

## New MAG Mutual Committee Members Announced

We are pleased to announce that two practicing Georgia physicians became members of key board of directors' committees at MAG Mutual Insurance Company's annual policyholder meeting April 24.

### John Price Corr, Jr., M.D. Claims and Medical Relations Committee



Dr. Corr practices general surgery in Albany. He is the current chairman of the regional committee on applicants for the American College of Surgeons and a member of the Medical Association of Georgia.


Dr. Corr received his B.S. in chemistry from the University of Georgia. He received his medical degree and completed his surgical internship and general surgery residency at the Medical College of Georgia.

### Michael E. Greene, M.D. Underwriting and Medical Relations Committee




Dr. Greene practices family medicine in Macon. He is currently a clinical assistant professor of family medicine and chairman of the COPP Advisory Committee at Mercer University School of Medicine, Macon. Dr. Greene is also speaker of the House of Delegates, executive committee member and a member of the board of directors of the Medical Association of Georgia.

He received his B.S. in medical technology from Columbus College in Columbus, Georgia and his medical degree from Mercer University School of Medicine. Dr. Greene completed his family medicine residency at the Mercer University School of Medicine/Medical Center of Central Georgia.

We welcome these physicians to their new roles in MAG Mutual's leadership. 

## Defendants and Experts Covered by Same Insurer

In a recent lawsuit, the defense introduced the testimony of two expert witnesses to support the care rendered by a defendant physician insured by MAG Mutual Insurance Company. The witnesses were also insured by MAG Mutual at the time of trial, and the plaintiff argued that their relationship with MAG Mutual and resulting bias should be disclosed to the jury. The defense countered that introduction of such evidence would violate longstanding Georgia law prohibiting disclosure of evidence of a defendant's insurance; the concern is that evidence of insurance can motivate juries to award increased damages. In a decision affirmed by the Georgia Court of Appeals (*Chambers v. Gwinnett Community Hospital*), the trial court found in favor of the defendant physician, and prohibited the plaintiff from disclosing to the jury that the experts were covered by the same insurer as the defendant.

The plaintiff had argued that these expert witnesses held a vested financial interest in the outcome of the trial because they could suffer some financial detriment if the jury returned a verdict against the defendant for which MAG Mutual would be responsible. Future plaintiffs could try the same tactic, but they are unlikely to be successful for one reason: *MAG Mutual policies are nonassessable*. This means that MAG Mutual physician policyholders cannot be held liable for MAG Mutual's obligation to pay losses of other policyholders. We do not believe an expert witness insured by MAG Mutual can be viewed as having a financial interest in the outcome of a trial involving another MAG Mutual policyholder by reason of his or her relationship with MAG Mutual. Evidence of insurance in these cases is irrelevant and should remain inadmissible. The *Chambers* plaintiff has asked the Georgia Supreme Court to review the case, so we will update you on important developments in this matter as they arise. 

## Coding Certification Workshops for Coding Specialists

### Albany

July 11, 25; Aug. 8, 22; Sept. 5  
Palmyra Medical Center  
2000 Palmyra Road

### Savannah

July 12, 26; Aug. 9, 23; Sept. 6  
Memorial Hospital  
4700 Waters Avenue

### Atlanta

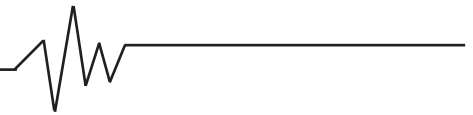
July 19; Aug. 2, 16, 30; Sept. 13  
MAG Mutual Boardroom  
Eight Piedmont Center, Ste. 600  
3525 Piedmont Road

A certified professional coder can help your practice comply with billing and coding regulations and increase your revenue.


MAG Mutual Healthcare Consultants of America's coding certification workshops help ensure that your coder is well-trained

on the principles of CPT and ICD-9 coding and helps your practice develop specialty-specific documentation and coding tools.

*(continued on page 2)*



(Coding Workshops, continued from page 1)

This extensive, 20-hour course is an excellent course to help prepare for your Certified Professional Coder (CPC) exam. It is offered in five afternoon sessions. Each class meets from 1:00-5:00 p.m. the same day every other week over the course of 10 weeks. Cost is \$795 per person for the five-session workshop. Space is limited, so please call Jennifer Watkins, toll-free, at 888-738-7495, today to register or for more information. 

## Physicians Need Time Off, Too


It's as important for you to take some time off to "renew" yourself as it is for your patients. However, most physicians don't look at vacations as a desirable use of time. From the time you enter medical school, you are taught to be tough—both emotionally and physically—and to work until your work is done. In essence, you are taught to become a workaholic.

Yet, when you don't take time off:

- The quality of your work may deteriorate
- You won't be as emotionally or mentally sharp as you need to be
- Your perspective and objectivity can be lost

According to Dr. Roy Menninger, a psychiatrist who specializes in physician psychology, in an article in the May/June 2001 issue of *Physician* magazine, "The long-term consequence for compulsive workaholic physicians is a high probability of chronic, low-grade depression. And there's every possibility that as physicians age, this can become a more prominent part of their own psychology. This has lots of implications for physical ill health, psychological ill health, suicide risk and a propensity to use illegal drugs to mitigate the effects of that."

So take a vacation once in awhile—even if it is just for a day or two. It can help you fight daily stress and may even save your life!

For the full text of *Time Out*, which appeared in the May/June issue of *Physician* magazine, log on to [www.family.org](http://www.family.org). 

## HIPAA Without the Hype Seminar Series Offers a Practical HIPAA Solution for Physicians

The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) is presenting a series of two-part seminars plus follow-up teleconferences this fall to help physicians prepare their practice for implementation of the federal HIPAA regulations. The program will be presented by:

- Tracy Field, an attorney with Arnall Golden Gregory LLP, and a member of the Executive Committee of the HIPAA Georgia Strategic Local Implementation Process
- George Inman, MBA, CPC, a consultant with MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants of America and a nationally recognized speaker with more than 20 years of experience implementing healthcare policy

This six-hour course is offered in two afternoon sessions. The cost is \$495 for one physician and one staff member for MAG members and \$595 for one physician and one staff member for non-MAG members. Additional staff members are \$150 each. This includes the follow-up teleconferences and the Complete HIPAA Manual—valued at \$150. Space is limited, so please call the Medical Association of Georgia at 404-881-5070 today to reserve your place or for more information.

August 20th and October 22nd - Atlanta (Fulton)  
August 21st and October 23rd - Albany  
August 22nd and October 24th - Atlanta (DeKalb)  
August 27th and October 29th - Dalton  
August 28th and October 30th - Atlanta (Cobb)  
August 29th and October 31st - Columbus  
September 10th and November 5th - Macon  
September 11th and November 6th - Savannah  
September 12th and November 7th - Augusta

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