



THE FORUM

May/June 2026 • Volume 25, No. 3 • The Official Magazine of Collier County Medical Society

17th Annual Women's Health Forum: "Stronger Tomorrow: Women's Health & Vitality"



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Register at ccmsonline.org
or call (239) 435-7727

Wednesday, May 13, 6:00pm
CCMS Spring General Membership Meeting
Physicians Regional Pine Ridge

Wednesday, May 20, 7:30am and 6:00pm
CCMS Seminar: The Medical Practice Ownership Journey
Porter Wright Law Office, Mercato

Saturday, June 20, 6:30pm
CCMS Annual Meeting
Arthrex One Conference Center
Open to the public
Sponsor opportunities at ccmsonline.org/support

June 22, 6:00pm
CCMS After 5 Social & CCMS Alliance Night Out
Welcome New Residents
Location TBD

July 16, 6:00pm
CCMS After 5 Social
Florida Oncology & Hematology, Collier Blvd.

July 31-August 2, 2026
FMA Annual Meeting
Hilton Orlando
Register at fmedical.org

Thursday, August 6, 6:00pm
After 5 Social
HSS at NCH

Thursday, August 13, 5:30pm
CCMS Employed/Group Physicians Lecture
Mighty Mussels Baseball Game

Thursday, September 17, 6:00pm
CCMS Women Physicians Social
Seasons 52

Saturday, September 26, 8am
Foundation of CCMS
"Docs & Duffers" Charity Golf Tournament
Bonita Bay Club Naples
Support opportunities at ccmsfoundation.org

Thursday, November 19, 6:30pm
CCMS New Members Welcome Reception
Vineyards Country Club
Sponsor opportunities at ccmsonline.org/support

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sunil.muley@lmcu.org
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Karen Mosteller, CPA, CHBC • 239-261-5554
kmosteller@markham-norton.com
markham-norton.com

2026 RCC Cards

CCMS Members receive special \$10 pricing on the 2026 RCC Card, which provides discounts at restaurants and merchants. Order a card at ccmsonline.org/membership or call CCMS at 239-435-7727. Cards will be mailed to the office address on file unless otherwise specified.

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Robin Babbo, CCMS Alliance President; Yenlee Hernandez, MD
and Dairon Lago, MD, Resident Physician Representatives

Views and opinions expressed in *The Forum* are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Collier County Medical Society's Board of Directors, staff or advertisers. Copy deadline for editorial and advertising submission is the 15th of the month preceding publication. The editorial staff of *The Forum* reserves the right to edit or reject any submission.

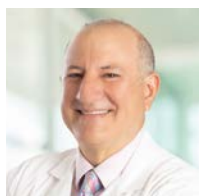
MEMBER NEWS

For full listings of practicing members, visit ccmsonline.org/find-a-doctor

New Members:



Aleksandra G Florek, MD
Riverchase Dermatology
261 9th St S, Naples, FL 34102
Phone: (239) 216-4337 Fax: (239) 261-5594
Board Certified: Dermatology



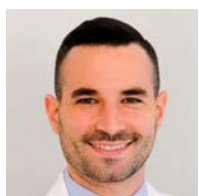
Felipe Gascon, MD
Internal Medicine
Millennium Physician Group
1735 SW Health Pkwy Ste 201, Naples, FL 34109
Phone: (239) 249-7800 Fax: (239) 249-7803



Susan M Manson, MD
Physicians Regional
GME Residency Program Director
6101 Pine Ridge Rd, Naples, FL 34119
Phone: (239) 348-4420 Fax: (239) 390-2486
Board Certified: Internal Medicine



Maria Pirraglia, MD
Jaffe Sports Medicine
1865 Veterans Park Dr Ste 101, Naples, FL 34109
Phone: (239) 254-7718 Fax: (855) 959-1692
Board Certified: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation



Conor Sperzel, MD
Vanguard Spine and Pain
720 Goodlette Frank Rd Ste 204, Naples, FL 34102
Phone: (239) 331-7732 Fax: (239) 387-2305
Board Certified: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation



Tatyana Stepanenko, MD
Pain Medicine
Jaffe Sports Medicine
1865 Veterans Park Dr Ste 101, Naples, FL 34109
Phone: (239) 254-7778 Fax: (855) 959-1692
Board Certified: Pain Medicine; Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

Reinstated:

Vlasios Albanis, MD
Retired

Retiring from Practice:

Robert Meli, MD

Practice Updates:

Charina C Yango-Cadavos, MD
Integrity Medical
New Phone: (239) 497-0365

Carlos B Quintero, MD
New Practice: Everwell Precision Health
1879 Veterans Park Dr Ste 1202
Naples, FL 34109
Phone: (239) 944-7352 Fax: (239) 799-7501
Board Certified: Internal Medicine

CCMS Physician Directory Deadlines



Ad reservations for the 2026-27 Physician Directory are due May 13th to reach your healthcare audience and members of the public across SWFL. Download order forms at ccmsonline.org/support.

