

# Taconic TALK

From the Taconic IPA.  
Exclusive physician network for MVP.

## Taconic IPA Board of Directors

Mark Foster, M.D.  
Chairman  
Michael Duffy  
Vice Chairman  
David R. Field, C.P.A.  
Treasurer  
Toni Saychek, M.D.  
Secretary  
Kelly DerCola, M.D.  
James V. Dilorenzo, M.D.  
Michael DiTullo  
David W. Olikier  
Norman L. Stein, M.D.

## Taconic IPA Administration

A. John Blair, III, M.D.  
President & CEO  
Joseph S. Lia  
Executive Director  
Jennie Youmans  
Physician Relations Manager

## Taconic IPA Committees & Committee Chairmen

*Credentialing Committee*  
Imtiaz Mallick, M.D.  
meets on the first Tuesday  
of the month at 7:30 AM

*Finance Committee*  
David R. Field, C.P.A.  
meets quarterly on the third  
Thursday of the month  
at 6:00 PM

*Medical Council Committee*  
Michael D. Freedman, M.D.  
meets on the fourth Thursday  
of the month at 6:30 PM

*Peer Review Committee*  
James Wise, M.D.  
meets on the first Thursday  
every other month at 6:00 PM

## TACONIC OFFICE INFO

One Summit Court, Suite 200  
Fishkill, NY 12524  
ph 800.532.3530  
fx 845.897.1035  
www.taconicipa.com

## A. JOHN BLAIR, III, M.D. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO



### National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)

*Congratulations to Thomas R. Castiglia, M.D., of Family Medicine of Pawling, James Corsones, M.D., Kelly DerCola, M.D., and J. Peter Roberts, M.D. of Kingston Internal Medicine who have all achieved NCQA recognition through Physician Practice Connections (PPC) a component of NCQA's Physician Recognition Program.*

"The NCQA offers the physician community a chance to demonstrate their excellence in patient care management," said Dr. Castiglia. "The process also opens physicians' eyes to the administrative and organizational processes required to achieve optimal patient care."

"The process of becoming NCQA certified, helped us to better understand how we can improve patient care," noted Dr. Corsones. Dr. DerCola stated, "NCQA recognizes physicians that have protocols in place to optimize patient care and encourages other physicians to do this as well." According to Dr. Roberts, "The NCQA Recognition process gave the physicians and their staff the opportunity to review and improve the organizational process to ensure optimal patient care."

Physician Practice Connections (PPC) recognizes physician practices that use information systematically to enhance the quality of patient care. Physicians who use such systematic processes are better able to:

- Monitor their patients' medical histories
- Work with patients over time, not just during office visits
- Follow up with patients and with other providers
- Manage populations, not just individuals, using evidence-based care
- Assist patients to manage their own health better
- Avoid medical errors

Meeting PPC standards means that practices have *connections*—to patients, to information, to other practitioners and to evidence.

Taconic IPA representatives are actively working with 42 practices in an effort to become recognized through the NCQA Physician Recognition Program. **I strongly encourage physicians to seek recognition at a national level for their efforts to deliver quality patient care.** Patients seeking information on NCQA recognized physicians are able to search the NCQA Web site ([www.ncqa.org/PhysicianQualityReports.htm](http://www.ncqa.org/PhysicianQualityReports.htm)).

**Taconic IPA is covering all NCQA charges to physicians and the IPA representatives are assisting practices in submitting materials.** We will report the names of physicians who have been recognized since the last *Taconic Talk* along with the total number recognized in the IPA. Any offices interested in participating in the NCQA recognition program should contact Jennie Youmans at **(845) 897-6363**.

### **Doctor's Office Quality – Information Technology (DOQ-IT)**

Medicare (CMS) has contracted with the state Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) which in New York State is the Island Peer Review Organization (IPRO) to help offices evaluate and prepare for implementing health information technology (Electronic Health Records) in their practices. DOQ-IT promotes the adoption of electronic health record (EHR) systems and information technology (IT) in small-to-medium sized physician offices with a vision of enhancing access to patient information, decision support, and reference data, as well as improving patient-clinician communications.

Medicare is providing extensive assistance, through IPRO, to physician offices in planning a migration path from paper-based health records to EHR systems. IPRO will provide physicians with free assistance to select, implement, and optimize IT systems such as electronic registries, electronic prescribing, and electronic health records.

Taconic IPA has teamed up with MedAllies and IPRO to make sure Taconic IPA physicians receive the most comprehensive assistance with regard to the DOQ-IT project and resources available to practices. Tools and guides on health information technology are available facilitate physician office transitions to electronic systems.

Medicare is currently piloting with ten physician practices across the country a pay-for-performance initiative to physicians under the Benefits Improvement and Protection Act of 2000. The demonstration project is the first phase of rewarding physicians for improving quality and efficiency of health care services delivered to Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries. Medicare is expected to expand out the incentive program to other

physician practices. Practices under the DOQ-IT program are likely candidates for being chosen to participate in the incentive program.

**It is critical the Taconic IPA physicians designate the Hudson Valley region as a DOQ-IT saturated market to bring to Medicare's attention our desire to be part of any future Medicare incentive programs.** Enclosed please find a DOQ-IT participation agreement. The agreement simply demonstrates the practice is interested in learning about health information technology and will have access to tools and resources to plan a migration path. A physician office can opt out of the program at any point in time. **Please fax completed DOQ-IT participation agreements to Jennie Youmans at (845) 897-1035 by May 30, 2006.** Questions about the DOQ-IT program can be directed to Jennie Youmans at **(845) 897-6363** or Dianne Koval at **(845) 298-8360**.

### **Electronic Health Record Certification**

I am extremely concerned with physician practices purchasing or consider purchasing Electronic Health Record (EHR) systems that will ultimately not be certified by CCHIT (Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology). **I cannot emphasize enough the importance for physicians to understand what the consequences of implementing non-certified EHRs in their practice will mean in terms of future reimbursement and incentives to their practice.** Especially when most physician practices are already experiencing increasing costs to run their practices while their reimbursement is decreasing.

In April 2004, and every year since, President George W. Bush has called for widespread use of health information technology, and for electronic health records to be used for most Americans by 2014. Since 2004, the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) and the American Health Information Community (AHIC) were established by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with the goal of improving healthcare through information technology. One of the key actions indicated by ONCHIT to move the nation toward the President's goal was *the private sector certification of health information technology products*. Three leading HIT industry associations – the American

Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and The National Alliance for Health Information Technology (Alliance) – joined forces in July 2004 to launch CCHIT as a voluntary, private-sector organization to certify HIT products. The three committed resources to support CCHIT during its organizational phase. To that end, the **Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology** (CCHITSM) was created.

**CCHIT is focused on ensuring physician practices:**

- reduce the risk of health information technology investment by physicians
- ensure interoperability (compatibility) of health information technology products
- assure payers and purchasers providing incentives for EHR adoption that return on investment (ROI) will be improved quality
- protect the privacy of patients' personal health information.

**Physicians choosing system unable to meet certification requirements are at risk of not being able to receive future payer and purchaser incentives.** Taconic IPA has committed to its physicians that only certified systems will be endorsed by the IPA.

I strongly encourage physicians to learn more about CCHIT. **The announcement of certified EHRs will be in June 2006.** Physicians can stay abreast of certification via an electronic newsletter. Sign up for CCHIT e-News at [www.cchit.org/about](http://www.cchit.org/about).

## **Healthcare Information Management and Systems Society (HIMSS) EHR Seminar**

Physicians have been hearing a great deal about EHRs, but may not have the resources or time to truly explore what EHRs are and what they can do for a physician practice.

Taconic IPA, in conjunction with MSSNY, is excited to bring a national association, HIMSS (Health Information Management and Systems Society), to the Hudson Valley region to educate physicians on EHRs and to hear experiences of fellow physicians who have implemented EHRs in their practices.

**HIMSS has agreed to bring nationally recognized EHR experts including physicians who have implemented EHRs to this region to educate physicians and their offices on EHRs.** The one-day Saturday seminar would provide physicians and their office staff an opportunity to spend the day focusing on EHRs and provide valuable information.

HIMSS will co-sponsor a conference in the Hudson Valley if the Taconic IPA can secure at least 150 attendees. The cost will be approximately \$150 per person. Some of the Taconic IPA practices have attended the HIMSS NYC conference and found it to be a wealth of information. We would like to offer this seminar to all our Taconic IPA practices that did not have the opportunity to attend the NYC conference or were not aware of the conference.

**Please indicate your interest in attending the seminar by completing and submitting the form on page 4.**

The form can be faxed to Dianne Koval at **(845) 298-9040** or mailed to:

Dianne Koval  
 Director of Physician Services  
 MedAllies  
 11 Marshall Road, Suite 2H  
 Wappingers, NY 12590



One Summit Court, Suite 200  
Fishkill, NY 12524

**Healthcare Information Management and Systems Society (HIMSS)  
Taconic IPA EHR Seminar**

PRACTICE NAME:

PRACTICE ADDRESS:

PRACTICE CONTACT:

TELEPHONE NUMBER:

E-MAIL:

- YES, I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE EHR SEMINAR. PLEASE RESERVE SPACE FOR \_\_\_\_\_ PEOPLE
- NO THANK YOU

*Please fax back to (845) 298-9040 no later than June 1, 2006.  
If you have questions, please contact Dianne Koval at (845) 298-8360.*