



TPS e-Newsletter May 2007

The Texas Pediatric Society
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Welcome!

New! TPS Monthly e-Newsletter! Get in the Loop!

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2007 TPS Annual Meeting




Need CME credits? Like to golf or shop? Bring family and friends! Join the Texas Pediatric Society for the 2007 Annual Meeting to be held at the Westin La Cantera Resort in San Antonio on June 21st – 24th, 2007! Annual meeting programs are now available, so please [contact us](#) if you would like a copy. Information pertaining to the Annual Meeting along with the complete program and online registration can also be found on our website at: [http://www.txpeds.org/Annual Meeting/](http://www.txpeds.org/Annual_Meeting/). We hope to see you there!

REMINDER: The deadline for early registration is **May 31st**, at which time the registration fee will increase.

IMPORTANT HOTEL INFORMATION: The Westin La Cantera, site of the 2007 TPS Annual Meeting, no longer has guest rooms available for overnight stays during our conference dates. We have reserved a block of rooms at the [Hyatt Place Suite Hotel](#), which is approximately 4 miles from the Westin La Cantera. Rooms will be available for \$139/night with the Texas Pediatric Society special rate, and reservations can be made by contacting 210.561.0099.

The 2007 Texas Pediatric Society Foundation Benefit and Raffle


The Texas Pediatric Society Foundation is hosting its 6th Annual Benefit, June 23rd 2007, at the Westin La Cantera Resort San Antonio in conjunction with the Texas Pediatric Society Annual Meeting. All proceeds from the event will go directly to the Foundation to support community programs and projects directed at improving the health and welfare of children in Texas. This year's raffle will be 7 nights in a mountain home in Ruidosa (Alto), NM, two Southwest Airline tickets, and a one week rental car. The raffle drawing will be held on Saturday evening, June 23rd during the benefit in San Antonio. Anyone may purchase raffle tickets – only 250 will be sold – and you do not have to be present to win! You can order tickets when you fill out your registration materials for the meeting or fill out the raffle ticket order form. We hope that we can count on your support!

A  [sponsorship form](#),  [auction item donation form](#), or  [raffle ticket order form](#) can be found on our [website](#).

Legislative Updates

Throughout the 80th Legislative Session, TPS has been closely following hundreds of bills that impact the pediatricians and children of Texas. As the session draws to a close, we would like to thank all of you who worked so hard on contacting legislators, participating in activities at the Capitol, and pledging your support for TPS initiatives. For the most recent news on what has been accomplished, please visit the [Advocacy link](#) (login required) on the TPS website.

Childhood Obesity Toolkits

The TPS Committee on Childhood Obesity has completed its first phase of the Childhood Obesity Toolkit!  [Order your copy today!](#)

Online Provider Education

The Texas Department of State Health Services has recently developed 16 educational online modules on various healthcare topics relevant to pediatrics. Though initially designed to meet the needs of providers serving the Texas Health Steps population, trainings contain valuable information and are available to all providers. The web-based training modules are self paced and divided into sections, with an evaluation component following each section. Continuing education units are provided for completing these short courses, which are designed to take about an hour, and the trainings are offered free of charge. The modules that are currently accessible online are: Culture Competence, Introduction to the Medical Home, Newborn Hearing Screening, and Newborn Screening. Many other modules will be available in the coming months, including; THSteps Overview, Pharmacy, Dental Health Screenings, Mental Health Screening, Developmental Screening, Adolescent Health Screening, Hearing and Vision Screening, Immunization, Nutrition, Overweight Prevention, and Case Management. DSHS plans to add trainings on topics of interest in the future.

The modules are also available in PowerPoint® versions for use in trainings conducted in classroom settings, and informational materials have been developed in conjunction with the modules to give providers tools to help educate their patients. To access the online training information, please go to: <http://www.txhealthsteps.com/default.asp>.

CATCH Grant Opportunities

Need funding to work on a community project? The AAP's CATCH (Community Access to Child Health) program provides start-up grants to local pediatricians and residents for the planning and implementation of community-based programs. The program's focus is on linking children to medical homes and providing access to any other needed healthcare services.

