

**CONFERENCES & MEETINGS**

Grand Rounds
Thursday, September 20, 2007, 12:00 Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Clinic Auditorium

J. Paul Mounsey, MD
Visiting Professor
Director, Cardiac Electrophysiology Laboratory
Division of Cardiology

Atrial Fibrillation - Traditions and Frontiers

FYI

- The Michael Hooker Microscopy Facility, in collaboration with the UNC Roadmap office and the School of Medicine, is offering a one-week workshop, Sept. 24-28, on the use of light microscopy in biomedical research. The workshop will provide an introduction, with hands-on sessions and industry involvement. Applications are required, and will be accepted until 15 seats are filled. Preference will be given to participants who will most benefit from the course. Please click [here](#) for details.
- Updated [templates](#) for studies that access Protected Health Information (PHI), such as medical records, have been posted on the IRB website. The header of this HIPAA form has been modified to display the same study-specific details as the consent form for that study; this is necessary to remain in compliance with HIPAA regulations.
- The Department of Surgery and Division of Plastic Surgery are conducting a study to evaluate teaching and learning styles across the medical center, and are interested in enrolling attendings, resident/fellows, and medical students

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Dean's Office presents a seminar by Jeanne-Marie Guise, MD, MPH, of Oregon Health & Science University, candidate for Director, Center for Women's Health Research. Her lecture is entitled "Bridges to Improve Women's Health," and will be held on Mon., Sept. 24, at 4:00 p.m. in G100 Bondurant Hall. Refreshments will be provided.
- Dr. Robert Lowman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, will be conducting a workshop that presents twelve key concepts related to success in grant writing. Two sessions will be held, one on Wed., Oct. 3 on [South Campus](#), one on Thurs., Oct. 4 on [North Campus](#). This workshop is designed for the grant writer with limited experience, and is appropriate for faculty members and post-doctoral fellows. Space is limited. To register, click the links above, or contact Jennifer Pruitt at 962-7757.
- Under Paul Mounsey's capable leadership, the Department has begun a program in atrial fibrillation ablation. His recent completion of the first successful procedure here at UNC is a substantial accomplishment, and is to be

from all departments. The study aims to determine the predominant teaching and learning styles of individual participants and of specialties, and to determine the correlations between those teaching and learning styles. For more information or questions, please contact [Megan Jack, MD](#) a 216-9457.

congratulated.

FROM THE CHAIR'S OFFICE

The provision of quality patient care is a delicate balancing act. On the one hand, we must ensure that the people who need our services can obtain them - this involves not only making arrangements with insurance providers such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Blue Cross Blue Shield, but also keeping patients' out-of-pocket expenses as reasonable as possible. On the other hand, we must ensure that our hospitals and clinics are financially viable, so that we can continue to provide those services.

Currently, the various clinics of the UNC HCS, including those within the Department of Medicine, each fall under two ownership models - some are owned by UNC Hospitals, and others by UNC Physicians & Associates. Billing is handled quite differently under the two models. Hospital clinics charge a professional fee for physicians' services, as well as a separate fee for technical support (materials, space, etc.). Clinics owned by UNC P&A send only one bill to the patient, as there is no applicable facilities charge.

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to each model. From the patient's point of view, it is often confusing to receive a second bill for a single visit to a hospital clinic, and the two bills combined are often more than the total charge from the single bill one would receive for the same service from a physician-based clinic.

Considering these and other advantages and drawbacks of each ownership model is a complex process, but a re-evaluation of our clinic ownership could yield real benefits. That is why the Health Care System has enlisted the assistance of ECG Management Consultants. The firm has begun a comprehensive evaluation of each of our clinics, and of our balance of ownership models throughout the UNC HCS. They will launch detailed analyses of the potential market and public relations impacts and financial benefits and risks of changing ownership models of various clinics. They will also consider a third, hybrid ownership model that combines aspects of the two existing ones. This third model would aim to tailor billing processes to the needs of different patient populations (for example, Blue Cross Blue Shield patients would not be charged a facilities fee, as BCBS does not cover those fees).

The information we will glean comes at an exciting time - just as we have completed the Employee Satisfaction Survey as part of the UNC HCS Commitment to Caring Initiative. We have learned much about ourselves thus far, and have much to learn, as we move forward in our mission to provide the best patient care possible, and as we improve on the already solid foundation on which those services are built. Be on the lookout for more information about this, and I thank you in advance for your cooperation in this process.

Questions or submissions, contact sarah_perry@med.unc.edu.