Message from the Chair

Getting in Touch

“I always try to make myself as widely understood as possible; and if I don’t succeed, I consider it my own fault.” - Dmitri Shostakovich, composer

Recently, a professional associate had a very important message for me. It pertained to a time-sensitive matter that demanded my prompt consideration. This vital message was communicated to me by e-mail. When a timely response was not forthcoming, the e-mail was re-sent. When there was still no response, the associate surmised that “I could not be reached.”

Electronic mailing is certainly a wonderful technologic advance. Anyone can reach out to another in a quick, seamless manner regardless of the recipient’s availability, geographic location, the time of day, weather, etc. More important, it’s easy. We don’t have to track someone down, wait for his or her attention, exchange pleasantries, respond to inquiries, or deal with the addressee’s mood fluctuations: We just hit the send button.

But sending e-mail correspondence, although interactive, is, at best, a very passive act. If the recipient is busy (i.e., not necessarily gazing at a computer or perusing a blackberry), the message may just sit in an inbox. Unfortunately, many of us may receive scores of daily e-mails, and getting to all of them punctually has become a chore in itself. Selecting that “must read” dispatch can be quite formidable. When was the last time you mass e-mailed a joke? Or bantered electronically about a meaningless item? Or sent an e-mail to someone you were going to see shortly? If it was on your personal e-mail (and time), so be it; but if it was on professional time (or business e-mail), in many ways you’re just making everyone else’s job more difficult.

In academic medicine some of us work from a desk and can regularly monitor our e-mails. Others work on the move and simply don’t have time to regularly track/monitor e-mails throughout the day. As a member of the latter group, it’s hard for me to envision that an unanswered e-mail would ever be considered a definitive attempt at reaching out to a colleague.

Without a confirmatory response, an e-mail does not ensure if or when a message is received, let alone if the recipient fully comprehends its content. Even in the information age, sometimes we just have to speak with each other.
Publications


Panchbhavi VK. The ‘foot cradle’ technique to offload the foot in a circular frame: technique tip. Foot Ankle Int. 2009;30(8):788-90.


Presentations


Faculty Focus

Zbigniew Gugala, MD, PhD, came to UTMB from Baylor College of Medicine in the fall of 2005. He received his MD from The Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland, and his PhD from The University of Groningen, The Netherlands. His professional and teaching experience includes work at the AO Research Institute, Davos, Switzerland. Dr. Gugala’s diverse research interests range from use of a cylindrical titanium mesh cage in combination with rhBMP2 to clearance of the cervical spine in trauma patients, and he has authored numerous book chapters and peer-reviewed articles. Additionally, he serves as a peer reviewer for a variety of professional journals. Holding the rank of Assistant Professor within the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Rehabilitation, Dr. Gugala’s professional memberships include the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, Orthopaedic Research Society, AO International, Material Research Society, and European Society for Biomaterials. His languages include not only English and his native Polish but also German, Russian, and Spanish. Dr. Gugala truly broadens the horizons within the department, bringing an international perspective to our research arena.

Honors and Awards

Congratulations to Dr. Ronald Lindsey for receiving the John P. McGovern Academy of Oslerian Medicine Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award. This award recognizes the fundamental concept, exemplified by Sir William Osler, that the development of outstanding physicians occurs primarily in clinical settings (ambulatory or in-patient). Each year, five faculty are selected for the Excellence in Clinical Teaching Award. Each recipient of the award receives $4,000 for support of his or her professional development and/or teaching programs.
Distinguished Guest Lectureship Series at USRA/NASA

On September 8, 2009, Laura Hermer, JD, LLM, Assistant Professor at the Institute for the Medical Humanities, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, TX, presented an opportune discussion titled “Where’s the Reform?: U.S. Health Coverage Reform and Medical Malpractice.”

On July 14 we were happy to welcome Patrick Lin, M.D., Associate Professor, Department of Orthopedic Oncology, Division of Surgery, University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, who presented a lecture on “The Future of Amputation Prosthetics: Interface Between Man and Machine.”

Voluntary Faculty

Jeffrey Baker, Ph.D
James Bocelli, M.D.
George Cox, M.D.
Marc Dehart, M.D.
Andrew Ebert, M.D.
Bradley Edwards, M.D.
Daniel Eidman, M.D.
Gary Gartsman, M.D.
Stanley Gertzbein, M.D.
Tyler Goldberg, M.D.
William Granberry, M.D.
Thomas Greider, M.D.
Alexander Hadjipavlou, M.D.
Eric Heinrich, M.D.
Omer Ilahi, M.D.
Don Johnson, M.D.
Robert Josey III, M.D.
Anand Joshi, M.D.
John Knecht, DPM
Marc Labbe, M.D.
Adrian LeBlanc, Ph.D
Anita Mercado, M.D.
Anthony Muffoletto, M.D.
Haring Nauta, M.D.
Okay Onan, M.D.
Daniel O’Neill, M.D.
Manish Patel, M.D.
Rita Patterson, Ph.D
Michael Putney, M.D.
J. Clark Race, M.D.
David Randall, M.D.
Hyman Roosth, M.D.
R. Eric Santos, M.D.
Walter Sassard, M.D.
L. Edward Seade, M.D.
Jack Seaquist, M.D.
Jean Sibonga, Ph.D
Sherwin Siff, M.D.
Todd Siff, M.D.
Terry Siller, M.D.
James Simmons, III, D.O.
James Simmons, Jr., M.D.
Roy Smith, M.D.
Gregory Stocks, M.D.
Nicholas Tsourmas, M.D.
Gregg Vager, M.D.
William Watters, III, M.D.
Suzanne Yandow, M.D.

More to come in the next issue of the DOSR Newsletter...