



Georgia  
Obstetrical and  
Gynecological  
Society, Inc.

# OBGyn News

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN  
WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE in GEORGIA



Georgia Section  
The American Congress  
of Obstetricians  
and Gynecologists

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## First Annual Joint Winter Symposium: OBGyns and Pediatricians Working Together to Improve Patient Care

In February, the Georgia OBGyn Society co-hosted its first joint meeting with the Georgia Chapter

- American Academy of Pediatricians (AAP). This year's Winter Symposium, OBGyns & Pediatricians: Working Together to Improve Patient Care, was the first time both professional organizations collaborated on an educational conference for its members.

The well attended Winter Symposium was held at the Atlanta Marriott Buckhead Hotel. It provided a unique opportunity to bring both specialties together to present topics that are common among both groups in maternal, newborn, and adolescent health. One of the symposium's major goals was to highlight the impor-

tance of viewing the mother-baby as a dyad and coordinating care to optimize the treatment that both receive.

This is especially true when dealing with postpartum depression, adolescent gynecology and immunizations.

It was clear from each presenter that the coordination of care will only yield better outcomes

and efficacy. Some of this year's topics included breastfeeding, immunizations, adolescent health, and perinatal depression. The symposium was kicked off by a keynote address from Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health, entitled "A Vision for Maternal & Infant Health in Georgia." Dr. Fitzgerald created a very vivid picture

of the state of Maternal and Child Health here in Georgia. She provided the perfect backdrop for the day's presentations that further explored ways



*Dr. Victoria Green presented Building Partnerships to Support Breastfeeding.*

in which both specialties could make an impact to improve maternal and child health care.

This year's symposium received high marks from attendees, which included obstetricians, pediatricians, nurses and professionals working with women and children. Many who attended expressed their satisfaction with the speakers, the topics,



*Dr. Kevin Ault gave an update on Immunizations for OBGyns and Pediatricians.*

exhibitors and the exceptional venue. Exhibitors for this year's event ranged from vaccine to contraceptive companies. It was a great opportunity for exhibitors, as well as physicians, to meet and explore the possibilities of incorporating services or products within their practice to better meet the needs of their patients.

The Society was excited about the opportunity to be able to offer this year's joint symposium in collaboration with Georgia AAP. The Georgia OBGyn Society's Executive Director, Pat Cota, looks forward to working with the Georgia Chapter - AAP's Director, Rick Ward, to offer a joint educational meeting annually. Hopefully, this year's annual meeting helped bring home the message that coordination and collaboration among specialties will only serve to improve the care for women and children in Georgia.



*GOGS President, Dr. David Byck, and Georgia AAP President, Dr. Kathryn Cheek, gave the closing remarks.*

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# President's Article

## Advocacy

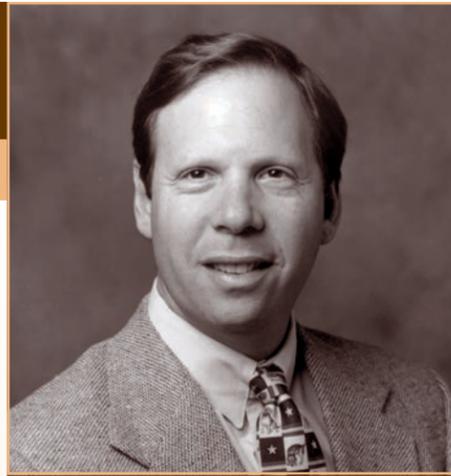
By the time you are reading this column, the 2012 Georgia Legislature will be wrapping up for the spring. This has been a very difficult year for us at the Capitol. We worked very hard for the Society in our attempts to keep Georgia a favorable place to practice Obstetrics and Gynecology, but really received some difficult messages from our legislators. Nevertheless we were there! Pat Cota, Skin Edge and our team of volunteers spent hours talking with those we have elected to represent us. Many of you took time out of your schedules (sometimes multiple times) and came down to testify. Thank you for your time and effort!

