

BIMDA expands with Business of Medicine Conference on March 4 at Posey Center; Medical Expo & CME Conference May 6 at Hilton Melbourne Rialto



BIMDA will open the year with its new March 4 Business of Medicine Conference, designed for physicians, dentists, group administrators, and hospital administrators. Dr. Ashok Shah, Internist, is BIMDA's Sponsorship Chair. Pictured with Geeta Shah, Dr. Shah is also a Board Member of Parrish Medical Center in Titusville.

By Ken Datzman

The Brevard Indo-American Medical and Dental Association, a nonprofit entity whose main emphasis is on education, has expanded its schedule of events for 2017.

The organization has added a timely program that will address the business of medicine in a shifting landscape for practitioners, hospital administrators, and other closely aligned care professionals that deal with financials.

BIMDA will be hosting two events in the first five months of the year, in addition to its longstanding spring and fall conferences, said Glad Kurian, the honorary executive director who guides one of the best-known organizations of its kind in the state.

"We have expanded our schedule and will start the year with a new event — the Business of Medicine Conference," said Florida Tech graduate Kurian, a vice president with Morgan Stanley in Melbourne. "We will have a lineup of interesting speakers talking about the new payment models in medicine and other timely topics in the industry."

He added, "The Business of Medicine Conference will give us a nice launching pad for marketing our 15th annual Medical Expo & CME Conference on May 6, which is our big spring event, to be followed by our 22nd annual Medical Conference and our big holiday gala on Nov. 18. The latter two events will be held at the Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place."

The Business of Medicine Conference will be conducted from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 4, at the Posey Conference Center in Viera. The event is for physicians, dentists, group administrators and hospital administrators, as well as organizations such as the Brevard County Medical Society.

"We are excited to put on this new conference for practitioners and administrators at a time of health-care reform in America," said 2017 BIMDA President Dr. Aparna Kopuri, who is a child and adolescent psychiatrist with Circles of Care. "There is going to be a lot of information presented at the event that will address important changes being made in the field of medicine."

She said she is "honored and humbled to be the new BIMDA president. I joined BIMDA a long time ago and have watched it evolve. It's a great organization." BIMDA is a regular supporter of The Holiday Reaching Out Fund at "Florida Today" and has been involved in the community for more than two decades.

Dr. Kopuri has practiced in Brevard County for the last 30 years. When she moved here from Illinois, there was no practicing child psychiatrist in the county. She was the first one. Colleague Dr. Rajasri Krishnamurthy, an internal medicine practitioner with Health First Medical Group and BIMDA's secretary, said she has been "associated with BIMDA since coming to this area nine or 10 years ago."

She continued, "BIMDA has presented me the opportunity to meet a lot of physicians. I think it's a good way to get to know your colleagues and make new friends. My husband was the president of BIMDA in 2016. So I have a lot of exposure to this organization. I'm happy to be a BIMDA officer for 2017."

The Business of Medicine Conference will include talks on a range of topics, including "Advanced Payment Models," "Prevention of Medical Errors," and "Estate Planning and Asset Protection for Healthcare Professionals." The law firm GrayRobinson will be providing speakers for the topics covering estate planning and health-care related topics of legal interest, said Kurian.

Recently, the Department of Health and Human Services finalized a landmark new payment system for Medicare clinicians. The "Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015," or MACRA, rewards physicians for delivering quality care to their patients and prioritizes wellness and prevention.

"Changes are coming, physicians and their groups are going to be paid based on the performance and outcomes of their patients as opposed

to the current fee-for-service model," said BIMDA Vice President Dr. Pavan Kancharla, a medical oncologist with Cancer Care Centers of Brevard.

"Medical Economics" just posted its list of the "Top 10 Challenges Facing Physicians in 2017." This is the fourth consecutive year it has surveyed physicians. According to these results, the No. 1 challenge is MACRA. "Health-care reimbursements are migrating from volume to value. MACRA will most likely serve as the road map for other payers, so get used to the reporting requirements."

MACRA sets forth major changes in Medicare payments. It introduces a new program under which physicians are linked to quality measures through two pathways — the Merit-Based Incentive Payment Systems, or MIPS, and Advanced Alternative Payment Models.

