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ACMG In Action

Essential Updates: Member News You Can Use

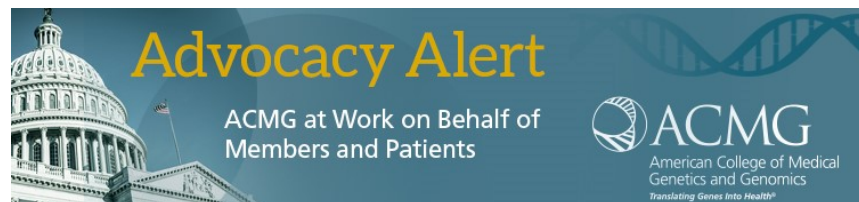


February 2021

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ACMG Advocacy Updates



Updates on Medicare Payments to Providers

In the December edition of the *ACMG in Action* member ezine we notified members of several changes to Medicare payment policies set to go into effect on January 1, 2021, including a significant decrease, approx. 10%, to the physician payment conversion factor. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is required by law to make budget neutrality adjustments, and this decrease was intended to offset the payment increases to evaluation/management (E/M) visits as well as other changes to the Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) for CY 2021. Following advocacy efforts led by the American Medical Association (AMA) and supported by ACMG and other medical associations, provisions to offset these cuts were included in a combined COVID-19 relief and omnibus spending bill (aka, the Consolidated Appropriations Act) passed in late December. The provisions included a general 3.75% increase in the payment schedule. Also included was a three-year suspension on payments for the new G2211 code (visit complexity inherent to E/M visits) which was a significant contributor to the high budget neutrality adjustment.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act also extended a moratorium on Medicare sequester cuts until March 31, 2021. These sequestration cuts are part of a legal requirement passed in the 2011 Budget Control Act that reduces Medicare payments to providers. The 2020 CARES Act temporarily suspended these cuts through December 3, 2020 in light of financial impacts from the pandemic. While this moratorium has now been extended through March 31, 2021, the AMA and broader physician community are advocating to further extend it throughout the duration of the public health emergency. HR 315, the Medicare Sequester COVID Moratorium Act, would do just that. ACMG recently joined AMA and

[Meeting – a Virtual Experience](#)

Upcoming Events

2021 ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting — a Virtual Experience

April 13-16, 2021

RENEW
MEMBERSHIP

Website Links

[ACMG](#)
[ACMG Foundation](#)
[ACMG Meetings Website](#)
[ACMG Education Center](#)
[NBSTRN](#)
[NCC](#)
[ClinGen](#)
[GIM](#)

other medical associations in writing to Congress to encourage passage of this bill before the March 31 deadline.

Congress Introduces the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act

On January 25 Representatives Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40), Mike Simpson (ID-02), Katherine Clark (MA-05), and Jaime Herrera Beutler (WA-03) introduced the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Reauthorization Act of 2021 (NBSSLRA; see the sponsor's announcement [here](#)). This bipartisan bill authorizes and funds many important programs through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Newborn screening is one of the most successful public health programs in the country, and funding these programs is important for their continued success.

ACMG is delighted to be working closely with members of Congress and several other patient and provider organizations to support passage of this critical piece of legislation. An identical bill was passed in the US House of Representatives in 2019, but it stalled in the Senate. We are optimistic that the NBSSLRA will be successfully passed during this new session of Congress. ACMG members will be able to help support this important legislation by asking your US representatives to cosponsor the bill. Be on the lookout for future ACMG communications with more information about how to get involved.

Share Your Medical Genetics Pride during Medical Genetics Awareness Week April 13–16, 2021



Through Medical Genetics Awareness Week, ACMG aims to promote awareness of the importance of medical genetics professionals on the healthcare team, including medical and laboratory geneticists, genetic counselors, nurses and physician assistants. The theme of the week is “Celebrating the Contributions of the Entire Medical Genetics Team to Patient Care and Public Health.”

“Medical genetics and genomics is now deeply wedged into nearly all disciplines of medicine,” said ACMG President Anthony R. Gregg, MD, MBA, FACOG, FACMG. “It is a natural extension that we remind the public and all healthcare professionals that those of us who practice medical genetics in clinics, clinical laboratories and research environments work tirelessly and with great enthusiasm. Our singular common goal is to bring accurate genetic information to the bedside that will improve people’s lives.”

New for 2021 are high-quality Medical Genetics Awareness Week face masks (available free to members [upon request](#)), and Zoom virtual backgrounds to help you *Share Your Medical Genetics Pride*. **Also new for 2021 are themed days that will include a Diversity Day and a Student and Trainee Day.** Back by popular demand are our Medical Genetics Awareness Week stickers and hashtag buttons, also available for free on request.