Practicing CCMS members who are current with their dues as of May 27th receive a free listing in the Directory. To update your listing and/or photo, email info@ccmsonline.org by May 27th. Members can verify their current information on file at ccmsonline.org/find-a-doctor.

Submit a Resolution for FMA Annual Meeting

CCMS members are invited to submit your resolutions for the 2026 FMA Annual Meeting to the CCMS Board for consideration. The board will co-sponsor and forward to the FMA House of Delegates all resolutions that are in the best interests of CCMS members and their patients. To submit a resolution to the CCMS board, email your resolution to april@ccmsonline.org by May 18th, in time for review and inclusion in the FMA Annual Meeting Handbook Addendum. For details visit <https://conta.cc/4c5JnNr>.

CCMS Membership Certificates

CCMS physician members who have paid their 2026 CCMS member dues can contact the Medical Society to request a 2026 membership certificate to print and display at your office. Email info@ccmsonline.org or call 239-435-7727.

A Message from the CCMS President

Jose Baez, M.D., Board President



Dear Members,

I hope this message finds you well and thriving in both your professional and personal endeavors. As we move through the year, I want to take a moment to reflect on several important initiatives, celebrate the accomplishments within our community, and highlight opportunities for your

continued engagement in shaping the future of our organization and the practice of medicine in Florida.

One of the recent highlights for our organization has been the Women's Health Forum. This event served as an important platform for collaboration, education, and advocacy around issues that are critical to the health and well-being of women in our community. From preventive care and chronic disease management to menopausal health and access to services, the discussions were both timely and impactful. The Forum also reinforced the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and the role we all play in advancing equitable, patient-centered care. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the organizers, speakers, and attendees who made this event such a success. Your commitment to addressing these vital issues continues to elevate the standard of care we provide.

Equally important is the opportunity to recognize excellence within our ranks. I am proud to congratulate this year's CCMS Awards Winners. Congratulations to Dr. Rebekah Bernard as this year's Physician of the Year and Dr. Hermes Koop as our Lifetime Achievement Award recipient. These individuals exemplify the highest standards of professionalism, compassion, and leadership. Their contributions go beyond clinical excellence—they serve as mentors, innovators, and advocates for both patients and colleagues. Recognizing their achievements not only honors their work but also inspires all of us to continue striving for excellence in our own practices. Please join me in celebrating their accomplishments and thanking them for their dedication to our medical community.

As we look ahead, we will also present the Slate of Officers for the upcoming CCMS term of office. Strong leadership is essential to the continued success and relevance of our organization. The individuals included in this slate have demonstrated a deep commitment to our mission and possess the vision needed to guide us forward. Your voice matters, and your engagement helps ensure that our leadership reflects the values and priorities of our membership. Thank you to all our candidate nominees and nominators.

In addition to leadership selection, another important way to make your voice heard is through the submission of resolutions to the Florida Medical Association (FMA) Annual Meeting. This process allows physicians at the local level to directly influence policy and advocate for meaningful change on issues affecting our profession and our patients. Whether your concerns relate to scope of practice, reimbursement, public health, or physician wellness, submitting a resolution is a powerful way to bring those issues to the forefront. I strongly encourage you to consider participating in this process. There is still time to submit resolution proposals for the FMA Handbook Addendum. If you have ideas or need guidance on how to develop a resolution, our organization is here to support you. Please contact CCMS.

To further inform you of our advocacy efforts, I urge you to review the FMA Legislative Report at bit.ly/fma-report2026. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the current legislative landscape, including key bills, policy priorities, and ongoing advocacy efforts that impact healthcare delivery across the state. Staying informed about these developments is critical, as legislative decisions often have direct and lasting effects on how we practice medicine and care for our patients. By understanding these issues, we are better equipped to engage with policymakers and advocate effectively on behalf of our profession.

