



Medical Ethics Newsletter

Catholic Medical Students' Association

Affiliated with the Catholic Medical Association



CMSA Goals:

- To provide guidance and support for medical students.
- To support & nurture spiritual growth and moral leadership.
- To promote education in Catholic physician values.
- To develop community among students entering the medical professions.

Inside this issue:

A Message From the US Bishops on Health Reform	1, 4
CMA Annual Conference	1-2
A Note from the Editor	2
Health Reform Criteria	3

A Message From US Bishops on Health Care Reform

USCCB NATIONWIDE BULLETIN INSERT

Tell Congress: Remove Abortion Funding & Mandates from Needed Health Care Reform.

Congress is preparing to debate health care reform legislation on the House and Senate floors.

Genuine health care reform should protect the life and dignity of all people from the moment of conception until natural death. The U.S. bishops' conference has concluded that all committee approved bills are seriously deficient on the issues of abortion and conscience, and do not provide adequate access to health care for immigrants and the poor. The bills will have to change or the bishops have pledged to oppose them.

Our nation is at a crossroads. Policies adopted in health care reform will have an impact for good or ill for years to come. None of the bills retains longstanding current policies against abortion funding or abortion coverage mandates, and none fully protects conscience rights in health care.

As the U.S. bishops' letter of October 8 states:

“No one should be required to pay for or participate in abortion. It is essential that the legislation clearly apply to this new program longstanding and widely supported federal restrictions on abortion funding and mandates, and protections for rights of conscience.

No current bill meets this test....

Continued on Page 4

CMA Annual Conference Invaluable for Students

By Jennifer Barr

“No institution can by itself replace the human heart, human compassion, human love or human initiative, when it is a question of dealing with the sufferings of another.” These words from Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Deloris* reverberated throughout the recent Catholic Medical Association's annual conference in Springfield, Illinois. Physicians, students, and clergy from throughout the country gathered for a 3-day medical conference/retreat to help them recommit to sharing Christ's love with those who suffer. Together the

group laughed, the group prayed, and the group was moved to a greater appreciation of their ministry.

For students, this conference offered a unique opportunity to network with other Catholic medical students. For many, this was the first time they saw the faces of other medical students struggling with how to build a culture of love and life in their schools. It was encouraging to see so many students asking the exact same questions and facing the exact same struggles. One student remarked “I walked into dinner with other medical students the first
Continued on Page 2



CMA Conference Continued...

night of the conference and it was like walking into a conversation I had with others at our school just a week prior.” Through the many local CMSA groups forming, the Holy Spirit is clearly laying the foundation for exciting changes in the medical community. With a greater commitment to communication between leaders of these groups, we are convinced the conversations from this conference will bear much fruit.

The Hippocratic Oath is the best summary of medical ethics thus far articulated.

This oath is a tradition which should be exemplified by every physician.

Mirroring enthusiasm by the students, the formal conference schedule also took active steps to expand involvement of students this year. Nicole Shirilla, medical student at University of Pittsburgh, eagerly shared her research with *Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza*, a hospital founded by Padre Pio and a living example of how to be the human hands and hearts that bring Christ’s healing into the world. Dr. Kim Hardey shared his personal story of suffering, emphasizing how God used it to transform his heart and reform his practice. We were left inspired that “God is looking for people to do the ridiculous so He can do the miraculous”. Later, members of Alliance Defense Fund reminded us that we do not need to be afraid to be “ridiculous” and pursue a culture of life; they will be there

to offer support as needed.

As a fourth year student soon venturing into obstetrics and gynecology, I was particularly touched by the support I found at the conference. Countless physicians offered me words of encouragement and phone numbers of useful contacts. Within a few days, I went from being concerned about finding a residency to wondering how I will possibly rank them all!

The other students blessed with the opportunity to attend this year’s conference will surely agree that we owe an incredible thanks to those who planned this conference and the individuals who provided the scholarships to us. For many it was a needed respite from a busy schedule and worldly demands. Refreshed, students left ready to return as the face of Christ’s love to their classmates. Though it was hard to see it end, the conference left participants eager for Seattle, 2010’s conference: “Restoring the Integrity of Medicine”. We hope to see you there!

Jennifer Barr is a 4th year medical student at the University of Wisconsin.

A Note From the Editor

I must first offer apologies for the tardiness of this newsletter. I am sure many of you are under similar time constraints between clinicals and studies. However, excuses being set aside, I want to take this opportunity to apprise all of you of the most recent news and upcoming events.