Events related to Medical Genetics Awareness Week will be held during the ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting – a Virtual Experience. Visit the [Medical Genetics Awareness Week web pages](#) for resources and tips to support your celebrations, and to download your Medical Genetics Awareness Week Zoom virtual background and other graphics. We'll be updating these pages throughout the spring so check back often! And for all the latest information, follow ACMG on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

ACMG Foundation Announces 2021 Summer Genetics Scholars Program Host Institutions, Sponsor



ACMG Foundation for
Genetic and Genomic Medicine
Better Health Through Genetics™
www.acmgfoundation.org



The ACMG Foundation Summer Genetics Scholars Program engages medical students in the exciting field of medical genetics and genomics by pairing students with medical geneticist mentors for 6 weeks of hands-on experiences in the clinical and laboratory practice of medical genetics and genomics. For 2021, the Foundation is pleased to announce that eight institutions will host students, including Nationwide Children's Hospital, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of California San Francisco (UCSF), University of Iowa, University of Maryland School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, and University of Washington.

"Training clinical geneticists and other physicians in genomic medicine has become more important than ever," said ACMG CEO Max Muenke, MD, FACMG. "ACMG provides memberships free of charge to all medical students in the US and around the world. The ACMGF Summer Genetics Scholars Program has successfully paired medical students with mentors in the field. Congratulations to the host institutions and the medical students whom they select. I would like to welcome you to the ACMG/F family and eventually as colleagues in this important field."

The ACMG Foundation thanks BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc. for their generous support of this year's program.

To learn more about the ACMG Foundation Summer Genetics Scholars Program, [click here](#). To learn more about the ACMG Foundation, [click here](#).

ACMG's #IGottheShot Campaign Encourages COVID Vaccination

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, ACMG has been inspired by the example our members have set in supporting their colleagues, family and friends, and caring for and protecting their patients. Last month, we announced ACMG's new #IGottheShot public relations campaign to encourage people to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The goal of the campaign is to show examples of healthcare professionals safely getting vaccinated and in so doing encourage others to get vaccinated.

Our sincere thanks go out to all those who have participated in the campaign to date, including Mahmoud Aarabi, MD, PhD, FACMG; Jennelle Hodge, PhD, FACMG; Susan Klugman, MD, FACMG; Jillene Kogan, MD, PhD, FACMG; Marco L. Leung, PhD, FACMG; Michele A. Lloyd-Puryear, MD, PhD, FAAP, FACMG; Teri Manolio, MD, PhD; Marilena Melas, MSc, PhD; David T. Miller, MD, PhD, FACMG; Max Muenke, MD, FACMG; Cynthia M. Powell, MD, FACMG; Amy E. Roberts, MD, FACMG; Robert D. Steiner, MD, FACMG; Douglas R. Stewart, MD, FACMG; Alessandra Sugrañes, MD; Cynthia J. Tifft, MD, PhD, MGC, FACMG; and Myra Wick, MD, PhD, FACMG. We hope you enjoy seeing just a few of these posts here and we invite you to visit ACMG's [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages to see all the #IGottheShot posts ACMG has shared.

If you have, or plan to take, a picture of yourself getting the COVID-19 vaccine, ACMG invites you to post your photos to your own social media pages along with #IGottheShot, #MedicalGeneticsAwareness and a tag to @TheACMG so we can find and share your posts. Or you can email your photo and a brief quote to ACMG Communications Coordinator [Reymar Santos](#) and we'll share a post for you on ACMG's social media channels and in other ACMG publications.



ACMG member Mahmoud Aarabi, MD, PhD, FACMG says, "Today, I got the #COVIDvaccine in a mobile vaccine clinic at one of the long-term care homes affiliated with my hospital. Wishing for the health and well-being of all of our dear seniors, we love you!" @MAarabiMDPhD

ACMG member Mahmoud Aarabi, MD, PhD, FACMG says, "Today, I got the COVID vaccine in a mobile vaccine clinic at one of the long-term care homes affiliated with my hospital. Wishing for the health and well-being of all of our dear seniors, we love you!"

