and comment and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the members, Board of Directors or staff of the Alabama Academy of Neurology. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome.

AAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE AUGUST 18, 2018

Hyatt Regency, The Wynfrey Hotel, Birmingham

AGENDA • SATURDAY, AUGUST 18

7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.
Breakfast with Exhibitors

8:15 a.m.
Welcome
Amit Arora, MD, President, AAN

8:15 a.m. – 9:05 a.m.
Update on Medical and Surgical Treatment of Parkinson's Disease
David G. Standaert, MD, PhD, John N. Whitaker Professor and Chair of Neurology, University of Alabama - Birmingham; and Harrison Walker, MD, Associate Professor of Neurology, and Medical Director for Surgical Movement Disorders, University of Alabama - Birmingham

9:05 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.
Business Issues in Neurology Practices in Alabama
James A. Stroud, CPA, Warren Averett, LLC

The 2018 AAN Conference offers approximately 5.25 hours of instruction.

9:55 a.m. – 10:25 a.m.
Morning Break with Exhibitors/ Poster Viewing

10:25 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Update on Myasthenia Gravis
Ikjae Lee, MD, Assistant Professor of Neurology, University of Alabama - Birmingham

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
The Evolving Concept of Alzheimer's Disease
David Geldmacher, MD, Professor of Neurology, University of Alabama - Birmingham

11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Neuro Bowl/Lunch

12:45 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Impacting MS: Genetic, Environmental and Lifestyle Factors that Play a Role in Disease Pathogenesis and Progression
Elizabeth Minto, MD, Assistant Professor of Neurology, University of South Alabama

1:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Acute Intervention in Stroke
Mark Harrigan, MD, Professor of Neurosurgery, University of Alabama - Birmingham

2:00 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.
Break with Exhibitors

2:20 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Movement Disorders Videos
Victor W. Sung, MD, Associate Professor, Director of UAB Huntington's Disease Clinic, University of Alabama - Birmingham; and Marissa N. Dean, MD, Instructor-Fellow, Division of Movement Disorders, Department of Neurology, University of Alabama - Birmingham

2:50 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Malpractice Cases in Neurology
George E. Knox Jr., Attorney, Lanier Ford Attorneys at Law

3:30 p.m.
Evaluation and Adjourn

REGISTRATION

Print a registration form or follow a link to online registration at www.alneurology.com/annual-conference.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Make hotel reservations by calling the Hyatt Regency at (800) 233-1234 and mention the Alabama Academy of Neurology 2018 Conference. Rates begin at \$117 per night. **The room block will expire on July 27.**

www.alneurology.com • (334) 954-2500 • MMartin@alamedical.org

AAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE AUGUST 18, 2018

Hyatt Regency, The Wynfrey Hotel, Birmingham



REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Designation ☐ MD ☐ DO ☐ Other _____

Practice/Facility Name _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Practice Manager _____ Practice Manager E-mail _____

Dietary Needs _____ ☐ First time attendee? (check if yes)

FEES

- ☐ Member \$150 ☐ Non-Member \$250 ☐ Retired \$50 ☐ Nonphysician Clinician \$100
☐ Resident/Fellow - Free ☐ Student - Free

REGISTRATION

Register online at www.tinyurl.com/AAN2018Conference or send completed form to:
AAN 2018 Conference | Attn. Meghan Martin | PO Box 1900 | Montgomery, AL 36102-1900

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DETAILS

More conference information is online at www.alneurology.com. If you have special needs and/or need assistance, please contact Meghan Martin, at (334) 954-2500 or MMartin@alamedical.org.

PAYMENT

☐ Check payable to AAN Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

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