MIPS replaces the existing Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' quality programs with four new components — quality, clinical practice improvement activities, advancing care information, and resource use.

Attendees of BIMDA's Business of Medicine Conference will hear from experts on these matters.

The program's main sponsor is Right Angle Solutions Inc., a national consultant organization that works with health-care entities, including providers and hospitals. Susan Richards is the firm's director of services.

Representatives of Right Angle Solutions will be speaking on MACRA at the Business of Medicine Conference.

"As MACRA continues the switch from fee-for-service incentives to quality-based rewards and penalties, the spotlight has focused on physicians," said Richards. "This means physicians need to substantiate the quality of care they provide and comply with reporting requirements in order to protect the financial health of their practices."

She added that "successful participation in MACRA requires proactive preparation. The program recognizes and rewards the fact that health IT is foundational to providing quality care and it's more important now for physicians to learn to use and leverage their patient (electronic medical record) and billing data. Right Angle's 'iAtro Solution' helps health-care organizations use their data to meet the changing regulatory requirements and gain insight to manage their practice more effectively."

Following the Business of Medicine Conference on the schedule will be BIMDA's Medical Expo & CME Conference May 6 at the



BIMDA will open the year with its new Business of Medicine Conference, designed for physicians, dentists, group administrators, and hospital administrators on March 4. From left, the BIMDA officers include: Dr. Rajasri Krishnamurthy, secretary; Glad Kurian, honorary executive director; Dr. Aparna Kopuri, president and chairwoman; Dr. Pavan Kancharla, vice president; and Dr. Rajiv Bhambri, member. They are at the Health First Heart Center.

Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place. Medical lectures and scientific exhibits will be from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. "BIMDA welcomes all physicians to attend the Medical Expo & CME Conference," said Kurian. The continuing medical education program is offered to physicians free of charge.

The current BIMDA leadership team includes: Dr. Sharad Vyas, membership director; Dr. Pavan Kancharla, vice president; Dr. Mahesh Soni, CME chairman, BIMDA founder; Dr. Subhash Rege, treasurer, first Life Member, co-founder; Glad Kurian, honorary executive director, BIMDA founder; Dr. N. Rao Kopuri, operations chairman; Dr. Rajiv Bhambri, life member; Dr. Rajasri Krishnamurthy, secretary; Dr. Aravind Kumar, past president; Dr. Ashok Shah, sponsorship chairman; and Dr. Aparna Kopuri, president.

"The dedicated work of BIMDA's leadership over the last decade has made it a premier medical organization," said Dr. Ashok Shah. He continued by stating, "I encourage all new physicians in our community to join BIMDA and help us attain greater heights."

The group said it welcomed the nomination of Seema Verma — the CEO and founder of SVC Inc., a national health-consulting company in Indianapolis — to serve as the new administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. She has a master's degree in public health from Johns Hopkins University. Verma has used

innovative models in Indiana to expand coverage for patients.

Dr. Bhambri, an endocrinologist with the Health First Medical Group is one of only a few such specialists in Brevard County. Endocrinologists are specially trained physicians who diagnose diseases related to the glands. They specialize in treating diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, thyroid disorders, adrenal diseases, and a variety of other conditions related to hormones.

There is "a shortage of endocrinologists nationwide." As more people are diagnosed with diabetes and other hormone conditions, a growing shortage of endocrinologists could force patients to wait longer to see a doctor, according to an Endocrine Society work-force analysis published in the "Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism."

The study found the available supply of endocrinologists who treat adult patients will exceed the growing demand for their services for at least the next eight years. As the population ages, the number of older individuals who develop Type 2 diabetes or other endocrine conditions is expected to climb. These are the type of topics that BIMDA, as an organization, stays on top of at its conferences.

"BIMDA is a trendsetter not only in the medical-education area, but also in the area of socializing. BIMDA's gala themes and banquets are annual events that are always enjoyed by the health-care community. This is where physicians, hospital leaders, academia, community leaders, and sponsors gather to network and get to know each other," said Kurian.