



NEWSLETTER

Florida Society of Rheumatology



FSR Assembles in Tallahassee for Annual Capitol Day



On Tuesday, February 4, 2020, the Florida Society of Rheumatology held its annual Capitol Day in Tallahassee. FSR members met with over 20 Florida state senate and house offices to discuss FSR's priority issues.

Attendees began their day with an issue briefing to learn more about FSR's priority legislation and how to have a successful meeting. Legislative priorities included:

- Non-Medical Switching Protections
- Co-Pay Accumulator Ban
- Increased PBM Transparency & Reporting
- Fail First/Step Therapy Protocols

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The main goal of the Florida Society of Rheumatology was to encourage legislators to add language consisting of patient protections and increased transparency for pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to both HB 7045 and SB 1338. We will look to carry our momentum into the next legislative session by continuing to educate policymakers about the importance of including protections for patients in the legislation we support.

The 2020 Capitol Day was an undoubted success and the Florida Society of Rheumatology is pleased to continue to working with these legislators to protect patients and providers across the state. We are already looking forward to next year's Capitol Day, and we hope you are there to join us!



President's Message



As the Florida Society of Rheumatology looks ahead to 2020 and the future, we see that healthcare has moved to the forefront of both national and state level politics. As an organization dedicated to representing the physicians practicing Rheumatology in the state of Florida, FSR has an obligation to provide education for the practicing rheumatologist, the practicing physician in other specialties, paramedical personnel, the patients themselves, and the Florida community.

With this in mind, FSR will continue to work to advance legislative and regulatory initiatives that improve patient access and physician practice in the state of Florida.

FSR is proud of the work it has undertaken to support both rheumatologists and patients with rheumatological diseases. Over the past year, our organization has worked tirelessly to reform the state's step therapy protocols, to prohibit accumulator adjustment programs and non-medical switching of a stable patient's coverage, as well as to lower drug prices by regulating pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). FSR will certainly face significant opposition in its mission to increase patient access, but we know that affordability and access to rheumatologic care are fundamental rights that each and every Floridian are entitled to. That is why FSR will continue to both monitor and actively engage legislation benefitting rheumatology patients at both the federal and state level.

I invite each of you to learn more about the resources that FSR offers by visiting our website at floridarheumatology.org. We look forward to working alongside you this coming year to protect Florida's patients and physicians.

Sincerely,

Guillermo J. Valenzuela, MD
President, Florida Society of Rheumatology

FSRPAC Making an Impact in Tallahassee

Every day, health care policy decisions take place in Tallahassee that directly impact how patient care is provided. At FSRPAC, we believe we have a responsibility as advocates to work tirelessly towards the goal of increasing patients' safety and well-being. Our organization raises money to influence change and spread awareness for Florida's top rheumatology issues.

Since February, 2019, FSRPAC has contributed a total of \$32,000 to six different organizations and legislative champions who have spoken out and brought actual legislative change to the state regarding the following issues:

- Lowering Prescription Drug Prices
- Increasing Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) Transparency
- Reforming Step Therapy Protocols
- Protecting Patients from Accumulator Adjustment Programs (AAPs)
- Preventing the Unwanted Switching of Health Plans for Non-Medical Reasons
- Implementing a Uniform Prior Authorization Form for All Insurers

Here, at FSRPAC, we encourage you to join our colleagues statewide in an effort to secure a safe and affordable health care system for the state of Florida and its patients.

Thank you in advance for your vital support. With contributions like yours, FSRPAC can directly impact Florida's health care system and the lives of Florida's patients for the better. If you have any questions pertaining to contributions, you can email fsr@fsrmd.org at any time.

FSRPAC

FLORIDA'S VOICE FOR
RHEUMATOLOGY



...“FSR is proud of the work it has undertaken to support both rheumatologists and patients with rheumatological diseases”..

2020 Annual Florida Society of Rheumatology PAC Golf Outing - Postponed

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Florida Society of Rheumatology (FSR) has determined the 2020 FSRPAC Golf outing will be postponed until 2021. The event will be held during the CCR East Annual Meeting next year.