- **CMSA National Leadership:** Anyone who is interested in being a part of the national leadership should contact Patrick Beeman at cathmsa@gmail.org
- **Medical Students’ Blog:** Look in the coming months for a link to a new blog that will focus on ethical and practical

questions faced by Catholic medical students. Contributions will be greatly welcomed.

- **Newsletter Submissions:** Just a reminder that submissions for the CMSA newsletter are needed. Please keep the articles to 500 words and send them to cathmsa@gmail.com

Thank you all for your support of the CMSA and please continue to spread the word!

In Christ,

Brian J Burke
VP Communications



CMSA USCCB Criteria for Health Care Reform



Serving God & Man

Criteria for Reform

Applying our experience and principles to the choices before the nation, our bishops' conference strongly supports comprehensive reform that will ensure a decent level of health care for all without regard to their ability to pay. This will require concerted action by federal and other levels of government and by the diverse providers and consumers of health care. We believe government, an instrument of our common purpose called to pursue the common good, has an essential role to play in assuring that the rights of all people to adequate health care are respected. We believe reform of the health care system which is truly fundamental and enduring must be rooted in values that reflect the essential dignity of each person, ensure that basic human rights are protected, and recognize the unique needs and claims of the poor. We commend to the leaders of our nation the following criteria for reform:

- Respect for Life. Whether it preserves and enhances the sanctity and dignity of human life from conception to natural death.
- Priority Concern for the Poor. Whether it gives special priority to meeting the most pressing health care needs of the poor and underserved, ensuring that they receive quality health services.
- Universal Access. Whether it provides ready universal access to comprehensive health care for every person living in the United States.
- Comprehensive Benefits. Whether it provides comprehensive benefits sufficient to maintain and promote good health; to provide preventive care; to treat disease, injury, and disability appropriately; and to care for persons who are chronically ill or dying.
- Pluralism. Whether it allows and encourages the involvement of the public and private sectors, including the voluntary, religious, and nonprofit sectors, in the delivery of care

and services; and whether it ensures respect for religious and ethical values in the delivery of health care for consumers and for individual and institutional providers.

- Quality. Whether it promotes the development of processes and standards that will help to achieve quality and equity in health services, in the training of providers, and in the informed participation of consumers in decision making on health care.
- Cost Containment and Controls. Whether it creates effective cost-containment measures that reduce waste, inefficiency, and unnecessary care; measures that control rising costs of competition, commercialism, and administration; and measures that provide incentives to individuals and providers for effective and economical use of limited resources.
- Equitable Financing. Whether it assures society's obligation to finance universal access to comprehensive health care in an equitable fashion, based on ability to pay; and whether proposed cost-sharing arrangements are designed to avoid creating barriers to effective care for the poor and vulnerable.

For more information, please visit www.usccb.org



Please join our new
Facebook community!



Affiliated with the Catholic Medical Association



Serving God and man

ON THE WEB AT
WWW.CATHMSA.ORG

Catholic Medical Students' Association
P.O. Box 214
Oak Park, IL 60302
Email: info@cathmsa.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

2010 Midwest Regional Bioethics Conference

“Moral Limits of Autonomy”

**Milwaukee, WI
May 1st, 2010**

Details To Follow

Message from the Bishops Continued...

If acceptable language in these areas cannot be found, we will have to oppose the health care bill vigorously.”

For the full text of this letter and more information on proposed legislation and the bishops' advocacy for authentic health care reform, visit: www.usccb.org/healthcare.

Congressional leaders are attempting to put together final bills for floor consideration. Please contact your Representative and Senators today and urge them to fix these bills with the pro-life amendments noted below. Otherwise much needed health care reform will have to be opposed. Health care reform should be about saving lives, not destroying them.

ACTION: Contact Members through e-mail, phone calls or FAX letters.

- 1) To send a pre-written, instant e-mail to Congress go to www.usccb.org/action.
- 2) Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call your Members' local offices.
- 3) Full contact info can be found on Members' web sites at www.house.gov & www.senate.gov.

MESSAGE to SENATE:

“During floor debate on the health care reform bill, please support an amendment to incorporate longstanding policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience rights. If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed.”

MESSAGE to HOUSE: “Please support the Stupak Amendment that addresses essential pro-life concerns on abortion funding and conscience rights in the health care reform bill. Help ensure that the Rule for the bill allows a vote on this amendment. If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed.”

NEW MEMBERS

We encourage students to join the Catholic Medical Association.

For Registration & Membership Information,
Call 1-215-877-9099 or visit WWW.CATHMED.ORG