Even when we lose the fight, we have not wasted our time. Our legislators must hear from us as a society, but more importantly, they must hear from each of you! Every time I met with someone on either side of the Dome, they seemed genuinely appreciative we were there. If we do

not speak to them, they really do not have any idea what the medical community is thinking. Even if each of you cannot come to Atlanta for the day, I urge you to keep up with the process and call your elected representatives. Learn them by name. Get their cell phones (yes, they will give them to you). It makes a difference!

I hope that by the next session we will have upgraded the Society's website where we can keep you all abreast of the "hot issues" so you can call or visit. I urge you to check out the new site as soon as it is available. We will try to keep our content relevant and succinct so you will make it one of your "must open" sites each day or week. Thank you for your support. Don't forget to mark your calendars and make your reservations for our Annual Meeting at The Cloister in August.

David Byck  
President



David Byck, MD  
President, GOGS  
Savannah, Georgia

# "It doesn't take long to get there!"

## The GOGS-MAG Mutual Educational Initiative on Shoulder Dystocia.

Dr. Willis Lanier, past president of the Georgia OBGyn Society, was at MAG Mutual's headquarters in Atlanta one afternoon in January, delivering a baby. Well, not quite; he was simulating a delivery with a plastic mannequin of a female torso and a vinyl newborn child. Dr. Henry A. "Sandy" Easley, who is on the



GOGS and Mag Mutual's simulator provides a wonderful opportunity for medical practitioners to have hands-on practical experience managing shoulder dystocia.

Board of MAG Mutual and an OBGyn in Wilmington, NC, was showing Dr. Lanier, how quickly, in a delivery complicated by shoulder dystocia, an obstetrician can reach the threshold of force that may

cause injury to the infant's brachial plexus. "It doesn't take long to get there!" Dr. Lanier said, as the computer and electronic strain gauge attached to the mannequin registered a quick 100 Newton's.

This simulated birthing exercise is the brainchild, so to speak, of GOGS and MAG Mutual. The collaboration will allow GOGS to offer quality educational programming to Georgia's residency programs, as well as to its membership. Using a simulator for educating OBGyns on managing shoulder dystocia is literally an excellent "hands-on" teaching exercise and will be of great benefit to obstetricians, especially those in residency training.

Shoulder dystocia is the cause of many expensive professional liability lawsuits. The benefit of being able to provide hands-on simulator training to residents and practicing providers was something the Society and MAG Mutual could not

ignore. Clearly, there were benefits to physicians from a practical and legal stand point, and this training was something the Society felt strongly about offering. When the opportunity presented itself to acquire the mannequin and simulator, the Society and Mag Mutual jumped at the chance. They named the

mannequin "Elizabeth," for Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first American woman to receive a degree from an American medical school. ("Elizabeth" proudly displays decals bearing the logos of

both GOGS and MAG Mutual!)

The presentation and training was piloted with the Morehouse School of Medicine residents at Grady Hospital, and was well received. The Society currently is providing shoulder dystocia training to physicians who will bring the training to residency programs and interested provider practices. This unique program provides

a wonderful opportunity for medical practitioners to have hands-on practical experience managing shoulder dystocia.



Ben Cheek  
MD  
Columbus, Georgia



Dr. Easley shows Dr. Lanier how quickly, in a delivery complicated by shoulder dystocia, an obstetrician can reach the threshold of force that may cause injury to the infant.

# 2012 Georgia OBGyn Society Golf Tournament at Bear's Best Atlanta

## A Jack Nicklaus Course

RANKED IN THE TOP GOLF COURSES YOU CAN PLAY IN AMERICA

Plan to arrive in time for lunch before tee off.