We encourage you to attend and support our FSRPAC fundraiser at FSR's annual meeting in August. Events like this fundraiser enable FSRPAC to influence real political change and spread awareness for Florida's top rheumatology issues.

Thank you in advance for your vital support. If you have any questions pertaining to either the annual meetings or contributions to FSRPAC, you can email fsr@fsrmd.org at any time.



Don't Wait to Schedule a Meeting with Your Legislator

We believe that rheumatologists play an important role in quality and cost effective care to the residents of each district across the state. It is important to demonstrate their value to the state, and the benefits they bring to the community. It is with this in mind, that we are pleased to offer our resources to help facilitate a face-to-face meeting.

Whether you are a practicing rheumatologist wanting your legislator to come view your practice, or an individual looking to meet at your legislator's district office to discuss a pressing issue, FSR can help you accomplish your task. Our staff is more than happy to reach out and schedule an appointment at a mutually agreeable time and place.

The Process of Scheduling Your Meeting/Office Tour

- 1) **Email FSR staff at kevin.daley@naylor.com with your name, office address, and desired date for your meeting/office tour**
- 2) **FSR staff will reach out to your legislator's office, check availability, and find a mutually agreeable date for the meeting/office tour**
- 3) **After the meeting is scheduled, FSR will send you materials and literature to review before the meeting/office tour. These materials will offer instructions on how to host a legislator meeting, as well as information on any current legislation regarding rheumatology in the state of Florida**
- 4) **You and your legislator will have the meeting/office tour at the agreed upon date. Here, we encourage you to take a photo with your legislator and send it to us to be uploaded to the FSR site and social media platforms. We will also follow up with both you and the legislator to determine if any further action or communication is necessary**

Face-to-face meetings with legislators are the most effective tools that we, as advocates for the highest quality medical care for rheumatic disease patients, have at our disposal. Do not sit back if there is an issue that needs to be addressed. Instead, contact us at kevin.daley@naylor.com to get the ball rolling.

Key Tips for a Successful Legislator Meeting:

Before the Meeting/Office Tour:

- Take some time to think through your talking points (both those provided by FSR and your own). What's your angle that makes your points different from everyone else? Know with whom you are meeting. Research the member and their positions
- Confirm your appointment a day in advance and be prepared for the office to ask if you can reschedule to another time. Legislative offices juggle numerous meetings as well as political responsibilities, and sometimes changes must be made

During the Meeting/Office Tour:

- Do not, under any circumstances, bring up a campaign contribution or threaten a member or staffer to not vote for them. It destroys your credibility and may even be illegal. It is, however, ok for you to thank a member for supporting a position in the past that is related to your meeting
- Mix facts with anecdotes. Legislative offices love facts they can use themselves (especially from constituents), but it is often the personal story that sells the importance of an issue. Make your ask. Always end your meeting asking the member or staffer whether they will support your position. Often you will get an ambiguous answer, but politely press them on when you can get an answer
- Never lie in your meeting. If you do not know something, be honest and say so but promise to send more information in the near future

After the Meeting/Office Tour:

- Send a thank you note to the person with whom you met and provide any information you promised to provide
- Give feedback to FSR on how your meeting went and if they need to provide follow-up

FSR's COVID-19 Responses & Resources

As COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continues to affect each and every one of our daily lives, FSR would like to provide its membership with the resources to keep oneself informed and up-to-date on the impacts to the state's healthcare system and its policies. Below, are resources from organizations like the Florida Medical Association (FMA) and the American College of Rheumatology (ACR). These will help you understand changes like Medicare's expansion of telehealth. Now is the time where information can truly support the health and financial well-being of both ourselves and our loved ones.

FSR Resources

On our website, we have compiled a library of resources from agencies providing assistance and answering questions concerning COVID-19. The safety and well-being of our community is our top priority, and we want to ensure that our members are kept informed on all policy changes regarding Coronavirus in these difficult times. To access the resources, visit floridarheumatology.org/covid-19.