As physicians, we are navigating an increasingly complex healthcare environment—one that requires not only clinical expertise but also active participation in leadership, advocacy, and community engagement. Our strength as an organization lies in the collective efforts of our members. Whether you are attending events, mentoring colleagues, contributing to discussions, or advocating at the state level, your involvement makes a meaningful difference.

I encourage each of you to remain engaged, stay informed, and continue contributing your unique perspectives and expertise. Together, we can address the challenges facing our profession, support one another, and ensure that we continue to provide the highest quality care to the communities we serve.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication, professionalism, and commitment to excellence. It is an honor to serve as your president, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

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Stronger Tomorrow: CCMS Women's Health Forum Highlights

Collier County Medical Society

As part of its ongoing initiative to foster connections between residents, visitors, and quality healthcare in Southwest Florida, Collier County Medical Society and the Foundation of CCMS hosted the 17th Annual Women's Health Forum, themed "Stronger Tomorrow: Women's Health & Vitality." This free public health education event took place on Saturday, April 11, from 8:30 AM to 12:45 PM at the Naples United Church of Christ.

Nearly 300 participants attended the highly anticipated Forum, which offered a range of educational sessions from 27 CCMS member physician speakers, panelists, and moderators. In addition to the informative talks, attendees explored an exhibit hall featuring vendors offering women-focused health resources, products, and services. Healthy refreshments were provided, and the event's success was supported by 19 partner organizations and 16 volunteers, alongside the dedicated Forum committee and CCMS staff.

"We are grateful for the success of this year's Women's Health Forum," said Dr. Theresa Vensel, Forum Committee Chair. "This event once again served as a powerful platform for delivering valuable medical insights to our attendees. We sincerely appreciate the physicians who shared their expertise and the supporters whose generosity helped us raise nearly \$6,500 for the Foundation of CCMS."

The Forum was centered on empowering attendees with the knowledge to enhance their health and vitality for a stronger tomorrow. Presentations covered a broad spectrum of topics, designed to inspire and educate women on their wellness journeys. Key subjects included innovations in women's health, emerging medical technologies, and the latest developments in preventive care.

Some of the featured topics included Aesthetics, Fitness & Nutrition, GI & Colon Care, Gynecology, Mental Well-being, Menopause, Oncology & Cancer Risk, Orthopedics, Urology, and Vascular Health. Each presentation was followed by a dedicated Q&A session with the presenting physician, offering attendees the chance to dive deeper into each subject.

An essential aspect of the Women's Health Forum is its role in supporting the charitable Foundation of CCMS. The event raised funds for scholarships for future medical professionals and to support local healthcare programs in need. Generous contributions from sponsors, exhibitors, and attendees made this possible. Donations at the door totaled nearly \$1,500, and CCMS will be contributing an additional \$5,000 from the sponsor and exhibitor fees. More details on the Foundation's initiatives can be found at ccmsfoundation.org.

The 17th Annual Women's Health Forum was made possible thanks to the generosity of title sponsor Apex Brain & Spine, along with other key sponsors including Hobdari Family Health, Inspire Oncology, Life in Naples Magazine, Magnolia Breast Center, McKenney Home Care, Precision Healthcare Specialists, and the Vascular Center of Naples. Numerous exhibitors and supporters were also crucial to the event's success. Information on participating in the 2027 Women's Health Forum will be available this fall.

Thank you to the Women's Health Forum speakers, panelists, and moderators:

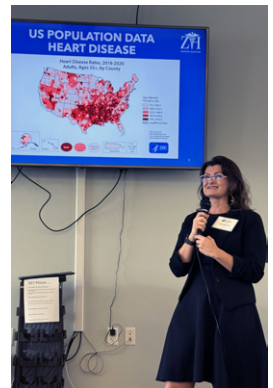
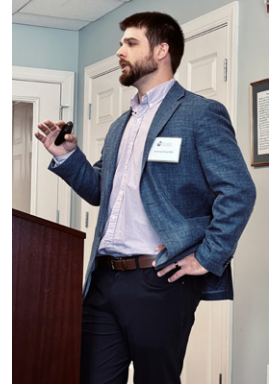
- Elizabeth Arguelles, MD
- Russell Becker, DO
- Elliot Blau, MD
- Andrew Bonett, MD
- Daniela Burchhardt, MD
- Susan Cera, MD
- Ankit Chander, MD
- Zachary Elstad, MD
- Anika Fernandez, MD
- Edward Grendys Jr, MD
- Lindita Hobdari, MD
- Thad Kammerlocher, MD
- Catherine Kowal, MD
- Susan Liberski, MD
- Tam Mai, MD
- Danielle Matta, DO
- Michael McGee, MD
- Sharla Gayle Patterson, MD
- Raymond Phillips, MD
- Ariel Pollock, MD
- Carol Roberts, MD
- Amanda Sacino, MD
- Stacey Sensor, DO
- Sandraliz Solano, MD
- Linsey Stocco, DO
- Sonal Sura, MD
- Matthew Sweet, MD