Information on the current grant cycle is available on the AAP website at <http://www.aap.org/catch/planninggrants.htm> for planning grants and at <http://www.aap.org/catch/residentgrants.htm> for resident grants. Applications are due by 4:00 pm CDT on July 31, 2007. Texas has 2 co-facilitators and a resident liaison that will be happy to answer questions and provide assistance in the application process. Contact Dr. Serena Yang (serenay@bcm.tmc.edu) or Dr. Louis Appel (louisa@austinpcc.org) regarding planning grants and Dr. Carl Tapia (ct692423@bcm.tmc.edu) for additional information on resident grants.

There will be a workshop on CATCH grants on Friday, June 22 at the TPS Annual Meeting (see program for details).

HMO Settlement Information

On April 27, 2007, a national class action lawsuit involving numerous Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans was settled, and included a guaranteed cash payment of over \$128 million to class members as well as an agreement to implement important business practice changes that bring the estimated value of the entire settlement consideration to over one billion dollars. When combined with settlements from similar cases, this means that more than 90% of all Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans in the country have now settled this class action with physicians. To read more about this settlement, as well as to keep up with latest news in HMO litigation, please go to: <http://www.hmocrisis.com/index1.html>

Free Immunization Educational Tool for Physicians

The Texas Medical Association's Be Wise — ImmunizeSM (Be Wise) program goal is to help physicians educate their patients about immunizations. To achieve this, Be Wise is introducing a new educational toolkit for physicians. The *Physician Immunization Toolkit* is a quick-reference guide for Texas physicians. To address some of the hurdles that may contribute to low immunization rates in Texas, the *Be Wise Physician Immunization Toolkit*:

- Describes best practices to help you reduce missed opportunities to vaccinate patients,
- Provides information you can use to help your patients or their parents understand the safety and importance of being fully immunized,
- Gives you quick access to immunization schedules and safety information, and
- Provides you the forms and contact information you need to participate in statewide immunization programs.

The toolkit also aims to improve communication between the physician and patient by preparing the physician for legitimate patient concerns. To help educate parents that immunizations are important, safe, and effective, the *Physician Immunization Toolkit* also provides [new educational materials](#) for patients. These include posters on the importance of immunizations for your waiting and exam rooms, fact sheets on childhood diseases, and how parents can verify registration with ImmTrac.

Stop by booth number 16 to receive your free copy at the TPS Annual Meeting, June 21-24, 2007!

Guidelines for Referral to Pediatric Rheumatologists

It is estimated that approximately 300,000 children and adolescents have some form of arthritis or rheumatic disease. If a child complains of unexplained bone, joint, muscle, or tendon pain; symptoms of arthritis; or other autoimmune disorders, the patient may benefit from a referral to a pediatric rheumatologist. Referral to a pediatric rheumatologist may result in early intervention and improve short and long term outcomes of these conditions.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section on Rheumatology (SORh) has assembled the following documents which may be helpful in determining the need for referral to a pediatric rheumatologist. Among these materials are: The American College of Rheumatology position statement, "[Guidelines for Referral of Children and Adolescents to Pediatric Rheumatologists](#)"; The AAP Fact Sheet, "[What is a Pediatric Rheumatologist](#)"; and AAP Clinical Report, "[Ophthalmologic Examinations in Children with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis.](#)"

Please contact Carlos Rose at 302.651.5970 or crose@nemours.org if you have questions or need additional information.

Texas Vaccine for Children Program (TVFC) Distribution Information

The Texas Department of State Health Services has recently issued a memo including information about the new distribution method in the Vaccine for Children Program. The National Vaccine Distributor Briefing Document outlines changes that can be anticipated as part of the Vaccine Management Business Improvement Project (VMBIP). While some states have already begun to receive shipments from the new distributor, McKesson Biosciences, providers in Texas will begin to receive these shipments in September 2007. To prepare for the new method of allocation, your Health Service Region or Local Health Department immunization representative should be contacting you to discuss any changes the national distribution contract will bring.

For many providers changes will be minimal, such as a change to the look in vaccine containers. Other providers may see changes to when and how often they are able to order a vaccine, which will be based on the volume of vaccine they administer annually. Under this new ordering model, some providers may be required to store more vaccine at their location. Regional or local health departments will be conducting a survey of all TVFC providers to assess refrigeration capacity in the coming months. If you have any questions regarding the VMBIP or survey, please contact the Immunization Branch, Vaccine Service Group at 512.458.7284 or 800.252.9152.

The mission of the Texas Pediatric Society, the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, is to focus its talent and resources to ensure that the children in Texas are safe and healthy, that its members are well informed and supported, and that the practice of pediatrics in Texas is both fulfilling and economically viable.