Welcome to our second newsletter. We have been hard at work on many fronts battling the challenges of ensuring that Michigan’s aging population will have the qualified care needed to age optimally. We know that aging is inevitable, but we believe we can help our patients do it with a better quality of life. We are continuing our existing community partnerships with Sparrow, Botsford, and Metro Health Hospitals and have had recent discussions with two other hospitals to enlist their help in the expansion of geriatric fellowship training in the MSUCOM Statewide Campus System. Gradually, we will reach out to each of the 35 hospital partners that are part of MSU’s Statewide Campus System.

We have also begun to reach out to our first-year students in our new undergraduate medical school curriculum. We want them to understand that what works in someone who’s 20 will not necessarily work in the body of a 60 to 75 year old or for a 75 to 100 year old person. As an aging Baby Boomer, I am not content to settle for the options that aging adults have had in the past; I want a higher and smarter level of care. Currently, many of our students have the perception that at a certain age, you go to a nursing home. It is our intent to change that view and have our students recognize us for the vital, caring and sexy group of people we are.

We have established a collaboration with the State of Michigan, Department of Community Health, Office of Services to the Aging. I have met twice with Director, Kari Sederburg, MPA and staff to discuss our grant in greater detail. They have enthusiastically agreed to collaborate with us and share ideas and existing resources to help us achieve our goals and their goals for Michigan’s aging population. We are looking forward to meeting with other key personnel they have suggested would be helpful in support of our proposed activities.

We have also had the opportunity to meet more extensively with some of the member organizations of the Michigan Primary Care Consortium.

“Our philosophical approach to patient care is to find health in our patients, in addition to disease, and help them maximize their lifestyle in the current health climate.”
Carol Monson, DO, MS
Project Director

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Foundation Modules for the Geriatric Fellowship Curriculum

A solid, comprehensive foundation of any medicine fellowship is part of what inspires physicians to seek further training and education in an area of specialty. In the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), creating a Geriatric Fellowship (GF) that incorporates both the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) core competencies will serve as the foundation for developing much needed, competent Geriatricians of the future. In addition to this merging of competencies, the work on optimal aging by Kenneth Brummel-Smith, MD is also being interwoven into the GF curriculum.

Dr. Brummel-Smith is the Charlotte Edwards Maguire Chair and Professor of Geriatrics at The Florida State University, College of Medicine. In 2007, Brummel-Smith wrote a two-part article where he proposed a definition of optimal aging that addressed the reality and needs of the growing aging demographic. Brummel-Smith’s definition of optimal aging (the capacity to function across many domains - physical, functional, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual - to one’s satisfaction and in spite of one’s medical conditions) will be utilized throughout all modules of the GF curriculum. The GF curriculum team believes this unique approach to geriatrics will be holistic, evidence-based, creative, interdisciplinary, and strength-based – a diversion from teaching only to the medical model. If you would like to learn more about Dr. Brummel-Smith, you can read an online interview with him from December 2009. The interview can be found at: Online Interview with Ken Brummel-Smith, MD. (2009). British Journal of Medical Practitioners, 2(4), 65-66. Retrieved from http://www.bjmp.org/files/dec2009/bjmp1209brummel-smith.pdf

The COM comprehensive GF will be one year in length with a 12 month clinical track. Primary experiences will be inpatient, ambulatory, and long-term care geriatrics. Currently, Francis Komara, DO (Geriatrician with Michigan State University), Annette Carron, DO (Geriatrician with Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills, MI), and Linda Keilman, DNP, GNP-BC (College of Nursing at Michigan State University) are developing and refining the three modules that will serve as the primary resources for fellows and preceptors. Objectives, instructional strategies, content and resources, and evaluation methods are the categories that are being correlated with the AOA and ACGME core competencies. 

Optimal Aging

The capacity to function across many domains - physical, functional, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual - to one’s satisfaction and in spite of one’s medical conditions.

Kenneth Brummel-Smith, MD

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Foundation Modules (continued from page 2)

competencies. In a future newsletter issue, you will learn more about the evaluation specialist on the grant – Eric D. Zemper, PhD – who is ensuring evaluation strategies will be measurable and trackable from day one of the GF.