Thank you to our Title Sponsors!



Gregory Cannarsa, MD and Amanda Sacino, MD
 Johns Hopkins-Trained Neurosurgical Specialists
apexbrainandspine.com

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CCMS Slate of Candidates 2026-2027

Collier County Medical Society

The Collier County Medical Society nominating committee must present its slate of CCMS candidates to the membership each spring, at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting. According to CCMS bylaws, candidates proposed by a CCMS member to the committee must be proposed in writing, including qualifications, at least 60 days before the annual meeting.

The 2026 CCMS nominating committee is pleased to present to the membership the following Slate of Candidates for 2026-2027.

Board of Directors:

- Glenn Groat, MD – President
- Alexandra Grace, DO – Vice President
- Erik Hiester, DO – Treasurer
- Sonal Sura, MD – Secretary
- Mazen Albeldawi, MD – Officer/Director at Large
- Tam Mai, MD – Director at Large
- Tareq Khader, MD – Director at Large

Alternate FMA Delegate:

- George Brinnig, MD
- Rafael Haciski, MD
- Michael McGee, MD

As 2025-2026 CCMS Board President, Jose Baez, MD will also remain on the board for an additional term in the position of Immediate Past President.

The Slate of Candidates will be presented to the active membership, for a vote, at the CCMS Annual Meeting June 20th at Arthrex One Conference Center. CCMS Physician members are invited to attend at no charge; please register at ccmsonline.org/events.

Nominations from the floor are accepted from a member in good standing and with the consent of the nominee. Only active members of the Society shall be considered for office (does not include adjunct, associate, resident, retired, or honorary). Candidates for president shall have served a minimum of 1 year on the Board of Directors. Candidates for vice-president shall have served either on the Board of Directors or chaired the PAC or a committee for 1 year. Those elected shall assume office at the close of the annual membership meeting for a term of 1 year.

Thank you to the 2025 nominating committee for their participation: Jose Baez, MD - Chair; Committee: Mazen Albeldawi, MD; Elizabeth Arguelles, MD; Tareq Khader, MD; and Rebecca Smith, MD.



Glenn Groat, MD



Alexandra Grace, DO



Erik Hiester, DO



Sonal Sura, MD



Mazen Albeldawi, MD



Tam Mai, MD



Tareq Khader, MD



George Brinnig, MD



Rafael Haciski, MD



Michael McGee, MD

The Foundation of Collier County Medical Society presents

Docs & Duffers 2026

13th Annual Charity Golf Tournament & Raffle benefiting scholarships for future medical professionals and funding for local healthcare programs in need

Saturday, September 26, 8:00am

Bonita Bay Club Naples

3700 Wildwood Blvd, Naples, 34120



This event is open to the public!
Register at ccmsfoundation.org
or call 239-435-7727 / email info@ccmsonline.org

Sponsors

from \$550 - \$4,200

Golfers

\$200/person, \$780/foursome

Prize Donors

please call 239-435-7727

Highlights

Light Breakfast

Goodie Bags

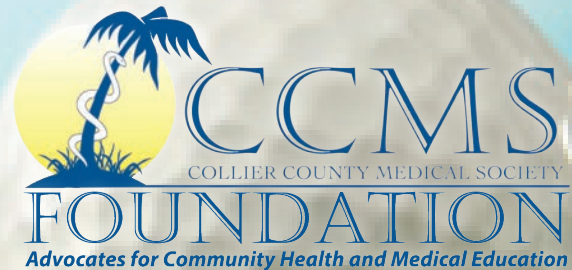
Hosted Beverages

Awards Luncheon

Foursome & Individual Prizes

Luncheon-Only Guest Tickets \$75

*Raffle open to all;
need not be present to win*



CCMS to Present Member Awards at Annual Meeting

Collier County Medical Society

CCMS is pleased to announce the recognition of these physician members at its 69th Annual Meeting & Installation of Officers on June 20th, Arthrex One Conference Center. Interested attendees can register for the event at ccmsonline.org/events, or by contacting CCMS: (239) 435-7727 or info@ccmsonline.org. Sponsorships are also available, please contact CCMS for details. The event is open to the public.



