Our continued thoughts and prayers are with everyone affected by Hurricane Irma. As we are in the path, we hope everyone will continue to stay safe. Our administrative and support staff at Merit Health will be away from the office Monday and tentatively Tuesday with limited access to our emails.

Welcome to our new members!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physician</th>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Michigan, MD</td>
<td>Urology</td>
<td>Urological Associates of Savannah</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alison Spellman, MD</td>
<td>Hematology; Medical Oncology</td>
<td>Summit Cancer Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane Davis, MD</td>
<td>Otolaryngologist</td>
<td>ENT Associates of Savannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald Cobb, MD</td>
<td>Internal Medicine; Primary Care</td>
<td>Southcoast Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Gabbard, MD</td>
<td>Nephrology</td>
<td>Nephrology &amp; Hypertension Medical Associates of Savannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Carter, MD</td>
<td>Neurology</td>
<td>Savannah Neurology Specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joel Greenberg, MD</td>
<td>Neurology</td>
<td>Savannah Neurology Specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard Bodziner, MD</td>
<td>Neurology</td>
<td>Savannah Neurology Specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert MacGregor, MD</td>
<td>Neurology; Clinical Neurophysiology</td>
<td>Savannah Neurology Specialists</td>
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As is pivotal in any Clinically Integrated Network, Merit has recently launched a Clinical Programs Committee. This committee is comprised of both primary care and specialty physicians who are members of the network, as well as administrators, analysts, and others. An effective clinical integration network contains initiatives that involve all physicians committed to a common set of clinical goals. These goals are likely to improve the health of a community, provide measureable results in quality improvement, efficiency of care and patient safety. Measureable results can also be used to compare physician performance which results in quality improvement. This group will work with appropriate workgroups to accomplish stated objectives, including technological infrastructure, as well as include other members as necessary. Data sharing and protocol develop will be an integral goal of this committee with periodic committee meetings and continuous correspondence to ensure appropriate communication. The driving objectives include:

Ø Improving patient outcomes through more formally integrating the coordination of care across the provider continuum through the exploration of new models of care and reimbursement.

Ø Identify and validate the means to improve the quality of care, reduce the cost of care, enhance the patient experience, and manage population health.

Ø Develops policy and procedure protocols and oversees activities related to clinical initiatives.

Ø Oversee and approve program measures, weighting, and performance targets.

Ø Provide guidance to the network’s clinical initiatives and respective workgroups.

Ø Develop the process for monitoring physician performance and identifying opportunities for education and improvement.

Two initiatives currently underway include: 1) Transitions of Care and 2) Pediatric Asthma Clinic (Led by Dr. Brad Goodman and Dr. Kasey Berman). Below is some information on each to give an idea of the initiatives in development.
1. **Transitions of Care (TOC)** is defined by CMS as - The movement of a patient from one setting of care (hospital, ambulatory primary care practice, ambulatory specialty care practice, long-term care, home health, rehabilitation facility) to another. We have several practices represented on this initiative with many breakout sessions and due diligence. We are investigating what information is most valuable to our providers and various settings and how best to store and report on this information. The committee has also engaged providers outside of Merit to further its objective of genuine community clinical integration.

2. **Pediatric Asthma Clinic** - The Asthma Center complements the care children receive from his or her pediatrician or family practice physician. After the child completes the Asthma Center program the physicians will provide the referring physician with a detailed summary of findings and recommendations (identification of triggers and education). Coastal Allergy and Asthma physicians - Dr. Brad Goodman, Dr. Bruce Finkel, and Dr. Monica Kenney - may continue to support your primary doctor’s treatment of the child’s asthma on a requested basis. For more information on the Asthma Clinic, please [click here](#).

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**Timeline:**

**Quality Payment Program**

- **January 1, 2017-December 31, 2017** | Performance period for 2019 payment (can report data for any 90-day period this year)
- **March 31, 2017** | First APM snapshot; (also June 30 and Aug. 31)
- **April 1–June 30, 2017** | Registration period for submitting data via the CMS web interface and/or administering the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey for MIPS
- **Oct. 2, 2017** | Start of final 90-day reporting period that counts for MIPS payment adjustments in 2019
- **Jan. 1–March 31, 2018** | Submission period for 2017 performance data for MIPS
- **Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2018** | Performance period for 2020 payment (full-year reporting for quality and cost, 90-day reporting for advancing care information and improvement activities)
- **Midyear 2018** | Performance feedback for 2017 performance period released
- **Oct. 2, 2018** | Start of final 90-day reporting period for improvement activities and advancing care information
- **2019** | MIPS payment adjustment +/- 4%
- **2019-2024** | APMs 5% annual bonus payments
- **Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2019** | Performance period for 2021 payment
- **2020** | MIPS payment adjustment +/- 5%
- **2021** | MIPS payment adjustment +/- 7%
News You Can Use

Blue Cross Blue Shield announces departure from 85 Georgia Counties

The company agreed to continue offering coverage in the 84 counties that will have no other health plans in 2018. For Chatham county, this leaves Ambetter as the only option - where there are fewer physicians and facilities that patients can utilize.

Click HERE to read more and view counties in which Ambetter will stay in.

Awareness Months

1 in 75 women will be diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer during their lifetimes. In women ages 35-74, ovarian cancer is the fifth leading cause of cancer-related deaths, with over 22,280 new cases each year. To learn more about Ovarian Cancer, click here.

Local Events:
4th Annual Savannah TEAL Walk
Every 3 minutes, someone in the US is diagnosed with a form of Blood Cancer. Every 9 minutes, someone in the US dies from a form of Blood Cancer. Despite progress, more than a third of blood cancer patients still do not survive five years after their diagnosis. To learn more, please click here.

Local Events:
Light The Night
For more local events, click HERE.