Please see the Society website, [www.georgiaobgyn.org](http://www.georgiaobgyn.org) for registration or call

770.904.5293



Wednesday, May 16, 2012

# Legislative Day at the Capitol

OBGyns from throughout Georgia met at the state Capitol on February 8th, for Legislative Day at the Capitol. They, along with their colleagues in pediatrics, internal medicine, family practice and osteopathy, took time from their busy lives to become part of the legislative process.

In addition to meeting with their legislators, those in attendance heard from Commissioner David Cook regarding Medicaid redesign, Commissioner Ralph Hudgens on the health exchange and other efforts related to national healthcare reform, and from Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald regarding public health issues in Georgia. Dr. Fitzgerald, a past president of this Society, was pleased to be speaking to a group of physician colleagues. A number of physicians invited their legislators to attend lunch, where the legislators were recognized and given a few minutes to speak to the group about current healthcare issues.

Legislative Day at the Capitol is an annual event held in February of each year. At other times during the legislative session, which lasts from January to April, physicians visit the Capitol to talk with legislators, meet on specific legislation



*Dr. John Hill and Commissioner Hudgens talk on Legislative Day at the Capitol*

and testify before committees to educate the legislative body on medical issues. Other OBGyns volunteer to staff the medical aid station for a day through a program coordinated by the Medical Association of Georgia. Please consider becoming more involved. Legislative issues can both positively and negatively affect your patients and your practice.



*Dr. Willis Lanier and Dr. Joel Engel at breakfast before a long day at the Capitol*

## A Special Thank You to Our 2012 Legislative Day at the Capitol Sponsors

Blue Cross Blue Shield  
MAG Mutual  
Pediatrix  
Pfizer

Physician's Alliance  
Phyttest  
Sanofi-Pasteur  
United Healthcare



*Drs. Cathy Bonk, Al Scott and John Hill (background)*



*Drs. Mike Scott, John Moore, Willis Lanier and Winifred Soufi*



## Factoid

9.6% of all infants born in Georgia weighed less than 2,500 grams (5.5 lbs.)

Only South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi had greater rates.

13% of all infants born in Georgia had a gestational age of less than 37 weeks. This rate is the 11th greatest among all states.

# Looking Out for Our Families in the State of Georgia

The citizens of Georgia need to be alert to what is going on under the Gold Dome this legislative session.

The most recent election results were an outcry from the public that Georgians and Americans desire less and not more government involvement in their personal lives. Unfortunately, the Georgia State Legislature has different plans about what is best for us citizens. That is: more government interference in our personal lives.

The current crisis involves Rep. Doug McKillip (115th) and his HB 954. Other sponsors of the bill include Doug Collins (27th), Terry England (108th), Mark Hamilton (23rd), Donna Sheldon (105th), and Allen Peake (137th). This legislation criminalizes the interference with any pregnancy over 20 weeks. Although the language is typical "legalese" in the bill, the legal interpretation by those versed in this language sug-

gests if any medical care is provided which could threaten the life of the fetus past this gestation, the physician would be subject to criminal punishment: that is time in prison. These physicians would also be publicly reported which could jeopardize their lives and families.

If this legislation becomes law, a woman whose water breaks at 21 weeks gestation would be legally forced to have a Cesarean delivery in order to protect the "life" of a non-viable fetus since the process of labor usually results in death of the fetus at this gestational age. A Cesarean section done at this gestation would put all of this mom's future pregnancies at risk for uterine rupture (this can result in death of mother but usually only causes severe damage or death of the baby), as well as

necessitate C-sections for all future deliveries. If the mother were to refuse the C-section, she would be at risk for developing a severe infection or hemorrhage that could result in loss of her childbearing ability. This is not acceptable medical care, yet it is the care being dictated by your elected representatives. No, these legislators do not have medical degrees but are practicing medicine.

The language of the bill has clauses of limited exceptions, but this interpretation can require days, months, or years of legal review. This is not a realistic option when caring for a patient when every minute is critical for optimal care. No physician could afford to risk that his or her care would be examined after the fact to confirm the law had been followed if criminal penalties were a probability.

