

Report from the 2009 FMA Annual Meeting

7/31/09

This past weekend, the Seminole County Medical Society sent three of its members as delegates to the FMA Annual Meeting held in Boca Raton, Florida. Dr. Vraj Panara, Dr. Franklin Clontz, and Dr. Sanjiv Kapil traveled to South Florida along with SCMS Executive Director, Carrie Pope. The weekend provided a great opportunity for the delegates to meet with some of the key players in organized medicine and voice their concerns regarding the state of Florida and Seminole County.

Some of the key resolutions discussed during the meeting will have an effect on the FMA's agenda in the upcoming 2010 Florida Legislative Session. For example, Resolution 9-33 was passed stating that the FMA will oppose any legislation that infringes on the state and federal laws that protect patient privacy and direct doctor/patient relationship, provided there is no impairment of public health. Another hot topic at the Annual Meeting this year was Resolution 9-51: FMA Position on the AMA's National Advocacy Efforts. Some state medical associations have recently questioned the AMA's efforts and there was no difference seen by Florida physicians at this year's annual meeting. President – Elect of the American Medical Association, Dr. Cecil Wilson, assured delegates to the annual meeting that they will be well-represented by the AMA, but many physicians wanted to ensure through Resolution 9-51 that the voice of Florida physicians would be heard, and therefore, this resolution was passed in the House of Delegates and adopted after some amendments to the wording. For example, many physicians wanted to ensure HR 3200 would include equitable reimbursement for physicians, tort reform, maintaining of the patient-physician relationship, and insure access to care for patients. SCMS delegate, Dr. Sanjiv Kapil, noted that the FMA was adamant that the AMA should not take the support of all physicians if it cannot provide the fundamental goals mentioned above.

According to Dr. Kapil, the FMA continued to voice its interest in defending scope of practice infringements such as Nurse Practitioners not being allowed to dispense narcotics and others. In addition, Dr. Kapil noted that expert witness reform was another hot topic in addition to insuring parity for mental healthcare along with general medicine, and promoting patient education and safety, such as legislation for booster seats for children below 95 lbs.

Overall the weekend went well and the FMA made great progress in streamlining the House of Delegates so the resolutions were voted on efficiently. However, time was left for necessary discussion when needed.

The FMA Annual Meeting is a great reminder of the power of organized medicine and what can be accomplished when physicians work together to answer some of the tough questions facing our state. Great progress was made this past weekend thanks to dedicated physicians and our own SCMS delegates. The FMA Annual Meeting will be held in Orlando next year and will be another great opportunity for SCMS members to voice their concerns and be a part of the positive change in medicine.