New Forum - Managing Your Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic

With all of the panic the Coronavirus brought, it is now more important than ever to increase communication and share perspectives. It is with this in mind that FSR has established this forum to give rheumatologists an opportunity to share their experiences, best practices, and suggestions regarding the management of their offices presently facing Coronavirus restrictions.

Instructions for navigating FSR's new forum resource:

- 1) Go to the FSR home page at floridarheumatology.org
- 2) Login using your username and password. The login button can be found at the top-right corner of the home page. (Your username is the email you use when paying your FSR dues. If you cannot remember your password, click 'forgot password' and a temporary password will be emailed to you)
- 3) After logging in, the forum can be accessed under the 'MEMBERSHIP' tab. Scroll over the tab and click the Forum option
- 4) You will then be brought to the forum landing page. Here, click your desired forum (Managing Your Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic)
- 5) Now you are ready to post to the forum. To do so, click New Topic (button with a plus sign)

When making your post, please remember the following:

- Enter your topic title in the SUBJECT bar and enter your message in the body of the posting space
- After writing your post, make sure you click the button labeled, Post New Topic beneath your post. This will publish your post to the forum. If you would like to preview your post before posting, there is a Preview Post button available beneath your post as well
- Click 'Email Notify me of Replies' at the bottom of the posting space to ensure you are notified of any activity regarding your post

FSR's Dr. Levin Testifies Before House Health Market Reform Subcommittee

On January 21st, Dr. Robert Levin appeared before the Florida House of Representatives Health Market Reform Subcommittee to testify on behalf of the Florida Society of Rheumatology regarding Proposed Committee Bill 20-02. With his testimony, Dr. Levin emphasized the importance of lowering prescription drug costs for Florida patients, as well as significantly increasing PBM transparency requirements. While the proposed bill does work to increase transparency requirements for PBMs, FSR believes that it must include further patients protections. Dr. Levin then went on to stress the importance of protecting patients from non-medical switching policies and accumulator adjustment programs. These are issues that affect Floridians on a daily basis and contribute to increases in the cost of high-quality rheumatology care.



Even in the face of increased attention to the following growing public outcry over rising drug costs, PBMs have managed to stay in large part under the public's radar. Acting as intermediaries between insurers, manufacturers, and pharmacies, PBMs play a uniquely central role in the prescription drug market. Everything from negotiating prices with drug manufacturers, and setting patient copay amounts, to determining which drugs are covered by which insurers. And yet, despite their undeniable significance, PBMs and their effect on drug costs have managed to go largely unnoticed by the vast majority of Americans, allowing them to quietly influence not only prices and ultimately the amount patients pay for their prescriptions but also which drugs are available and accessible to the public.

While FSR knows it is critical to increase transparency with these PBMs, it also knows that protections for patient access cannot be sacrificed in the process. If patients are not protected from non-medical switching policies and/or accumulator adjustment programs, their successful treatment may be disrupted at any time. Patients are then left to choose between two options: endure outrageously high medical costs, or discontinue their successful treatment, leading to adverse health effects.

Dr. Madelaine Feldman Leads Panel to Educate Florida Senate Health Policy Committee on the Practices of PBMs

On February 5th, 2020, the Florida Senate Health Policy Committee met in Tallahassee to address pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) and whether or not they actually serve the interest of Florida's patients. In seven minutes of testimony, Dr. Feldman, President of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Societies (which FSR is a member of) thoroughly dissected and exposed PBM practices, and their adverse effects. In the United States, three giants (Express Scripts, CVS, and UnitedHealth) are responsible for 80% of all PBM coverage. However, these companies survive shrouded in mystery and untold profits.

During her testimony, Dr. Feldman detailed how Express Scripts were using a flawed health care system to increase their profits at the expense of patients. She went on to explain how Express Scripts must classify pharmaceutical companies as a client, because 40% of their revenue comes from them. PBMs control what drugs patients can have, what order they can take them, where they can buy them, and how much they will pay for them. Unfortunately, the drugs that PBMs profit the most from are the ones getting preferred. It is time for change and transparency, because PBM shareholders are trumping patient's well-being every day.