Dr. Rebekah Bernard, CCMS Physician of the Year

Collier County Medical Society is pleased to announce that Rebekah Bernard, MD is the recipient of the 12th Annual CCMS Physician of the Year Award. This award honors a CCMS member who deserves special recognition for exemplary contributions to the practice of medicine and/or outstanding service to

our community. Members of the Medical Society submitted nominations for the award to the CCMS Board of Directors, who this year selected Dr. Bernard, as nominated by Dr. Catherine Kowal.

“I’m incredibly honored by this recognition, which I owe to the mentors, sponsors, and colleagues who created room for me at the table and encouraged me to do more,” said Dr. Bernard. “I’ve learned that leadership isn’t about having all the answers—it’s about showing up, speaking out, and supporting one another. I hope this encourages other physicians, especially women, to step forward, because there is a place for your voice and it truly matters.”

Dr. Bernard is board-certified in family medicine with extensive experience across multiple care settings. She earned her medical degree from the University of Miami School of Medicine and completed a Family Medicine residency at Florida Hospital, Orlando. She is a nationally recognized expert in scope of practice and physician wellness and owns and operates a private practice, Gulf Coast Direct Primary Care.

Dr. Bernard is the co-founder of Physicians for Patient Protection, an organization committed to preserving physician-led care. She is also a published author, podcast host, frequent speaker, and consistently advocates for both physicians and patients nationwide as well as for the integrity of the profession.

A past president of CCMS, Dr. Bernard remains an active leader, serving on the Foundation of CCMS board and endowing a

new scholarship fund to be announced this spring. She has held numerous leadership roles, including service on the Florida Medical Association Board of Governors and Audit Committee, and was elected FMA Treasurer at their 2025 Annual Meeting. Last year, she spearheaded the launch of the Florida Women Physicians Retreat, now an annual statewide event for women physicians. Widely respected for her leadership and advocacy, her contributions to patient care and the medical profession have earned national recognition and continue to drive meaningful impact across the field.

“Dr. Bernard has been a tremendous asset to CCMS and a dedicated advocate for physicians, particularly women physicians,” commented Dr. Kowal in her nomination. “Her leadership, service, and commitment to physician-led care represent the very best of our medical community.”

“Recognizing physicians who demonstrate exceptional dedication to their patients and their community is a cornerstone of our mission,” said CCMS Board President, Dr. Jose Baez. “Dr. Bernard’s influence extends far beyond her practice, shaping the future of healthcare and inspiring others across our profession. This honor is a testament to her remarkable contributions.”



Dr. Hermes Koop, Lifetime Achievement Award

CCMS is pleased to announce that Hermes Koop, MD is the recipient of the 2026 CCMS Lifetime Achievement Award. This award honors a CCMS member who deserves special recognition for making outstanding contributions to the practice of medicine, and displaying dedication, commitment, leadership, and excellence that spans their professional career and aligns with the CCMS mission.

Dr. Koop, nominated by Dr. Paul Jones, was selected for his decades of distinguished service as a physician, educator, and healthcare leader. Since moving to Naples in 1992, he has provided patient care in both solo and group practice settings and, in 2009, established a concierge medical practice. He has had a long-standing association with NCH, where he has served in numerous leadership roles, including President of the Medical Staff, Chairman of the Department of Medicine, Chairman of the Credentials Committee, and as a member of the NCH Board of Trustees.

“I am truly honored by this award, and I am so grateful and

Continued on page 11

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proud of the Southwest Florida community, Naples Comprehensive Health, the physicians, the fellows, the residents, the medical students, my work colleagues, and my family for their contributions and support to my career,” said Dr. Koop. “It has been and continues to be an incredible pleasure. Thank you CCMS!”

Dr. Koop has been extensively involved at NCH in both graduate and undergraduate medical education. Not only does he serve on the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Committee, he is also the Designated Institutional Official for GME and currently oversees and supports multiple residency and fellowship programs. Dr. Koop also holds an academic appointment as Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Central Florida College of Medicine and was awarded “Outstanding Teacher of the Year” in 2024 from the Florida Chapter of the American College of Physicians. Furthermore, he has been instrumental in developing the proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine in Naples.