At this point in time, the core team has approved the inpatient module. The work-group is adding instructional strategies and resources to the ambulatory and long-term care modules. Any suggestions you might have for evidence-based, up-to-date resources for the curriculum, please send your suggestions to this author at keilman@msu.edu. We look forward to completing the modules in the spring.

Linda J. Keilman, DNP, GNP-BC
Division of Geriatrics Fellowship Clinical Workgroup

Spotlight On…
Annette Carron, DO

In every newsletter we will introduce one of the members of the grant team in a feature we are calling **Spotlight On**. This quarter we are introducing Dr. Carron.

Annette Carron, DO is the representative for the Internal Medicine (IM) geriatric content and is helping to meet the goals of the MSUCOM Division of Geriatrics Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) grant to unify the Family Medicine (FM) and Internal Medicine (IM) Geriatric Fellowship (GF) curricula. Dr. Carron currently is based at Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills, Michigan. She is Director of the Departments of Geriatrics and Palliative Care. Dr. Carron is board-certified in IM and did her internship and residency at Botsford Hospital, where she was Chief Resident. She completed her GF at George Washington University. Dr. Carron is a board member of the American College of Osteopathic Internists; a member of the American Osteopathic Association, the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, and the Michigan Osteopathic Association. She is also Assistant Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine in the Department of Osteopathic Medical Specialties.

Dr. Carron has a special interest in, and is certified in Hospice and Palliative Medicine. She is passionate about care of the elderly, loves to teach, and is excited to have the opportunity to help grow the number of Geriatricians training in the state of Michigan. Over the course of the grant, you will get to know Dr. Carron more!

The HRSA grant to Family and Community Medicine and the Division of Internal Medicine has among its many goals the development of educational modules which address the topic of Mind-Body-Spirit, with a central focus on Optimal Aging in geriatrics.

Key foundational ideas in these modules will be AOA core competencies, and osteopathic principles and best practices as they apply to the concept of Optimal Aging, which posits that programs and services to the geriatric population should promote the capacity for the individual to function at maximum levels in all areas of life – physical, functional, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual – in a way that increases one’s level of satisfaction, whatever one’s medical condition. Most modules will include didactic material as well as experiential components.

One module topic will be cultural competency: the ability to recognize and successfully work with individuals from diverse cultures, traditions, religions, and backgrounds. Included will be a discussion of culture, cultural intelligence and cultural competency. Students will assess their own attitudes about different cultures in order to improve their ability to work with patients from all backgrounds.

Another topic will be spirituality, including the difference between spiritual and religious ideas and practices. Recognition of the importance of spirituality in an elderly person’s life can be an important tool for the osteopathic physician, especially as a person nears the end of life. As assessment of a patient’s spiritual and religious beliefs can reveal important resources that can assist in patient care, treatment, and recovery and, most importantly, comfort and satisfaction.

A third area to be covered will be mind-body-spirit medicine, also commonly known as complementary or alternative medicine. Included will be a discussion of complementary techniques that focus on the mind, those that focus on the body, and those that focus on the spirit. Resources will be provided to assist the students in becoming familiar with alternative techniques. Other topics under consideration for development include the problems and politics of aging, and sexuality and the aging. It is expected that most modules will be completed by June, 2013.

Jan Bocskay, MSW, MS CMH
Project Consultant

Message from the Director (continued from page 1)

(MPCC) who we met last October. We have agreed to joint efforts to move geriatric care to the forefront of Michigan’s health care priorities. As we move toward May, our collaboration with the Michigan Osteopathic Association’s (MOA) Education Committee will result in the opportunity to present some of our educational materials to practicing physicians at the upcoming MOA 114th Annual Spring Scientific Convention. The recent discussion of our grant in the MSU Outreach e-Newsletter has brought us additional attention both locally, state-wide and nationally. Stay tuned for additional updates as they happen. Thank you for your continuing support of our grant activities.

Carol Monson, DO, MS