

Mission: *The Permanente Journal* is published for physicians and nurses to create and deliver superior health care through the principles and benefits of Permanente Medicine.

Permanente Medicine is preventive, innovative, evidence-based, population care practiced by a multispecialty group, using an electronic health and medical record, and focused on patient relationships and outcomes.

Circulation: 30,000 print readers per quarter, and accessed by 500,000 unique Web readers in 2007 from all 160 countries of the world.



On the cover: "Solitude" by James McCormick, MD, is a photograph of California scrub oaks in the morning fog taken in Calabasas, CA.

Dr McCormick is an emergency physician

at the Panorama City Medical Center. His interest in photography was reawakened with the advent of digital imagery, which allows a photographer to move both the color and black and white labs into the house with ease. Dr McCormick says that few things make one feel as self contented as watching someone view and enjoy your work. He also states that it affords him a very relaxing diversion from the tension and pressures of the Emergency Department.

More of Dr McCormick's work can be viewed at the Web site: www.zen-photo.net.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

4 **The Dartmouth Atlas Applied to Kaiser Permanente: Analysis of Variation in Care at the End of Life.**

Matt Stiefel, MPA; Paul Feigenbaum, MD; Elliott S Fisher, MD, MPH

The *Dartmouth Atlas* method for examination of variation in care at the end of life was replicated by Kaiser Permanente (KP). Although KP inpatient care use rates were 25% to 30% lower and hospice use rates were higher than in the surrounding communities, there was still two- to four-fold variation in inpatient care use across KP geographic areas. Results reinforced emphasis on palliative care for patients with chronic conditions and earlier transitions to hospice.

10 **Puentes Clinic: An Integrated Model for the Primary Care of Vulnerable Populations.**

Lawrence Kwan, MD; Cheryl J Ho, MD; Charles Preston, PhD; Viet Le, MD, PhD

This integrated model to address the needs of a medically vulnerable population of homeless and injection-drug users emphasizes open access, outreach, groups, and a team approach to care. Emergency Department and urgent care visit rates decreased, simultaneous with increased primary care visits.

16 **Myocardial Infarction and Its Association with the Use of Nonselective NSAIDs: A Nested Case-Control and Time-to-Event Analysis.**

T Craig Cheetham, PharmD, MS; David J Graham, MD, MPH; David Campen, MD; Rita Hui, PharmD, MS; Michele Spence, PhD; Gerald Levy, MD; Stanford Shoor, MD

In a study of 8143 cases and 31,496 matched study control subjects, indomethacin and naproxen were associated with increased odds of adverse cardiovascular outcomes—myocardial infarctions and sudden cardiac death. These events occurred early in therapy.

23 **Home Hospice Acupuncture: A Preliminary Report of Treatment Delivery and Outcomes.**

Karen Kaufman, PhD, LAC; Ellen J Salkeld, PhD

The increasing incorporation of complementary and alternative medicine modalities into hospice care prompted a preliminary exploration of the process of offering acupuncture to ameliorate undesirable side effects from needed analgesic and sedative medications. Excellent or good results were noted in the charts of 34% of patients whose chief complaint was pain and in 31% of patients with anxiety.

REVIEW ARTICLES

27 **Laparoscopic Colorectal Surgery.**

CME James Yoo, MD

The use of minimally invasive techniques in colorectal surgery has lagged behind its application in other surgical fields, even though important new studies have demonstrated the benefits and safety of laparoscopic colorectal surgery, making it now the preferred approach.

32 **Current Status and Treatment of Primary Hyperparathyroidism.**

Dina M Elaraj, MD; Orlo H Clark, MD

Sporadic rather than familial, 80% to 85% of cases of primary hyperparathyroidism are caused by a solitary parathyroid adenoma. Diagnosis is made by hypercalcemia, elevated parathyroid hormone level, and a normal or high 24-hour urine calcium excretion. Multiple studies have demonstrated symptomatic and metabolic benefits of parathyroidectomy in "asymptomatic" patients.

SOUL OF THE HEALER

Original Visual Art

38 **"Haleakala—The House of the Sun"**
Charlene Hughes, RN

46 **"Out of Order"**
Denise Fuson, MD

55 **"Twenty-five years and two days"**
Marilyn Mitchell, RN

62 **Nurse Lacasad Paints for Patients: A Service Credo Story to Improve Health Care.**
Mia Medcalf

CASE STUDIES

39 "The Other Side of the Fence": A Geriatric Surgical Case Study of Error Disclosure.