As a practicing obstetrician and gynecologist in Athens, Georgia, these difficult clinical situations of an impending delivery before the point of viability



**Ruth Cline, MD**  
Editor  
Athens, Georgia

occur multiple times each year in our community. The families are devastated. The physician and nursing team are the support to assist these families as they suffer through these losses. These are not happy experiences for any of us involved. Many women never emotionally recover from this trauma. With the proposed legislation, appropriate medical care could not be delivered legally in the state of Georgia. Women and their caregivers would risk criminal prosecution or have to leave the state for adequate care.

The Georgia OBGyn Society has labored tirelessly, but ineffectively, to have changes made to the bill that would allow for appropriate medical care to continue to be rendered. Mr. McKillip, the Athens representative, and his colleagues are not open to any alterations in their proposed legislation. HB 954 was voted out of committee in the House on February 27, 2012.

There is not any other specialty in medicine where legislators have felt the need to intrude as they do in Women's Health. Do they not think women and their medically trained physicians can give appropriate care? It is time for the government to get out of my examination room in my office. If you, legislators, want to practice medicine, go to medical school! We have a really nice new campus in Athens. We are definitely going to need more obstetricians in Georgia because all of my colleagues will leave the state, go to jail, or give up practice if this legislation passes.



# Flu Shots for Women During and After Pregnancy:

Below is information distributed by the Department of Public Health to educate women on the importance of receiving the flu vaccine during pregnancy. Please feel free to reprint and share the information with your patients. *From IssueBrief Georgia, October 2011*

The flu can cause you to become very sick if you are pregnant.<sup>1-3</sup> This is because of the changes that your body goes through during pregnancy. These changes make it is easier for you to get very ill when you have the flu.<sup>1-3</sup> The best way to protect yourself against the flu is to get the flu shot every year.<sup>4</sup> Getting the flu shot while you are pregnant will help protect you, as well as your baby, who is too young to receive the flu shot.<sup>4-8</sup> Experts recommend that you get a flu shot if you are pregnant, no matter how far along you are in your pregnancy.<sup>4, 5</sup>

## The Georgia Experience

Georgia collects information on the health of women who are pregnant and recently gave birth. During the 2009-2010 flu season, less than half of women who had a baby in Georgia, or 29.9%, got the flu shot.

## Information and Actions for Pregnant Women

*Is it safe for you to get a flu shot while you are pregnant?*

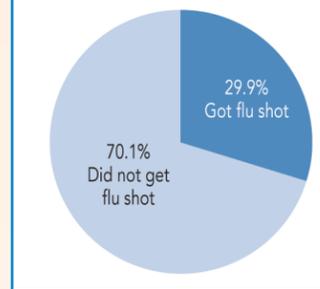
Yes. The flu shot has been given safely to millions of pregnant women over many years. Flu shots have not been shown to cause any harm to pregnant women or their babies. In fact, flu shots during pregnancy protect the baby.

*Is a flu shot safe for unborn babies?*

Many studies show that pregnant women who get the flu shot are safe. These studies have shown no sign

of harm to pregnant women, to the unborn child (or fetus) or to newborns because of the changes that your body goes through during pregnancy. In addition, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and CDC keep track of safety issues and have not seen any need for concern.

### How Many Women Got the Flu Shot?



*When should you get the flu shot?*

Experts have recommended that you get the flu shot if you are pregnant.