“Dr. Koop’s efforts at establishing a robust medical education system in Collier County will help to ensure that our community will have a perpetual pool of young physicians to care for our population well into the future,” said Dr. Jones. “This is his legacy and it is well worth celebrating.”

A Fellow of the American College of Physicians since 1992, Dr. Koop was named NCH Physician of the Year in 2006 and has been board certified in Internal Medicine since 1987. Born in Baghdad, Iraq to Dutch parents, he spent his early years living internationally before completing his education in the United States. He obtained his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch and completed his internship and residency in Internal Medicine at Good Samaritan Medical Center, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Arizona.

“It is a privilege to recognize Dr. Koop for his lifetime of service and dedication to the advancement of medicine and medical education,” said CCMS Board President, Dr. Jose Baez. “His leadership and commitment to excellence have made a lasting impact on the healthcare community in Collier County.”



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Highlights from the 2026 FMA Legislative Report

Florida Medical Association

[Editor's Note]: Excerpts on top legislative issues the FMA and CCMS addressed in this year's state legislative session. Read the full report at bit.ly/fma-report2026.

BILLS THAT PASSED

Naturopathy - (HB 223 / SB 688) Modernizes Florida's regulation of naturopathic medicine, establishes clear licensure requirements, establishes a new board, and brings back a class of providers that have not been able to practice in Florida since 1959. This bill did not gain much traction until the last few weeks of session. Inherently, this bill does not expand scope of practice. However, it legitimizes yet another group of providers that will, without fail, come back in several years for more privileges and expansions to their practice. The FMA actively opposed this bill and will work to persuade the Governor to veto this ill-advised legislation.

Temporary Certificates for Practice Areas of Critical Need - (HB 809 by Rep. Benarroch and SB 1480 by Sen. Burton) Permits certificate holders who established a primary care treatment relationship by Jan. 1, 2026, in an area designated as critical need to continue practicing there if the area's designation is later lost. It would require each board to review the temporary certificate holders at least annually and revoke or restrict the certificate if minimum practice requirements are not met. Rep. Benarroch amended her bill to match Sen. Burton's bill, which put it in a posture that the FMA could support.

Florida Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Association - (HB 1291 / SB 1668) The FMA worked to ensure that there was no increase in the \$250 annual assessment, and that the current law that allows for a special assessment in case of insolvency was not changed in a manner that unfairly burdens physicians. The important takeaway from this bill is that it does not authorize new assessments. NICA has always had the authority to assess in case of insolvency, but this bill codifies the order in which they are allowed in the event NICA becomes actuarially unsound.

Drug Price and Coverage - (HB 697 / SB 1760) Adds targeted protections for pharmacies and limits certain PBM behaviors that lawmakers believe contribute to pharmacy losses or unfair drug coverage decisions. If a PBM denies a claim, sets an unfair reimbursement price, or makes another adverse decision, the pharmacy must be able to challenge the decision through a defined appeal procedure. PBMs cannot steer patients or exclude drugs under conditions in which the law prohibits. Additionally, the amended bill revises the term "pharmacy benefits plan or program" to exclude a plan or program that exclusively serves a PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for Elders) organization. Most notably, this bill was amended to restore the income eligibility for the ADAP to 400% of the federal poverty level to June 30, 2026.

BILLS THAT FAILED

Scope of Practice

Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Autonomous Practice - (HB 301 / SB 138) Would have authorized certain advanced practice

registered nurses to engage in autonomous mental health practice. **Autonomous Practice by a Certified Nurse Anesthesiologist** - (HB 375 / SB 462) Would have authorized certified nurse anesthetists to practice anesthesia services autonomously.

Physician Assistants - (SB 668) Would have expanded physician assistants' authority by allowing without physician supervision if specific qualifications are met.

Prescribing Authority for Physician Assistants - (HB 683 / SB 374) Would have expanded prescribing authority for physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses while allowing them to practice without direct physician supervision during certain declared emergencies.

Practice of Chiropractic Medicine - (HB 439 / SB 1524) Would have expanded the scope of practice to allow prescribing and administration of certain substances.