Robert Formanek, Jr, MD; Doug Bonacum, MBA, CSA

An unanticipated adverse event after the surgical repair of a hip fracture lead to an exploration of a patient's care experience, through panel discussion, commentary, and excerpts from a letter entitled *The Other Side of the Fence*, written by the daughter of the 90-year-old patient.

47 Giant Colonic Diverticulum: Endoscopic, Imaging, and Histopathologic Findings.

Pejvak Sassani, MD; Hardeep M Singh, MD; Donald Gerety, MD; Maher A Abbas, MD

Two cases of a rare manifestation of diverticulosis illustrate the clinical presentation and surgical management, which is curative and in select cases can be carried out laparoscopically.

CLINICAL MEDICINE

50 Improving Chronic Care: The "Guided Care" Model.

Chad Boulton, MD, MPH, MBA; Lya Karm, MD; Carol Groves, RN, MPA

In a new model now being tested by Kaiser Permanente in the Baltimore-Washington, DC area, a registered nurse works in a practice with several primary care physicians conducting eight clinical processes for 50-60 multimorbid patients.

56 The "Party Drug" Crystal Methamphetamine: Risk Factor for the Acquisition of HIV.

Michael Allerton, MS; William Blake, MD

The use of methamphetamine is highly prevalent among populations at risk for acquiring HIV infection, especially men who have sex with men. A novel intervention tool—the "video doctor"—significantly reduced high-risk behaviors.

Corridor Consult

59 When Is a Computed Tomography Angiogram Necessary to Rule Out Pulmonary Embolus in the Emergency Department?

Joel Handler, MD

In two case examples, use of an evidenced-based diagnostic algorithm to rule out pulmonary embolus seeks to reduce the significant radiation exposure to a patient. A single CTA is equivalent to 400 chest x-rays.

COMMENTARIES

63 Culture and Medicine: Reflections on Identity and Community in an Age of Pluralism.

Sylvestre Quevedo, MD, MPH

This narrative account of a physician-patient relationship explores the meanings and relevance of race, ethnicity, and cultural diversity in the practice of medicine and in our general society.

68 Innovation in Our Nation's Public Hospitals: Interview with Five CEOs and Medical Directors.

Tom Janisse, MD; Winston F Wong, MD

Prominent leaders talk about: developing an integrated system with community clinics and neighborhoods; and, for an ever larger, diverse, and immigrant population, a new simultaneous translation system; and training future doctors by involving them in the hospital's quality improvement committees and clinical projects.

75 Beyond Equal Care: How Health Systems Can Impact Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities.

Kate Meyers, MPP

Factors outside traditional health care delivery—community-based social determinants of health such as environment, pollution, job opportunities, education, income, and support for healthy lifestyles—play equally important roles in disparities improvement by health systems.

EDITORIALS

81 Confronting the Uncomfortable: Health Plans and Health Disparities: A Moral Dilemma in a Morally Driven Industry.

Winston F Wong, MD

Health plans, in fulfilling their obligation to provide a reliable, safe, and secure system of care to millions of users, must also assume a leading role in demonstrating a commitment to abrogate the destructive role of racism and social injustice upon the health care of all Americans.

87 HIV Today: What's Encouraging; What's Discouraging.

Lee Jacobs, MD

There has been real progress in controlling this infection—in the US and in the developing world—however, men having sex with men continues to represent the majority of new infections. Despite tremendously effective medication, poor adherence by patients is all too common.

NARRATIVE MEDICINE

88 Narrative Medicines: Challenge and Resistance.

David B Morris, PhD

All narrative shares the common function of *someone telling something to someone about something*. For decades American medical students have memorized the familiar acronym—S.O.A.P—which identifies patient as subjective and physician as agent of objective fact. Narrative medicine challenges this slippery assumption about a clean division between subject and object. Physicians and patients are immersed in the act of storytelling.

*CME Evaluation
Form now online —
see page 3 for details.*

ERRATUM

Perm J 2007 Fall;11(4):30-40.

In the Original Article, "A Decade of Experience with a Multiday Residential Communication Skills Intensive: Has the Outcome Been Worth the Investment?," an error occurred in the second column of the 26th row of Table 2 on page 35. The percentage should be 3%; the row should read: Psychiatry 17 (3%).