

As chair of the Medical Relations Committee, Dr. Andrews broadens Board education by bringing new ideas to her fellow Board members. "One of our meetings featured an expert who talked about cultural differences that put potential barriers patients of one culture and their physician from another," says Dr. Andrews. "We also had an excellent discussion with a physician who showed us how to effectively manage risk for physicians working with breast cancer patients."

### Your Defense... a Testimonial

In addition to our Board members' understanding the what, when, where and how of medicine, they also understand that professional liability claims are a direct and personal attack on your training, your skill and your reputation. So MAG Mutual works diligently to successfully defend you.

Below is a letter we received from a appreciative policyholder we defended:

*I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude toward you and your unflagging support, kind reassurance and very meaningful contribution during the past months and especially during the week or so in court.*

*I was both surprised and delighted with your faithful presence in the courtroom. As you may recall, it was your strong recommendation to use Jon Peters as my attorney.*

*You were so right and we certainly did get an excellent legal team. For this advice, as well as your support, I am truly grateful.*

*Although I have enjoyed your companionship last week, I never want to do that again, ever. You have my deep gratitude.*

Sincerely,  
William Kilpatrick, M.D.

In future issues of *The MAGnet*, we will share more interesting stories and letters with you, because MAG Mutual is **By Physicians. For Physicians.**



# THE MAGNET™



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GEORGIA'S SOURCE FOR IMPORTANT PHYSICIAN INFORMATION

### Risk Management Tips

#### *Study Finds Quality-of-Care Often Sacrificed During Physician-to-Physician Patient Handoffs*

Physicians often turn their patients care over to another physician during the course of a hospitalization. This type of transfer can occur several times during a hospital stay, and multiple physicians may be involved. *How do you build in assurances for patient safety and quality-of-care if multiple handoffs are needed?*

A study published in the December 2005 issue of *Academic Medicine* finds considerable variation in the quality and content of handoffs across four separate hospital settings.

Handoffs involve the transfer of rights, duties and obligations from one person or team to another. In many high-precision, high-risk contexts such as a relay race or handling air traffic, handoff skills are practiced repetitively to optimize precision and anticipate errors. Effective information transfer such as those above requires a solid foundation in communication skills. Little formal attention or education is available concerning physician-to-physician communication to reinforce this vital link in the continuity of patient care.

The authors of the study cited the following four major barriers to effective handoffs:

- Physical setting
- Social setting
- Language barriers
- Communication barriers

(Continued on page 2)

### Want to Reduce HR Risk? MAG Mutual's New HR Helpline Can Help

MAG Mutual Insurance Agency offers a new service for Employment Practices Liability and/or Workers' Compensation policy customers.

If you are an Employment Practices Liability (EPL) policyholder, you'll have toll-free telephone or email consultation access to employment law attorneys from a nationally recognized law firm. These premium advice & counsel services combine state-of-the-art technology and content with professional customer support in order to help you, as employers, meet today's workplace challenges. **The HR Helpline may answer your organization's Human Resource and Employment Law questions!**

EPL customers must be registered with a secure user name and password. If you haven't received your registration information, call the HR Helpline, toll free, at **1-877-568-6655** to get started.

EPL and **Workers' Compensation policyholders** have access to the HR Helpline website. The website contains resources intended to assist physicians and managers of medical organizations with employment challenges.

The website content includes:

- Online HR Library
- Online access to sample policies and procedures
- Monthly HR Express Updates & HR Alerts via email
- Federal and State Law Changes

Employment Law Audit - ELLA™ - a management tool which helps employers:

- Detect hidden problems
- Develop positive employee relations
- Implement risk reduction strategies
- Benchmark best practices
- Prioritize corrective measures

(Continued on page 2)



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**Summer 2006 Publication Catalog**

The summer 2006 MAG Mutual Healthcare Solutions, Inc. catalog is being mailed and offers an expanded Coders' Library, more coding and revenue management software and the 2007 Physicians' Fee and Coding Guides.

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*(Risk Management Tips, continued from page 1)*

The authors conclude that irrespective of local context, precise, unambiguous, face-to-face communication is the best way to ensure effective handoffs of hospitalized patients. They also maintain that the handoff process must be standardized, interruptions limited and that students and residents be taught the most effective, safe and efficient ways to perform handoffs.

Particularly important, the study authors write, "is to emphasize an attitudinal shift from the concept of 'sign out' or 'baby-sitting overnight' to an assumption of primary-care responsibilities for that patient". ●

*(MAG Mutual's New HR Helpline, continued from page 1)*

Workers' Compensation customers can log on to [www.magmutual.com/mmia](http://www.magmutual.com/mmia). You'll need your MAG Mutual Insurance Company Workers' Compensation policy number. If you don't know your policy number, phone **1-800-282-4882** and select option 3.

For more information about MAG Mutual's EPL or Workers' Compensation insurance, please call MAG Mutual Insurance Agency, LLC at **1-800-282-4882**, or email us at [info@magmutual.com](mailto:info@magmutual.com). ●

**MAG Mutual's Marie Turner to Handle Georgia & Florida Risk Management Issues**

Marie Turner recently joined MAG Mutual as a Risk Management Consultant. She will help design and conduct risk management training programs and provide other risk management services to assist physicians, medical office managers, advanced healthcare practitioners, healthcare risk managers and allied healthcare providers with specific loss/claims prevention strategies. **Marie will cover southwest Georgia and the Florida Panhandle.**



Before coming to MAG Mutual, Marie worked as an O.R. charge nurse in Jacksonville, FL. She has also worked as a risk management consultant for another medical professional liability insurance company and has done inspections of medical offices for credentialing. Marie was also a Legal Nurse Consultant providing advice to attorneys on surgical liability, verifying the merit of claims and serving as an expert witness.

Marie has a Master's Degree in Health Law, and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. To contact Marie, call 1-800-282-4882, ext. 5552. ●

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**THE MAGNET™**

**By Physicians. For Physicians.****Your Company**

Every insurance company claims to understand the needs of its policyholders. But MAG Mutual goes far beyond a casual understanding—we truly know the men and women who practice medicine; what, when, where and how they do it.

That's because MAG Mutual Insurance Company was started by physicians, is owned by its physician members and has always been governed and directed by physicians. The doctors serving on your Board of Directors practice medicine just like you. They know exactly what it's like to see patients, run medical offices and make patient-centered decisions, because that's what they do, too.

For the next year, we'll be featuring a Board member on this panel, so you'll get to know the physicians representing you.

Board member Dr. Catherine Andrews from Kennesaw, says, "In my family medicine practice, there's always something new to learn about a patient and the practice of medicine."

As a member of the Underwriting Committee, Dr. Andrews identifies and analyzes which physicians to insure. "We spend a great deal of time looking at each physician's profile and claims history," she says. "And as physicians, we empathize with the physicians before us. There's a lot of angst expended in making those decisions."

*(Continued on inside flap)*