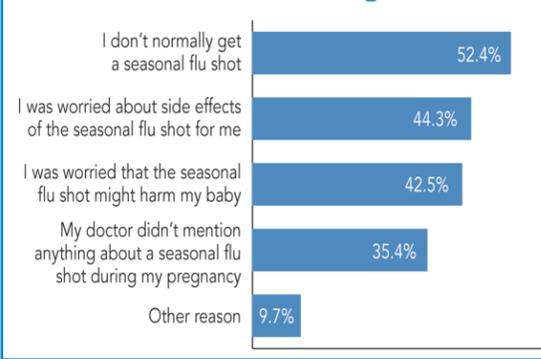
*Speak to your health care provider if you have questions about getting the flu shot.*

Some Georgia women did not get a flu shot during or after their pregnancy. The table below shows some of the reasons they gave for not getting the shot. If you have any concerns about the flu shots, talk to your health care provider. A flu shot is recommended during pregnancy because it can protect you and your baby.

## Other everyday actions you can take to prevent the flu:

- *Avoid close contact with people who are sick.* When you are sick, stay away from others to protect them from getting sick too.

### Concerns About Getting A Flu Shot



- *Stay home when you are sick.* If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- *Cover your mouth and*

*nose.* Use a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands. It may prevent those around you from

## Getting the flu shot while you are pregnant will help protect you and your baby.

*"I was surprised my doctor didn't talk to me about... flu vaccinations."  
-PRAMS mother*

getting sick.

- *Wash your hands often.* Washing your hands helps protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer.
- *Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.* Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- *Practice other good health habits.* Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

*For more information, visit:*

<http://health.state.ga.us/epi/prams/index.asp>

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# Mental Health America of Georgia: Project Healthy Moms



**Project Healthy Moms (PHM)** is an important initiative of Mental Health America of Georgia. Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (including disorders such as antenatal depression, postpartum depression, postpartum anxiety, and postpartum psychosis) are the most common complication of childbirth. In the United States, it is estimated that between 10% and 15% of new mothers suffer from these devastating illnesses, which, if not properly treated, can have a long term negative impact on the health of not only the mothers, but also their children and families.



Through Project Healthy Moms, MHA is providing resources for those in need in Georgia. Their goal is to increase awareness, identification, treatment, and support of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs), while also reducing the stigma associated with them. MHA provides support for pregnant and postpartum women through many types of services, including (but not limited to): Educational seminars through the Upcoming

Provider Program (PHM UPP), PMAD Screening/Identification Trainings for Healthcare Providers, PMAD Provider Tool Kits, monthly newsletters, peer support, and resource linkage through the Project Healthy Moms Warmline.

MHA has provided an abbreviated list of resources for women throughout Georgia (see information below). For additional information on the Project Healthy Moms initiative, please contact the Project Healthy Moms Coordinator at [liz@mhageorgia.org](mailto:liz@mhageorgia.org) or 678-904-1968.

## Project Healthy Moms: Abbreviated Resource List for Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs)

Mental Health America of Georgia's Project Healthy Moms provides this abbreviated list of resources that specialize in providing care for pregnant/postpartum women. This list includes many resources that may be combined.

### Healthcare Providers

- **Emory Women's Mental Health Program**  
Emory Clinic Building B  
Atlanta, GA  
404-778-2524
- **Northside Behavioral Health Services**  
Atlanta, GA  
404-851-8960 or 404-851-8050  
Eligibility: Self pay, private insurance, Medicare, state funding offered
- **Georgia Health Sciences University**  
Women's Behavioral Health  
Augusta, GA  
706-721-6719
- **Lauren Magalnick Berman, PhD**  
Atlanta, GA  
404-634-2555
- **Gina Campbell**  
The Care and Counseling Center of GA  
Decatur, GA  
404-636-1457
- **Jacqueline Cohen, MS, LAPC, NCC**  
Marietta, GA  
404-822-1026
- **Bethany D. Davis, MD**  
Atlanta, GA  
404-841-1000
- **Omi Dobbins, LPC, NCC, NCSC**  
Stockbridge, GA  
678-960-9355  
678-701-1996
- **Kate Ferguson, MA, NCC**  
Life Gate Counseling Center  
Atlanta, GA  
404-842-3161

## PROJECT HEALTHY MOMS WARMLINE

The Project Healthy Moms Warmline is available to ALL Georgia women seeking peer support for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. Georgia women can phone the toll-free Project Healthy Moms Warmline at **1-800-933-9896 (x234)**, call the local Georgia number at **678-904-1966**, or email [PHMhelp@mhageorgia.org](mailto:PHMhelp@mhageorgia.org) to contact a survivor of PMADs who can provide emotional support and suggest appropriate, Georgia specific resources. Callers should leave a message when calling the Warmline, and they will receive a response from a facilitator within 48 hours. It DOES get better!