Civil Liability for the Wrongful Death of an Unborn Child - (HB 289 / SB 164) The House version of the bill would have expanded the wrongful death actions to include unborn children while limiting liability for mothers and healthcare providers and specifying recoverable damages for parents. The Senate version includes unborn children under wrongful death claims while prohibiting actions against mothers and medical providers providing lawful care. HB 289 passed off the House floor but only made it through two of the three committee stops in the Senate. This bill ultimately died in committee.

Parental Rights - (HB 173 / SB 166) Would have expanded parental rights in minors' healthcare and school-related decision-making by requiring explicit parental consent for many services and increasing parents' authority over information shared with their children. The House bill passed every committee but was never heard in the Senate. The FMA opposed this bill because asking children to ask their parents for permission to have their STDs treated can have problematic consequences, especially if the STD was caused by the parent.

Medical Freedom - (SB 1756) Would have allowed parents to opt out of the school immunization requirements for reasons of conscience in addition to the currently allowed medical and religious exemption. Additionally, this bill would have authorized over-the-counter ivermectin sales. An amendment was adopted that makes it unlawful for a vaccine manufacturer to offer or pay a commission, bonus, kickback, or rebate, directly or indirectly, in cash or in kind, for the administration of a vaccine. While a divided Senate passed this legislation, it was never taken up by the House. It is possible that this issue will be brought back up in a special session later in the year.

Professional Use of Nursing Titles - (HB 237 / SB 36) Current law allows the use of Doctor of Nursing Practice and Doctor of Philosophy by titleholders to call themselves "doctor." HB 237 and SB 36 require D.N.P. or Ph.D. titleholders to indicate what they are a doctor of. An amendment was proffered that would attach criminal penalties to those who did not properly identify themselves. This amendment caused disagreement amongst stakeholders and is what ultimately stalled this bill.



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Medical Professional Liability coverage options



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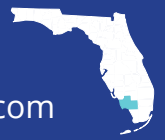
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Dr. Debra Shepard, Dr. Bobby Palmer



Dr. Sandraliz Solano, Dr. Freddy Solano, and family



Dr. Aleksandra Florek, Dr. Sonal Sura



Dr. Eric Hochman, Kim Hochman, Dr. Scott Ross



Dr. Silvano Samartine, Dr. Jose Baez



Dr. Brett Beecher, Jamie Mackenzie



Dr. Jan Forszpaniak, Dr. Maggie Forszpaniak



Members and Guests at Twins Spring Training



Dr. Christina Kabbash and Family



Dr. Robert Bello, Dr. Drew Chapman, Dr. Kevin Lam, Dr. Eileen Rivero, Dr. Karan Malani, Jeremy Gentry



Susan Regala, Dr. Phil Regala



69TH ANNUAL MEETING



**SATURDAY
JUNE 20, 2026**



**6:30 PM Reception
7:15 PM Dinner Program**

Arthrex One Conference Center

Join us for the CCMS Annual Meeting as we install the 2026-2027 CCMS President **Dr. Glenn Groat** and Board of Directors, present the Physician of the Year Award to **Dr. Rebekah Bernard**, and honor **Dr. Hermes Koop** for Lifetime Achievement.

Complimentary for CCMS Physician Members. Open to the Public.
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RSVP by June 11th

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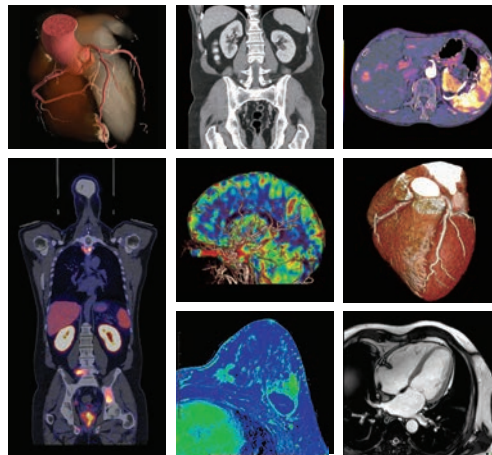


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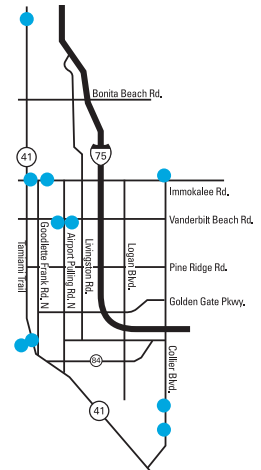
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