

SCMS Legislative Committee

Meeting Minutes – 10/6/08

The Seminole County Medical Society Legislative Committee (LC) met on 10/6/08 via conference call.

Members in attendance:

Glen Davis, MD, Chair
Joshua Helman, MD
Shirley Davis – Alliance Legislative Chair
Hank Greenberg, MD
Norma Ryan – Alliance President
Lloyd Werk, MD
Richard Bragg, MD, SCMS President
Carrie Gilbert – Executive Director

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 PM. The following was discussed:

1. The November 4, 2008 general election – Dr. Davis went over the Senate and House races of interest to the Seminole County Medical Society. The FMA PAC endorsed candidates mentioned in Senate races were Andy Gardiner and Thad Altman; and in House races Rep. Sandy Adams and Rep. Dean Cannon.

Dr. Bragg asked whether the law firms that have a relationship with SCMS could give a recommendation as to appellate judges that are running in the election. ED will contact Michael Bittman, JD, from GrayRobinson, to see if he would be willing to do this. Dr. Davis will contact the FMA to see if they have any recommendations.

Hank Greenberg noted that this would be a good time to meet with judge candidates to attempt to educate them about the issues facing physicians - especially in regards to malpractice.

2. 2009 FMA Legislative Priorities – Dr. Davis provided a copy of the 2009 FMA Legislative Priorities for informational purposes for Committee members to review.

3. 2009 SCMS Legislative Priorities – The Legislative Committee chose four major items to discuss with representatives throughout the year. Dr. Davis noted that the Committee is open to other issues that may come up throughout the year. The four items are:

Medicaid to Medicare – increase the reimbursement rate for Medicaid to that of Medicare.

Managed Care – to build on the managed care reforms accomplished this past year.

Expert Witness Certificate – this item is being kept as a priority out of principal, although it is unlikely legislators will address this in 2009.

Fully fund the University of Central Florida Medical School – Dr. Davis mentioned the recent meeting with Dr. Deborah German at UCF. Talking points are being put together so lobbying efforts can be coordinated.

The Committee discussed and will keep an eye on the following issues:

Access to care for children: Dr. Werk brought up the AAP's lawsuit against state of Florida for the way Medicaid is structured which results in lack of access to care for children. Dr. Greenberg noted that FMA voted to continue assisting in the funding of the lawsuit both this year and next.

Immunizations for children: Dr. Greenberg noted that there may be legislation filed this year to end the requirement for all child immunizations, due to the belief by some that the immunizations cause Down syndrome and autism. Dr. Werk noted that many major and international studies have shown no link between immunizations and autism. The Committee will keep abreast of this issue. Dr. Werk will discuss this issue with other at Nemours and will provide the Committee with additional information. He also agreed to be the point person for the Committee on this issue. Norma Ryan added that it's important to stay on top of this issue due to the problems that could occur if immunizations were no longer required.

Medical staff legal representation: Dr. Greenberg raised the issue of the need for independent medical staff legal representation. Dr. Greenberg noted that at Florida Hospital the medical staff approved hiring an attorney to represent the medical staff and voted to charge an extra \$100 every two years as part of a physician reapplication fee to pay this attorney's salary. However, the FH Board voted not to let the staff collect the money, and said that if physicians didn't pay the money this couldn't be used against them. The FMA has taken the position of supporting the FH medical staff legally and perhaps financially because they see this as a major issue.

4. The next "SCMS Legislative Corner" – Dr. Davis noted that two more "Legislative Corners" will be put out this year. The first will remind members of the general election and endorsed candidates. The second will be sent out after the election as an update.

5. The SCMS Key Contact Program – Dr. Davis reviewed the purpose of having the Key Contact Program. Dr. Davis noted that visits should be made after the elections when legislators are more situated. Dr. Davis asked the Committee members to let him know if anyone wants to be added or removed as a Key Contact.

2008 Key Contacts are:

Sen. Baker	John Robertson, MD	Frank Clontz, MD
Sen. Constantine	Glen Davis, MD	Robert Feldman, MD
Sen. Posey*	John Robertson, MD	Glen Davis, MD
Sen. Webster*	Glen Davis, MD	
Rep. Hays	John Robertson, MD	Frank Clontz, MD
Rep. Adams	Glen Davis, MD	Sanjay Reddy, MD
Rep. Dorworth	Glen Davis, MD	Raaj Popli, MD
Rep. Simmons*	Richard Bragg, MD	Glen Davis, MD

* termed out this year.

6. Potential speakers for future SCMS meetings – Dr. Davis stated that the SCMS quarterly meeting date in November conflicts with a meeting in the legislature. The suggestion was made to have legislative speakers at the meetings in 2009. Dr. Greenberg noted that having politicians at quarterly meetings is a good way to get physicians involved and get them used to donating money to campaigns.

7. The Seminole County Delegation hearing (December) – Dr. Davis noted that organizations are given 3 minutes to present their legislative agenda before this delegation. This hearing occurs in Sanford and all legislators on the state level are present. Dr. Davis suggested that Sanjay Reddy, MD would be a good person to present before this delegation since he has expressed interest in the past. ED will confirm with Dr. Reddy if he would like to present and will call Senator Baker’s office to confirm the date of this event and that SCMS is on the agenda. Any handouts must be sent in at least a week prior to the hearing.

8. Tallahassee visits in 2009 – Dr. Davis noted that SCMS will try to coordinate with the FMA and send at least one group of people to Tallahassee. Dr. Davis stated this is a good time to build relationships with the legislators. SCMS will coordinate with FMA to see which days will be the most productive. ED will try to make appointments with as many legislators as possible. Dr. Davis noted that the 2nd or 3rd week in March is probably the best time to meet with the legislators.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Gilbert, SCMS Executive Director

Glen Davis, MD
Chair, SCMS Legislative Committee