"Currently, PBMs are not required to share what percentage of their revenue is coming from these rebates. All we know is that the PBM keeps a portion of it and pass the rest on to the patients. But past that, all of the details of that are top secret" – Madelaine Feldman, MD, President of CSRO



FSR Member Advocacy Resources

Action Center:

The Florida Society of Rheumatology is pleased to bring you its new Action Center feature on our website. Here, patients, practicing rheumatologists, and rheumatology advocates have the opportunity to not only view current rheumatological issues, but to act on them as well. Thanks to new VoterVoice technology, individuals can now directly contact their respective legislators in a matter of seconds. After selecting the specific issue, site visitors only need to enter their basic contact information in order to submit a message of support directly to legislators on both state and federal levels.

Furthermore, we encourage individuals visiting the Action Center to sign up for advocacy alerts as well. After entering only an email address and a zip code, you are able to receive alerts for upcoming legislation affecting the rheumatology community.

To take action and contact your legislators today, visit the FSR Action Center at floridarheumatology.org/action

Non-Medical Switching Video Vault:

Visitors to our website now have the opportunity to view, as well as to share numerous videos regarding non-medical switching. These videos are a resource created for physician offices, patients, and others to use in helping FSR's campaign to educate the public and lawmakers about how non-medical switching adversely affects stable patients.

FSR Photo Gallery:

Photographs from our 2020 Capitol Day, as well as all of our future meetings, will continue to be housed under the website's Advocacy tab. These images have also been shared on our social media pages, and can be accessed at the site visitor's convenience.

Social Media Platforms:

You can now follow the Florida Society of Rheumatology on both Twitter and Facebook! Using the medium of social media, our organization can now easily reach a much larger audience in an instant. On these platforms FSR will continue posting real-time updates of our society's news, as well as current actions on all active legislation impacting rheumatology in Florida.

To connect with FSR's social media pages, follow the listed accounts on their respective platforms. We look forward to having you engage with our organization online!

Facebook: @FLSocietyRheumatology

Twitter: @FloridaRheums

Registration Now Open – 2020 Annual Meeting

Registration is open for the Florida Society of Rheumatology's 2020 Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida. Here, attendees will have the opportunity to engage with FSR Leadership through numerous clinical lectures. Many members of FSR's Board of Directors will be joining rheumatology experts from around the country in providing these fantastic lectures on the most important industry topics of today.

FSR has adopted the recommended safety protocols in response to COVID-19. Food will be served directly to attendees, hand sanitizer stations will be strategically placed throughout the conference, and social distancing and other precautionary measures will be in effect. Please email fsr@fsrmd.org for the complete list of safety protocols

FSR 2020 PRACTICE MANAGERS PROGRAM

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2020

7:00 am – 8:00 am	Breakfast in Exhibit Hall
8:00 am – 8:15 am	Welcome Remarks – Planning Committee & Olga Kromo, MD
8:15 am – 9:15 am	Lead Authentically with an Executive Presence – Sara Krisher
9:15 am – 10:30 am	Managing Millennials in a Multigenerational Workplace – Meredith F. Hirsh, MBA
10:30 am – 11:15 pm	Break in Exhibit Hall
11:15 am – 12:15 pm	De-escalating a Situation: Conflict Resolution – John Dalton
12:15 pm – 12:45 pm	Hot Topics in Rheumatology Discussion
12:45 pm – 1:45 pm	Lunch in the Exhibit Hall
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	What's Your Culture Club? - Cameron M. Cox, III, MHA, FACMPE
2:45 pm – 3:45 pm	Panel of Experts
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Legislative Reception