**Toll Free: 1-800-933-9896**  
**Local: 678-904-1966**  
**Email: [PHMhelp@mhageorgia.org](mailto:PHMhelp@mhageorgia.org)**

The Warmline is not a crisis hotline and does not handle emergencies. In case of emergency, please contact 911 or The National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

- **Licia Freeman, MA, MEd, LMFT**  
Atlanta, GA  
770-352-0029
- **Sally Herbert, MD**  
Atlanta, GA  
404-842-0070
- **Vicki Leopold, LCSW**  
Fayetteville, GA  
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- **Mandy Mercer, LMSW**  
Atlanta, GA  
404-420-3202
- **Fran McAleer, LCSW**  
GHSU Dept of Psychiatry and Health Behavior  
Savannah, GA  
706-721-CARE  
912-350-7673
- **Elizabeth O'Brien, MA, LPC**  
TRU Integrative Health and Wellness  
Atlanta, GA  
907-378-6972  
404-846-0699
- **Shana Pittman, LPC**  
Decatur, GA 30030  
770-361-6833
- **Julie Rand, MD**  
Peachtree Psychiatric Professionals  
Atlanta, GA  
404-351-2008
- **Tara Samples, MC, LPC, NCC**  
Stockbridge, GA  
770-506-9575 x111

## Other Resources

- Atlanta Postpartum Support Group (Atlanta, GA) 914-261-8182
- Project Healthy Moms Warmline: Phone in to the free Project Healthy Moms Warmline or email us to contact a survivor of a PMAD who can provide emotional support and suggest Georgia-specific resources. Please leave a message when you call the Warmline, and the facilitator will respond as soon as possible. 678-904-1966  
1-800-933-9896 ext. 234 (toll-free)  
[PHMhelp@mhageorgia.org](mailto:PHMhelp@mhageorgia.org)
- Postpartum Support International <http://www.postpartum.net>  
PSI's Warmline (in English and Spanish) for general information/ resources: 1800-944-4PPD (4773)
- Postpartum Progress: The most widely read blog on PMADs in the world, facilitated by Georgia mom and PMAD advocate Katherine Stone [www.postpartumprogress.com](http://www.postpartumprogress.com)
- Beyond Postpartum: Atlanta mom Amber Koter-Puline's blog that offers insight into personal experience dealing with PMADs [www.beyondpostpartumblog.com](http://www.beyondpostpartumblog.com)

*To access our full resource list, please go to [www.mhageorgia.org](http://www.mhageorgia.org) and visit the Project Healthy Moms tab. Please contact Liz Smulian at [liz@mhageorgia.org](mailto:liz@mhageorgia.org) or 678-904-1968 for more information.*



## Planning for Healthy Babies *Faster Easier Enrollment for P4HB*

*Planning for Healthy Babies (P4HB)* is a Medicaid program supported by the federal government to help reduce the number of small babies born at risk for life-long health challenges, such as developmental delays, respiratory illness and loss of vision. The P4HB program provides no cost family planning services to eligible women in Georgia.

### Women in P4HB are enrolled with one of the three CMOs: **Wellcare, Amerigroup or Peachstate.**

All three CMOs cover the same services. All billing and reimbursement inquiries should go to the CMO in which the woman is enrolled.

