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### What's Inside

ACG Policy Update.....	2
Physician Finder.....	2
Call for Nominations .....	2

### Our conference is this weekend!


We are excited about our 2016 Conference this weekend at the Hilton Sandestin! Our excellent line up of speakers (see below) are presenting sessions that have been approved for 8 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*<sup>™\*</sup>. In addition, our Practice Managers Conference has the highest number of pre-registered attendees we've ever had!

Our exhibit hall is sold out and we have a wonderful Welcome Dinner planned for Saturday night on the Sunset Deck. We will enjoy a family dinner buffet, with ice cream sundaes, and entertainment by Light Travelers, a popular acoustic guitar duo - John Keuler and Karl Langley. Bring you children for this fun-filled event!

As a bonus, attendees and family members receive 10 percent discount on Serenity by the Sea Spa Services!

#### 2016 Conference Speakers

- David A. Schwartz, MD, FACC, AGAF, Vanderbilt University Medical Center
- James P. Callaway, MD, UAB School of Medicine
- Mallory Earley, JD, ProAssurance
- Phillip K. Henderson, DO, USA School of Medicine
- Kenneth M. Sigman, MD, Birmingham Gastroenterology Associates, PC
- Derek Dubay, MD, UAB School of Medicine
- Jim Stroud, CPA, Warren Averett

Online registration is closed, so please contact Charlotte Morris at [cmorris@alamedical.org](mailto:cmorris@alamedical.org) or (334) 954-2500 if you need to register! 

# Have you renewed your MEMBERSHIP for 2016?

Log on to [www.alagastro.org](http://www.alagastro.org) to print an application or send an e-mail to [cmorris@alamedical.org](mailto:cmorris@alamedical.org).

#### \* Accreditation Statement

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of the Medical Foundation of Alabama and the Alabama Gastroenterological Society. The Medical Foundation of Alabama is accredited by the Medical Association of the State of Alabama to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

# ACG Public Policy Update

## Is “Advancing Care Information” just Lipstick on a “Meaningful Use” Pig?

In short, the answer is “yes.” However, on a positive note, it is a potentially more attractive pig. How so?

This category adopts some current Meaningful Use Program objectives. However, CMS is also proposing to reduce practice management burdens by: eliminating the duplicative clinical quality reporting requirements and getting rid of the “Clinical Decision Support” and “Computerized Provider Order Entry” objectives that are currently required in Meaningful Use. Advancing Care Information is also not an “all or nothing” reporting program like in Meaningful Use.

So in 2017, instead of reporting any Modified Stage 2 requirements, MIPS and APM participants will instead be reporting and attesting to measures under this new Advancing Care Information category.

...but this is still related to Meaningful Use, so it has to be a bit more complicated, right? Of course. It is still a pig. To read

more on how this works, please [read the full tidbit here](#).

Check out ACG’s “*Making Sense of MACRA*” summary for more analysis of MIPS and APMs.

### Meaningful Use in 2016: Practice Management Conundrum?

*ACG National Affairs Committee Chair, Whitfield L. Knapple, MD, FACC*

As mentioned above, “Advancing Care Information” requirements will replace Meaningful Use beginning in 2017. What’s more, Congress passed legislation last year that allows ACG members to apply for a blanket hardship exemption for 2015 Meaningful Use reporting requirements. *ACG members have until July 2016 to apply for this exemption.*


So is 2016 a Meaningful Use “donut-hole” year?

Since Meaningful Use – err, Advancing Care Information – should reduce provider reporting burdens by eliminating the “Clinical Decision Support” and “Computerized Provider Order Entry” objectives starting 2017,

and since ACG members can still take advantage of the 2015 reporting exemption (avoiding a 2017 payment cut) ... is it even worth participating in Meaningful Use in 2016? Would your practice benefit from just accepting the 3% payment cut in 2018?

Only you can answer this question based on your individual Medicare fee-for-service revenue and practice management operations. (ACG is not officially recommending this). Some things to consider could include: the *CMS estimated amount of time and cost in participating in Meaningful Use in 2016*; comparing that to your practice’s actual time and cost when participating in Meaningful Use for 2016; whether or not your practice can make up for this 3% cut in Medicare Part B revenue by not participating in Meaningful Use but freeing up more time to see and treat Medicare Part B patients.

[Read the full blog post here.](#)


Please check out *ACG’s Meaningful Use toolkit* to learn more on important dates and 2016 reporting requirements. 

## Physician Finder


### Brookwood Baptist Health/ Shelby Baptist Medical Center:

Employed Gastroenterologist opportunity for a board certified physician at Shelby Baptist Medical Center which is 25 minutes from metro Birmingham.

Looking for a general Gastroenterologist for this 252 multi-specialty facility for primarily inpatient consults, general gastro procedures & call. Call will be 3:1. Very competitive salary and comprehensive benefits offered to this candidate based on skill set & experience.

For more information, please contact Margaret Ann Webb, Physician Recruitment Coordinator for Brookwood Baptist Health, at: [Margaret.webb@bhsala.com](mailto:Margaret.webb@bhsala.com) or at (205) 715-5842. 

## Call for nominations

AGS is seeking nominations to fill the positions of Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer for 2016-2018. Please contact AGS Executive Director *Jennifer Hayes* if you are interested in serving or would like to nominate someone. Call (334) 954-2500 or click to send an e-mail. 



### Alabama Gastroenterological Society

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### Alabama Gastroenterological Society 2014 Officers

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DeWayne Tooson, MD — Vice President  
Kenneth Sigman, MD — Secretary/Treasurer  
Timothy Denton, MD — Immediate Past President

Robert Shaffer, MD — Publisher  
Jennifer Hayes — Executive Editor  
Charlotte Morris — Senior Editor

Send article submissions and comments to Charlotte Morris at [cmorris@alamedical.org](mailto:cmorris@alamedical.org) two weeks in advance. Scope is printed bimonthly. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome.