Improving Access to Care and Advancing Health Equity in Kansas City

The Kansas City Medical Society advances the practice of medicine and works to improve the health of people throughout greater Kansas City. We advocate for physicians and medicine and promote public health for the Kansas City region. For physicians, we provide educational programs, offer networking opportunities and more. The Medical Society coordinates the delivery of over $8 million in donated charitable care annually to uninsured individuals through the Kansas City Medical Society Foundation.

The Medical Society has more than 3,000 member physicians in both Missouri and Kansas, including both doctors of medicine and doctors of osteopathy. Our membership represents all specialties, ranging from internal medicine and pediatrics, to cardiology and neurology, to ophthalmology and anesthesiology, to surgical specialties and psychiatry. Members are in private practice, work at area hospitals and teach at local universities. Medical students and residents participate as well. We count among our members many nationally leading physicians in their specialties. The chief medical officers of area hospitals are KCMS members, and two local hospital CEOs who are physicians also are longtime members.

Now over 140 years old, we have been serving greater Kansas City since 1881. Our territory includes Jackson County, Clay County and Platte County in Missouri, and Johnson County and Wyandotte County in Kansas.

“KCMS serves as a voice of science and reason as we advocate for patients, physicians and the health of our communities. In these uncertain times the voice of organized medicine is invaluable.”

– James Wetzel, MD, Internal Medicine and Retired Chief Medical Officer, Olathe Health
Advocating for Patients and Medicine

The Kansas City Medical Society advocates for policies and programs that support the practice of medicine and improve the health of residents across greater Kansas City. We also join with the state and national advocacy efforts of the Missouri State Medical Association, the Kansas Medical Society and the American Medical Association. Delegates from KCMS participate in the governing bodies of these state and national associations.

› As part of our overall priority to improve access to care for the less fortunate in metro Kansas City, KCMS in 2019 endorsed Medicaid expansion in both states. Letters were sent to the governors and state legislators in Kansas and Missouri. Late in 2019, Medical Society members joined in gathering petition signatures to place Medicaid expansion on the ballot in Missouri in 2020.

› Over 20 KCMS physicians networked with 16 Kansas state legislators from the metropolitan area at the Summer Social event held in August 2019 at the home of KCMS President Mark Brady, MD.

At the Summer Social for Kansas legislators and physicians were, from left, Rep. Rui Xu; Chakshu Gupta, MD; Rep. Cindy Holscher; KCMS 2019 President Mark Brady, MD; and Rep. Cindy Neighbor.

› KCMS members gained insights on legislative advocacy and the current status of health care issues at the “Medicine's Muscle” program presented by the Missouri State Medical Association in August.

State representative and KCMS member Jonathan Patterson, MD, spoke at the “Medicine's Muscle” program on legislative advocacy.

“KCMS provides physician across the community with an opportunity to work collaboratively across state lines to address key issues impacting our profession and the health of our community.”

– Daphne Bascom, MD, PhD, Otolaryngologist and Vice President of Population Health, Saint Luke's Health System
Advancing Community Health

The Medical Society takes an active part in advancing community health issues across Kansas City.

› Members have spoken out about the dangers of marijuana use for medical purposes citing a lack of definitive studies or evidence.

› Teen vaping and a shortage of community mental health services have been identified as priority concerns.

› KCMS member physicians are encouraged to use the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program available to metro Kansas City to help prevent misuse of opioid prescriptions.

› Members of the KCMS Retired Physicians Organization gave 24 presentations to community groups on health education topics.

› In June 2019, five physicians volunteered to provide free sports physicians to over 50 young people preparing to attend the Kids on Campus summer camp at Kansas City, Kan. Community College. The program gives youth exposure to careers in health care, business and STEAM.

Educating and Informing Physicians

The Medical Society holds educational events throughout the year, the largest of which is the Annual Meeting each fall. In addition, Members can learn about trends and issues impacting medicine through the quarterly publication Kansas City Medicine. News updates are provided via the Medical Society’s website, Facebook page, Twitter account and member email.

› Over 250 KCMS members and partners attended the September 26, 2019 Annual Meeting. Featured speaker was Vanila M. Singh, MD, MACM, from Stanford University and recently with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She discussed the recommendations of a federal task force she led on pain management and proper management of opioid prescribing.
Recognizing Member Achievement

Each year, the Medical Society honors member physicians and others for their outstanding service. The 2019 awards were presented at the September 26, 2019 Annual Meeting. Those honored were:

**Lifetime Achievement Award**
- Charles B. Wheeler, Jr., MD, JD
  Former mayor of Kansas City and a third-generation physician

**Friend of Medicine Award**
- Patrick B. (Rusty) Ryan, PharmD
  Longtime faculty member in the Department of Community and Family Medicine at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and member of the Kansas City Medical Society Retired Physicians Organization

**Member Awards**

**Rising Star Award**
- Carole E. Freiberger-O’Keefe, DO
  Saint Luke’s Hospital of Kansas City

**Patient and Community Advocate Award**
- Peter J. DiPasco, MD, and Leland Graves, III, MD
  University of Kansas Medical Center

**Innovation Award**
- Nathan D. Granger, MD, MBA
  Clay-Platte Family Medicine Clinic, Kansas City Metropolitan Physician Association and the KCMPA-ACO

**Community Service Award**
- JayDoc Free Clinic

**Exemplary Leadership Award**
- James L. Vacek, MD, MS
  University of Kansas Medical Center

Promoting Access to Care for All

Long concerned about the less fortunate in metro Kansas City and their ability to access needed medical care, the Medical Society operates charitable care programs through the Kansas City Medical Society Foundation. These programs, Wy Jo Care in Kansas and Metro Care in Missouri, connect uninsured, low-income patients with specialty physicians and hospitals who provide all care the patient needs at no cost. In 2019, these programs arranged over $8 million in donated care for nearly 800 patients.

**Wy Jo Care**

- 797 uninsured, low-income individuals served
- 2,913 medical services delivered at no cost to the patient
- More than $8 million in donated care provided
- Over 10,000 patients treated and able to return to work since 2006

**MetroCare**

- Volunteer doctors from KCMS

Former Kansas City mayor Charles B. Wheeler, Jr., MD, JD, right, received the Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by 2019 KCMS President Mark Brady, MD.
“At the end of the day, what motivates physicians is doing what is best for our patients and our community. KCMS allows us to channel that passion and collaborate with our colleagues across the metro to improve the health of all.”

– Joshua M.V. Mammen, MD, PhD, Surgical Oncologist, University of Kansas Medical Center