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 2020

7:00 am – 8:00 am	Breakfast in Exhibit Hall
8:00 am – 9:00 am	Wait...What is Queuing Theory? - Cameron M. Cox, III, MHA, FACMP
9:00 am – 10:00 am	A Legal Look: When a Patient's RX is Termination – Dave Davidson
10:00 am – 10:30 am	Break in Exhibit Hall
10:30 am – 10:45 am	Medicare Update – Kenneth Stark, MD, PA
10:45 am – 12:15 pm	Updates in Rheumatology Coding & Compliance – Jean Acevedo, LHRM, CPC, CHC, CENTC, AAPC Fellow
12:15 pm – 1:15 pm	Finding Solid Ground - Navigating MACRA's Quality Payment - Elizabeth Woodcock, MBA, FACMPE, CPC
1:15 pm – 1:30 pm	Elections for Planning Committee
1:30 pm – 1:45 pm	Prize Drawing

FSR 2020 PHYSICIAN SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2020

6:30 a.m.	Practice Manager Sanctioned Dinner Sponsored by Janssen (more info. to follow)
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FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2020

7:00 am – 8:00 am	Breakfast in Exhibit Hall
8:00 am – 8:10 am	Opening Remarks and Pre-test
8:10 am – 9:10 am	Viral Infections in Rheumatology: Etiologies, Complications and Prevention Strategies - Leonard H. Calabrese, DO
9:10 am – 10:10 am	The Impact of Nociception and Mental State on Disease Burden in Rheumatic Diseases - Peter C. Taylor, MA, PhD, FRCP
10:10 am – 10:50 am	Break in Exhibit Hall
10:50 am – 11:50 am	The Immunologic Basis of Wellness and the Role of Behavioral Modification in Patients with Immune Mediated Disease - Leonard H. Calabrese, DO
11:50 am – 12:50 pm	Management of Adults with JIA - Jonathan S. Hausmann, MD

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- 12:50 am – 1:50 pm **Buffet Lunch in Exhibit Hall**
- 1:50 am – 2:50 pm New Horizons in Rheumatology -
Peter C. Taylor, MA, PhD, FRCP
- 2:50 pm – 3:50 pm Using Anti-Resorptive Therapies 2020
- **Marcy Bolster, MD**
- 3:50 pm – 4:30 pm **Break in Exhibit Hall**
- 4:30 pm – 5:30 pm Gout as Lodestar - Moving Us All to the Next
Level - **Christopher Parker, DO, FACP**
- 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm **Legislative Reception**

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 2020

- 7:00 am – 8:00 am **Breakfast in Exhibit Hall**
- 8:00 am – 9:00 am Autoinflammatory Conditions -
Jonathan S. Hausmann, MD
- 9:00 am – 10:00 am Covid-19: Immunopathogenesis and
Prospects of Targeted Therapy -
Leonard H. Calabrese, DO
- 10:00 am – 10:45 am **Break in the Exhibit Hall**
- 10:45 am – 11:45 am Preventing the Next Fracture -
Marcy Bolster, MD
- 11:45 am – 12:45 pm Updates in Lupus: 2020 -
Susan M. Manzi, MD, MPH
- 12:45 pm – 2:00 pm **Annual Business Meeting Luncheon**
- 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm **Best of Show Networking Reception**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2020

- 8:00 am – 9:00 am E&M Changes: Will You Be Ready?
- **Jean Acevedo, LHRM, CPC, CHC, CENTC,
AAPC Fellow**
- 9:00 am – 10:00 am **Best of Show Networking Brunch & Fellow
Abstract Awards**
- 10:00 am – 11:00 am Office Visits 2021: Applying Tomorrow’s
Concepts to Today’s Documentation
- **Jean Acevedo, LHRM, CPC, CHC, CENTC,
AAPC Fellow**
- 11:00 am – 11:15 am Post-Test

HOTEL INFORMATION



Reservations: (800) 228-9290 or online
Room Rates: \$179 per night
Resort Fee: \$20
Self-Parking: \$22
Hotel Deadline: August 1, 2020

To register today, visit the FSR website, floridarheumatology.org



Florida Society of Rheumatology
4909 Lannie Road, Ste. B
Jacksonville, FL 32218

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

2020 Annual Meeting
August 27 - 30, 2020
Orlando World Center Marriott
Orlando, Florida

Register quickly and easily online at floridarheumatology.org/annual