

# 2007 ASA Annual Meeting in San Francisco

## The Largest Attendance at an ASA Meeting

By *Linda J. Mason, M.D.*  
*ASA Director for California*



The annual ASA meeting—the largest ASA meeting to date, with almost 20,000 participants—was held in San Francisco, October 13-17. The CSA and Western Caucus meetings were held on Saturday and Tuesday. The two sessions of the House of Delegates were held on Sunday and Wednesday mornings. A welcome from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was read to the opening session and, in addition, the mayor of San Francisco declared the week of the ASA meeting as Anesthesiologists' Week. The four reference committees met on that Sunday afternoon.

The Reference Committee on Administrative Affairs heard The Anesthesia Care Team report, which centered on the term “Qualified Anesthesia Providers” as it appears in the proposed revision of the ASA’s Statement on the Anesthesia Care Team. This term defines those members of the Anesthesia Care Team who, by virtue of their training, licensure, and privileges, may provide anesthesia care alone in the operating room. Testimony supported the statement that the training of both nurse anesthetists and anesthesia assistants is equal.

The Reference Committee on Professional Affairs was particularly important to California anesthesiologists. California delegates Kenneth Pauker, M.D., Chair of the Legislative and Practice Affairs Division, and Mark Singleton, M.D., ASA Alternate Director for California, introduced two resolutions, “ASA Pay for Performance Action Plan” and “Confidential Bench Marking.” Another resolution, “Chiropractic Spinal Manipulation under Anesthesia,” also was introduced by Mark Singleton. The resolutions were adopted, with some amendments as follows:

### **Resolution 6 ASA Pay-for-Performance Action Plan**

RESOLVED, That ASA reject the concept that P4P be used as a mechanism to redistribute payments from physicians in one specialty to those in another specialty; and therefore be it further

## **ASA Annual Board Meeting (cont'd)**

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RESOLVED, That the American Society of Anesthesiologists develop a specific process concerning pay for performance in anesthesiology that will include a standard procedure for whether or not these measures are selected, vetted, approved and implemented, with due consideration for their economic impact.”

Testimony indicated that the membership is highly skeptical of pay-for-performance initiatives. Members are concerned about the unintended consequences of these initiatives and suspicious of the intended consequences. Furthermore, testimony expressed the necessity that performance measures are clearly distinct from American Society of Anesthesiologists Standards and Guidelines.

### **Resolution 7 Confidential Bench Marking (portion referred to a committee of the president's choice)**

RESOLVED, That ASA support the careful, deliberate, and reasoned approach of ASA's Committee on Performance and Outcomes Measurement (CPOM) in developing evidence-based measures, and reasserts that each measure must ultimately be approved by the ASA House of Delegates, and that measures circulated to groups outside of the ASA before House approval must be labeled as an “ASA Work Product” as stipulated by ASA Administrative Procedures. Be it further

### **Resolution 7 Confidential Bench Marking (portion approved as amended)**

RESOLVED, That ASA reaffirm its commitment to the preeminence of the doctor-patient relationship and declare that continual improvement in quality of care and in patient safety are inherent elements of our profession; and be it further

RESOLVED, That ASA declare that appropriate and accurate measurement both of physician performance and of patient outcomes are critical to our methodology for improving the quality of patient care; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the American Society of Anesthesiologists explore the feasibility of the construction of patient registries and databases with confidential bench marking of individual practitioners using measures developed by or in collaboration with the Committee on Performance and Outcomes Measurement and/or other subspecialty organizations as potentially more

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effective in improving physician performance than using financial incentives as in the pay-for-performance methodology.

### **Resolution 5   Chiropractic Spinal Manipulation under Anesthesia**

RESOLVED, that the American Society of Anesthesiologists declares that the use of general anesthesia for chiropractic spinal manipulation has no scientific basis and that there is no evidence to support a claim that its use is either safe or beneficial for patients.

A Practice Advisory for the Prevention and Management of Operating Room Fires and Practice Guidelines for the Prevention, Action and Management of Respiratory Depression associated with Neuroaxial Opioid Administration were approved and can be found on the ASA Web Site.

The Committee on Performance and Outcomes report was approved as amended. Testimony supported that in the future development of performance measures, two-thirds or more of the consultants should agree or strongly agree before that recommendation is proposed. This is in contrast to the current practice of 50 percent.

At the Reference Committee on Scientific Affairs, the Obstetrical Anesthesia annual report included testimony that clarified what appeared to be internal conflicts within this report. Wording was chosen to reflect the diversity in practice settings.

The Committee on Transplant Anesthesia submitted the document, "Model Policy for Organ Donation after Cardiac Death," as a work product only.

### **Annual Meeting Sites**

Testimony in the Reference Committee hearing indicated strong support for the Committee on Annual Meeting Sites' original recommendation to move the 2014 Annual Meeting from New Orleans to Atlanta. However, at the House of Delegates, a vote was taken to hold the meeting in New Orleans in 2014.

The Reference Committee on Finance did not include any controversial issues, except that the Director from Texas Society of Anesthesiologists Annual report stated, "It is RECOMMENDED that ASA study Joint Commission regulations including but not limited to pre-labeled syringes as well as regulations promulgated by other entities to ascertain whether these enhance patient safety, and if not, then work to rescind these rules." Testimony suggested that the issue of labeled syringes also be forwarded by the ASA Delegation to the AMA.

## ASA Annual Board Meeting (cont'd)

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The slate of new officers are as follows:

President	Jeffrey L. Apfelbaum, M.D.
President-Elect	Roger A. Moore, M.D.
Immediate Past President	Mark J. Lema, M.D.
First Vice-President	Alexander A. Hannenberg, M.D.
Vice-President for Scientific Affairs	Charles W. Otto, M.D.
Vice-President for Professional Affairs	Robert E. Johnstone, M.D.
Secretary	Gregory K. Unruh, M.D.
Treasurer	John M. Zerwas, M.D.
Assistant Secretary	Arthur M. Boudreaux, M.D.
Assistant Treasurer	James D. Grant, M.D.
Speaker, House of Delegates	Candace E. Keller, M.D., M.P.H.
Vice-Speaker, House of Delegates	John P. Abenstein, M.D.

The CSA delegation, along with many others in the House of Delegates, extended congratulations to Ronald D. Miller, M.D., who was selected to receive the ASA Distinguished Service Award at the 2008 ASA Annual Meeting.

It is a great honor for me to represent the CSA as the Director from California. It will be my pleasure to bring reports to you of the significant events occurring in the specialty as they evolve during my tenure as Director.

### **Call for Submission of Resolutions to the House of Delegates**

Any CSA member may submit a resolution to the House of Delegates (your elected representatives) on any issue that you deem important. The deliberations pursuant to these resolutions influence the course of action of the CSA during the ensuing year. For assistance in formulating a resolution, you are welcome to contact Linda B. Hertzberg, M.D., Speaker of the House of Delegates.

The House of Delegates will meet on Saturday, May 31, as part of the CSA Annual Meeting at the Hilton Los Angeles/Universal City, Universal City, California. A reference committee meets Friday evening to hear testimony on all matters to be considered by the House. For more information, contact the CSA office (650) 345-3020, (800) 345-3691, fax (650) 345-3269.

The deadline for submissions is April 1, 2008.