Share your photo getting the COVID vaccine to inspire others. #IGottheShot



NHGRI's Dr. Teri Manolio and Dr. Michele A. Lloyd-Puryear, FAAP, FACMG have been administering the #COVIDvaccine as volunteer members of the Maryland Medical Reserve Corps. Dr. Puryear says, "I want everyone to be vaccinated!" as she gets her shot from Dr. Manolio. @genome.gov

NHGRI's Teri Manolio, MD, PhD and Michele A. Lloyd-Puryear, MD, PhD, FAAP, FACMG have been administering the COVID vaccine as volunteer members of the Maryland Medical Reserve Corps.

Dr. Puryear says, "I want everyone to be vaccinated!" as she receives her shot from Dr. Manolio.

Share your photo getting the COVID vaccine to inspire others.

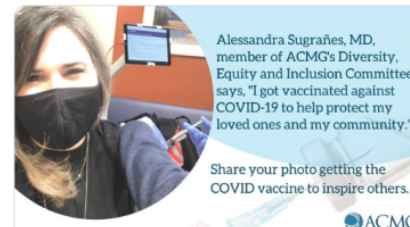




David T. Miller, MD, PhD, FACMG, deputy editor-in-chief @GIMJournal & medical geneticist at Harvard Med, Boston Children's Hospital, says, "#IGottheShot and I'm feeling great!" Post your #COVIDvaccine pic using #IGottheShot #MedicalGeneticsAwareness & tag @TheACMG.



Alessandra Sugrañes, MD, member of ACMG's #DEI Committee, says, "I got vaccinated against #COVID19 to help protect my loved ones and my community." Have you gotten your #COVIDvaccine? Post a photo getting your vaccine with #IGottheShot #MedicalGeneticsAwareness and @TheACMG.



Draft ACMG Document Open for Member Comment

The ACMG Board of Directors routinely invites members to comment on draft ACMG documents, including new and updated laboratory technical standards, points to consider statements, clinical practice resources, and more. The contribution of members' expertise to the review process for ACMG draft documents consistently leads to higher quality publications because members serve as expert peer reviewers—it is your valuable input that earns ACMG its continued reputation as the trusted experts in medical genetics and genomics practice.

Presently, the ACMG Board of Directors is requesting member comments on the following document:

- [Chromosomal Microarray Analysis, Including Constitutional and Neoplastic Disease Applications, 2021 Revision: A Technical Standard of the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics \(ACMG\)](#)

For more information, including instructions for accessing the document and deadlines for comments, please click on the document title. Thank you for your participation in this important ACMG members-only activity.

February 2021 GenePod: Targeted Exome Sequencing for Second-Tier Newborn Screening Tests: Technology to Scale



In newborn screening tests, after a first-tier abnormal screening result, single gene or multi-gene testing panels are often utilized as second- or third-tier tests. However, the technologies typically employed today do not scale well and this is a real problem for the high-volume rapid throughput nature of newborn screening labs.

On this month's episode of [GenePod](#), *Genetics in Medicine's* monthly podcast, Drs. Nicole Ruiz-Shultz and Andreas Rohrwasser of the Utah

Public Health Laboratory discuss how [they tested targeted exome sequencing](#), which focuses analysis on the most relevant subset of genes.

ACMG Welcomes 38 New Members

ACMG welcomes and congratulates 38 new and newly certified members. There has never been a more exciting time to be a part of this field and we encourage current members of the College to invite friends and colleagues to join and help grow the medical genetics and genomics field.

Thank you to all our members who make important contributions and the work of the College possible through your membership, support and involvement.

Fellow Members

Saud H. AlDubayan, MD, FACMG
Mohammad Arif, PhD, FACMG
Peter R. Baker, MD, FACMG
Vikas Bhambhani, MD, FACMG
Amanda Brodeur, MD, PhD, FACMG
Paul Cardenas, MD, FACMG
Margaret DiGuardo, MD, FACMG
Chia-Ling Gau, PhD, FACMG
Joseph W. Ray, MD, FACMG
Mari J. Tokita, MD, FACMG
Clesson Turner, MD, FACMG

Candidate Fellow Members

Alicia Aycinena, MD
Patrick R. Blackburn, PhD
Marina T. DiStefano, PhD
Cinthya J. Zepeda Mendoza, PhD

Associate Members

Adrienne Bailey, MS, CGC
Deborah L. Eunpu, MGC, MS, CGC
Donna M. Farren-Chavez, MGC, CGC
Elizabeth Janoski, MS, CGC
Jessica Omark, MGC, CGC
Denise L. Perry, MGC, CGC
Karen S. Raraigh, MGC, CGC
Erica L. Soster, MGC, CGC

Affiliate Members

Maya Chopra, MD
Gregory A. Costain, MD, PhD
Helen L. Hanson, MBBS
Moriya Iwaizumi, MD, PhD
Soheil Shams, PhD
Kwan Hok Tong, MS

Trainee Members

Mafalda Barbosa, MD, PhD
Andrea C. Cortes Fernandez, MD, MS
Hyunyong Koh, MD, PhD
Kristen A. Lancaster, MD
Anuja M. Sule, MBBS

Student Members

Shangqing Jiang, MPH
Chae Hee Lim, BS
Brittany Sears, PhD
Lydia Seed, BS

Do you know someone who should join ACMG? Please invite them to visit our [Join ACMG web page](#).

