Merit has always been driven to be different than the typical IPA. As demonstrated this past year, we believe ongoing education, awareness, and advocacy is the core to our success as a network. In particular, as we pivot to a FFV world with development of our Clinically Integrated Network. From there, you have charged us with providing applicable and unfiltered information at the local, state, and federal level. And with that knowledge, enhancing our ability to adapt to changes in current and upcoming reimbursement models.

One prime example of the strength in this network, is our focus on the Quality Payment Program over the last year. Like you, we’ve read and heard about the mass confusion over this program and felt once again, that education was key. We created an internal MACRA research team and function, researched grant funding options, exchanged countless number of emails, and held webinars and seminars on this very topic. Our goal was not just to help practices ‘check the box’ for MACRA compliance, but to begin building the culture necessary to thrive as our industry and reimbursement models evolve. Most recently, we were given the privilege to speak at
the GA MGMA conference on QPP education and thriving in such a new program. The feedback there was no different than that of our community or any of the many survey's you read. What was distinctly different however, is the manner in which a large group of independent provider in a market like Savannah collaborated. Coming together to help one another better understand the QPP world and subsequently, further partnerships via the CIN platform.

Lastly, let's quickly take a look back at our 2016 meeting and our stated objectives at that session for the next 12 months:

1. Continue CIN development
2. Continuing advocacy efforts
3. Develop MACRA/MIPS plan and options for members
4. Further develop contract portfolio
5. Further Member Engagement/Education

You'll see the same theme here – Collaboration. From where we are today, that is surely to be the core theme in which we operate going forward. And it's your willingness to do so that will further make Merit a success. Please be on the lookout for a look back at the member meeting and other information over the coming days. And, here's to another great year for our membership!

Many Thanks.

---

**Legislative Update**

**American Health Care Act Impact**

After original failure, the House of Representatives passed a version of the AHCA in late April. Please click [HERE](#) for the proposed changes and impact.

---

**Warm Welcome to Our New Practice!**
Caravan's Summer Quality Improvement Workshop  
July 21, 2017

Savannah Marriott Riverfront
Please take the time to register before Friday, **June 30th**.  
[Click here to register]

**Lightbeam Champions:**
- Wrightington Rheumatology
- Pediatrics Associates of Savannah
- Savannah Vascular and Cardiac Institute

**Patient Satisfaction Champions:**
- ENT Associates of Savannah
- Coastal Allergy & Asthma
Congratulations to our Merit physicians on being named "Best of Savannah" by readers of Connect Savannah!

Dr. Robert Dow Hoffman of Chatham Orthopedics named Best Orthopedist!

Dr. Kristin Updegraff of SouthCoast named Best Primary Care Physician!
Dr. Brad Goodman of Coastal Allergy and Asthma named Best Allergist!

To read more "Best of" by Connect Savannah, click HERE.

June's Awareness

Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month

Worldwide, 47 million people are living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. Join the Alzheimer's Association in going purple and raising awareness this June. To learn more, click HERE.

Men's Health Awareness

The purpose of Men's Health Month is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys. To learn more, click HERE.
News You Can Use

eClinicalWorks to Pay $155 Million
The EHR vendor allegedly violated federal law by misleading users on what their software could do, and paying customers to promote the software - violating the False Claims Act and Anti-Kickback Statute.
To read more, click HERE.

Anthem - Cigna Merger
Anthem, Cigna saga not over as insurer demands Anthem pay the $1.85 billion breakup fee plus $13 billion. In which, Anthem is fighting back against Cigna.
To read more, click HERE.

BCBS of Georgia to stop covering ED visits it deems unnecessary
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia will no longer cover emergency department services it determines are unnecessary for members with individual plans, starting next month.
Click HERE to read more.

ACA Premium Rate Increases Range from 6.7% to 59%
All insurers have until June 21st to file their rate requests with the federal government, and they are predicting double digit premium increases due to the Trump administration making no guarantee over the continuation of cost-sharing reduction payments.
Click HERE to read more.

Kaiser Permanente Rated Top Plan in Region
Kaiser Permanente of Georgia remains the highest-rated health plan in its region for the eighth straight year, according to the J.D. Power study of health plans in the United States. Click HERE to read more.