#### Covered Services:

- Family planning counseling and follow-up visits - up to 4
- Annual exams including pap smears
- Contraceptives (birth control) services and supplies
- Prescriptions for multivitamins with folic acid
- Pregnancy tests
- Counseling and referrals to social services and primary health care providers
- STD testing and treatment; Sexually transmitted infections found during a family planning exam (does not include HIV/AIDS and hepatitis)

All moms who were eligible for pregnancy Medicaid may qualify for coverage. New Auto Enrollment with their CMO when pregnancy Medicaid ends.

#### Where do women get more information about Planning for Healthy Babies?

- Refer women to [www.planning4healthybabies.org](http://www.planning4healthybabies.org) where they can apply online or download an application.
- Applications can be picked up at local health department or DFCS offices.
- Refer patients to [www.dch.georgia.gov/p4hb](http://www.dch.georgia.gov/p4hb) or 1-877-P4HB-101 for more info.



**FREE, physician led, peer-to-peer education in your office**  
**FREE CME and contact hours**



**IMMUNIZATION:**  
Delivering vaccines in your practice-OB/GYN's Guide  
Clinical-Operational-Financial  
EPIC: Immunization  
Sandra Yarn - Program Director  
Shanrita McClain - Program Coordinator  
404-881-5054

**BREASTFEEDING:**  
Breastfeeding Fundamentals  
Supporting Breastfeeding in the Hospital  
Advanced Breastfeeding Support  
EPIC: Breastfeeding  
Arlene Toole - Program Director  
Andrea Perry - Program Coordinator  
404-881-5068

**WANTED... Physician Trainers**  
If you are an advocate for immunization and/or breastfeeding and like to teach contact the EPIC office:  
**Immunization: 404-881-5054**  
**Breastfeeding: 404-881-5068**

**Georgia Chapter**  
**American Academy of Pediatrics**  
1330 West Peachtree Street • Suite 500 • Atlanta, Georgia 30309

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essentials and Standards of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education by the Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to offer continuing medical education to physicians. The Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics designates this educational activity for a maximum of 2.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)<sup>™</sup>. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

## Thank You OBGyn Leaders at the Capitol!

Thanks to all the OBGyns who have taken time out of their busy schedule to journey to the Capitol and testify before committees, speak with senators and representatives and interact with the legislature. You are an important part of the legislative process and you make a difference.

This year, during Legislative Day at the Capitol, OBGyns discussed a number of issues with legislators, including:

- Protecting access to OB care for women by supporting adequate Medicaid reimbursement and an administratively workable Medicaid system
- Decreasing the current OBGyn shortage by supporting the increase of OBGyn residency education in Georgia
- Supporting a tobacco tax to decrease smoking and increase funds available for healthcare
- Reviving Tort Reform

I hope to see many more of you at the Capitol next year. Please continue to look for alerts about key legislation and be sure to contact your legislators about issues that will affect you and your patients.

Thanks this year to the following OBGyn leaders attending events at the Capitol:

- Dr. Michael Lindsay
- Dr. Richie Zane
- Dr. Nancy Cook
- Dr. Anne Patterson
- Dr. Shelley Dunson-Allen
- Dr. Catherine Bagley
- Dr. Cathy Bonk
- Dr. David Byck
- Dr. Ruth Cline
- Dr. Holly Coleman
- Dr. Joel Engel
- Dr. Victoria L. Green
- Dr. Tommy Hatchett
- Dr. John Hill
- Dr. Willis Lanier
- Dr. Courtney Legum-Wenk
- Dr. Stacy Lindo
- Dr. Cynthia Mercer
- Dr. John Moore
- Dr. Al Scott
- Dr. Mike Scott
- Dr. Mardi Schaufler
- Dr. Hugh Smith
- Dr. Winifred Soufi
- Dr. Andrew Toledo
- Adrienne DeMarais, MD/MPH Candidate



**Andrew A. Toledo, MD**  
*Legislative Chair, GOGS*  
*Sandy Springs, Georgia*



*Dr. Michael Lindsay testifies at the Capitol about unshackling women who are in labor.*



*Dr. Toledo speaks at the capitol.*

## The Society is Growing

For the last few years, the Georgia OBGyn Society has pretty much been a two woman operation. Pat Cota, Executive Director, has been the driving force behind the Society, with the assistance of Office Administrator, Beth Yoder. The time has finally come for the Society to grow and really expand it's influence within the OBGyn community. The Society has partnered with the Georgia Department of Public Health, Maternal and Child Health Division to focus on maternal and child health issues.