Introducing the NBS Virtual Repository of States, Subjects & Samples (NBS-VR)

NBSTRN has developed three key data tools designed to accelerate discoveries in rare genetic disease. In part one of a three-part series, we describe the key features of the Newborn Screening Virtual Repository of States, Subjects, & Samples (NBS-VR). These data tools are available on the new [NBSTRN](#)

[website](#).

Every year all newborns in the United States receive screening for over 61 rare genetic diseases, and approximately 22,000 receive a diagnosis after a positive screen. Newborn screening (NBS) is a system that begins with physiological screening in birthing hospitals and blood-based screening in 53 programs located in 50 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia (DC). Although there are federal recommendations, each NBS program establishes their own policies and procedures, including which conditions to screen, whether and how to store residual dried blood spots (DBS), whether to obtain consent from parents for the use of DBS, and whether to conduct long-term follow up of diagnosed cases.

[READ MORE](#)

ClinGen and DECIPHER Partner for Fifth Curating the Clinical Genome Conference May 12–14, 2021

ACMG is a proud partner on the National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded Clinical Genome Resource ([ClinGen](#)). This spring, ClinGen is partnering with DECIPHER to host the fifth Curating the Clinical Genome Conference. This popular event brings together the clinical genomics and biodata communities.

These annual meetings have been spearheaded by the ClinGen and DECIPHER consortia as a way to highlight the power of sharing genetic data for delivery of genomic medicine. By bringing together international initiatives, this latest online forum aims to develop common standards, share best practices, integrate the latest research findings and drive patient benefit.

Topics will include:

- Polygenic risk scores across populations
 - Approaches to estimating penetrance
 - Noninvasive prenatal testing
 - Neonatal screening
- **Cancer and non-cancer molecular targeted therapies**
- Sharing data and associated clinical phenotypes in the genomic era

Sessions of this three-day meeting will start at 8:00 AM ET and finish at approximately 12:00 PM ET each day. Please consider submitting an abstract for an oral or poster presentation on one of the themes of the conference that is relevant to your work. Abstracts are due **March 16, 2021**. Registration will remain open until **May 5, 2021**. For more information, visit the [conference website](#).

This 2021 conference is being organised by Wellcome Genome Campus, Advanced Courses and Scientific Conferences and is funded by Wellcome.

DECIPHER is a web-based resource and database of genomic variation data from analysis of patient DNA. Established at the Wellcome Sanger Institute, DECIPHER is supported by an international research consortium.

Don't Let Your Membership Benefits and Discounts Expire!



There's still time to renew your membership without incurring a late fee! ACMG is extending the 2021 membership renewal period to ensure that all members have ample time to complete this process

in light of the ongoing COVID pandemic and the challenging circumstances it continues to create. If you have a medical or financial hardship prohibiting you from renewing, ACMG may be able to offer a reduction or waiver of dues for 2021.

If you would like more information about hardship requests or need assistance with renewing membership, please email the [ACMG membership department](#) or call us at 301-718-9603.

ACMG's online renewal system is a fast, easy and secure way to renew your ACMG membership instantly and receive immediate payment confirmation. The online system accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express payments. If you prefer to pay by check or by fax,

[download a 2021 Dues Renewal Form here](#). Renewal by phone is also available at 301-718-9603.

Renew today to avoid interruption of membership services and benefits. Membership payment must be current to register at the member rate for the ACMG 2021 Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting, receive member discounts in the Genetics Academy and access the ACMG Members Only sections of the ACMG website.

Don't forget! *Genetics in Medicine*, ACMG's official journal, has gone green. Online access and free downloads remain the same for members, but if you wish to receive a print copy of the journal you will need to add the print subscription cost when submitting your renewal payment.

Send your questions regarding membership renewal to the [membership department](#).

Meeting Attendee List Scam Warning – Please Do Not Fall for This Scam

It has come to our attention that companies are contacting ACMG members, meeting attendees and exhibitors to offer them the ACMG Annual Meeting attendee mailing list. This, unfortunately, has become a more common occurrence for association annual meetings and trade shows in recent years and the practice is being monitored by the convention and meetings industry.

ACMG does not sell or give away attendee lists or email contact information. ACMG does not rent, share or sell attendee contact information to third parties. No third-party company is authorized to distribute or sell any lists for the ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting.

Scammers offering to sell these lists often aggregate information based on web crawler or email “scraper” programs searching for the “@” sign in email addresses posted on various websites including LinkedIn and Facebook. While this is illegal in most countries, it does not prevent scammers from doing so.

These offers constitute consumer fraud as the lists they are claiming to have are nonexistent. Please do not engage with or acquire or buy any list from any company claiming to have use of ACMG members' or attendees' contact information (or for any conference you attend), as it puts you and others' contact information at risk. Often, responding to these emails (even to “unsubscribe”) confirms to them that they have reached a valid email address.

Please direct any questions you may have to the ACMG meetings team [by email](#).

Update: The 2021 ACMG Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting – a

Virtual Experience



The 2021 ACMG Virtual Meeting is less than two months away and will be brought to genetics professionals from around the world through an innovative, interactive and engaging platform that will capture the excitement of being at the ACMG Annual Meeting.

If you haven't registered yet, do so as soon as possible. 2021 Registration fees are 30% less than the 2020 registration fees. [View fees and register here.](#)

The virtual experience begins with a two-hour interactive session on Thursday, April 8th entitled "Laboratory Diagnostic Challenges"—a session favorite featuring discussion about real cases that have been solved or remain unsolved. The full meeting will then launch on Tuesday, April 13th with two short courses, student and trainee sessions and an informatics workshop. Wednesday, April 14–Friday, April 16 will feature 40+ sessions including live panel discussions, live TED-style presentations, and Platform Presentations.

The virtual platform will remain open until Friday, July 16, 2021. Attendees will be able to claim educational credits after viewing a session by completing a session evaluation (no test). July 19th, the 2021 **Digital Edition** will launch in the ACMG Genetics Academy and the recorded content of the meeting will be available. For three years of unlimited access to the Digital Edition, be sure to add it to your registration for only \$99. This special price is only available to those registering for the virtual meeting.

Other highlights of the meeting will include:

Online Exclusive Sessions

An additional six sessions will be available for viewing 24/7 on demand in the virtual platform.

Industry Solution Center

Located within the virtual platform, the Industry Solution Center will provide opportunities for networking and connections between attendees and participating companies via video chats, product literature and videos, topic lounges and many other features. It is important to maintain and develop new relationships with industry until we can all be together again for face-to-face meetings. To learn about the companies participating, go to the [Industry Solution Center section](#) of the ACMG Meeting website.

Satellite Symposia

Ten Satellite Symposia will be offered in 2021. These sessions will be available for viewing on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings before the start of the ACMG Scientific Sessions. Satellite Symposia are

not part of the official ACMG program, however, many of the sessions will be awarded CME by accredited CME providers. For those that have CME accreditation, ACMG has applied for CEU's for genetic counselors. For a list of topics and the schedule, visit the [ACMG Meeting website](#).

Product Theaters

Product Theater presentations will be 30-minute non-CME/CE sessions presented by industry showcasing how each company's products or services are used in practical, laboratory and/or clinical settings. The sessions will be prerecorded and available for on-demand viewing during breaks from sessions or on your own schedule. A list of the presentations will be available on the meeting website in mid-March.

Virtual Poster Sessions

The online e-Poster Gallery will showcase just over 500 posters. Many poster presenters will provide an audio clip to accompany their poster. Posters will be available for viewing during breaks or on your own schedule.

ACMG Foundation for Genetic and Genomic Medicine Awards

Located within the virtual platform will be an area highlighting the ACMG Foundation Training and Fellowship Award winners, and the winners of the David L. Rimoin Lifetime Achievement Award in Medical Genetics and the Dr. Michael S. Watson Genetic and Genomic Medicine Innovation Award.

Networking Events

Each evening during the virtual meeting there will be entertainment and networking events available for attendees' enjoyment. These will include:

- Tuesday, April 13: Trainee/Resident/PostDoc/Student Networking
- Wednesday, April 14: Entertainment from LA; Diversity Happy Hour
- Thursday, April 15: Live music from Nashville (our 2022 destination); ACMG Foundation Donors Recognition Reception (by invitation)



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