Last August, the Society welcomed **Kaprice Welsh**, CNM, MSN, MPH, who will serve as Clinical Liaison. Kaprice comes to the Society with a well-rounded background in women's and public health. Prior to joining the Society, Kaprice worked as a midwife in private practice and then at the Georgia Department of Community Health (DCH) as the Perinatal Nurse Manager, managing contracts for perinatal care as well as the Regional Tertiary Hospitals. She then moved up in the division to the Georgia Department



of Medicaid as Director of Women's Services, focusing on policies affecting women's health and was instrumental in implementing Georgia Medicaid's new family planning waiver: Planning for Healthy Babies (P4HB). With Kaprice's diverse experience and dedication, she will assist the Society in meeting its goals and objectives to continue to promote the health and wellness of women and families in Georgia.

In December, the Society welcomed **Debbie Sibley**, RN, MSN, as the new Maternal Mortality Review (MMR) Coordinator. Debbie brings to this role many years of experience as staff nurse at Newnan Hospital (1973-1974) and at University Hospital (1974-1977), Clinical Nurse Specialist at University Hospital (1977-1994) and at The Medical Center of Central Georgia (2007-2011), and as Perinatal Outreach Coordinator at the Medical College of Georgia (1995-2005).



Debbie's experiences in these hospitals and with their affiliated professionals have prepared her for

her new role as MMR Coordinator. She will coordinate efforts to look at the maternal deaths that have occurred in Georgia. The state ranks 49th in maternal mortality. The review findings will be used to improve Georgia's statistics. "Data for improvement, not data for judgment" will be the review team's objective.

The last addition to the GOGS family is **Amanda Kowal**. Amanda joined the Society in February as an Administrative Assistant. She has a strong background in editing and producing publications as well as experience in website management, graphics, printing, and meeting planning. She has many years of experience working for nonprofit organizations such as the American Speech-Language Hearing Association in Rockville, MD. She will utilize her management and organizational skills to assist the Society in many capacities, such as maintaining its website, helping with newsletters and other projects.



## Happy 102<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Dr. Watson



In the 1960s, Dr. Frederick Zusan pioneered the use of intravenous magnesium sulfate to prevent convulsions in women with preeclampsia. His treatment protocol was adopted internationally and is still used to treat preeclampsia nearly 50 years later. Guess who taught him? Dr. W.G. Watson, who celebrated his 102nd birthday in February.

During a tour of the clinical facilities at the University Hospital in Augusta, Dr. Zusan, noticed Dr. Watson utilizing an IV medication for one of his obstetrical patients. Dr. Watson explained to him, "That's Mag Sulfate. It's for high blood pressure." Dr. Zusan had not seen Mag Sulfate utilized that way. Subsequently, Dr. Zusan began his research on the uses of

Magnesium Sulfate, which has greatly influenced medical practice today.

Dr. Watson began his career in 1947 with University Hospital and worked there past his 100th birthday. He is a legend for his lifetime of service to people in Augusta. Hospital leaders estimated he has delivered between 16,000 to 18,000 babies over his near 60 year career. There were many families in the area that had several generations of babies delivered by Dr. Watson. The women's health wing of University Hospital is named in his honor, and a bronze statue honoring him stands in its lobby.

*Happy Birthday Dr. Watson!*

## CPT Coding Seminar

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Look for the Annual Meeting flyer in the mail,  
or call the Society office at 770.904.5293





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