



AAMA Newsletter

February 2011

President's Message

A look at term and at AAMA's future as Dr. Niemtzow prepares to step down

By Richard C. Niemtzow, MD, PhD, MPH
President, AAMA

This will be my last column in the AAMA Newsletter as your president. It is amazing how fast two years have gone. During this period, the Academy survived the devastating dip in the economy that brought many challenges and some loss of members who closed their practices.

On the positive side, lots of work has been done in the area of website, insurances and coding, membership renewals, education and Symposia. We even reached out to the licensed acupuncture community in a historic Baltimore, MD meeting that brought together the mainstream acupuncture groups in this country. Our journal, Medical Acupuncture, got some face lifting; a new managing editor and a consultant editor. Representation to ICMART continues to show the "flag" of the Academy to our overseas colleagues. The white paper made progress on insurances and coding. There are many other accomplishments too numerous to mention.

As you know, there will be Board elections. This time around, there will be permutations and the eventual addition of two new directors at large. The new Board will certainly have its challenges ahead. All the areas mentioned need work and lots of it. The new Board selection is composed of people we believe can do the job. However, they cannot do everything. Much of the muscle must come from the membership. Besides your being our "raison d'être," we need your push forward with creative ideas and willingness to perform the mundane tasks to keep the Academy rolling.

As I mentioned in my previous column, the Symposium in San Diego in April will most likely be the best one in the history of the Academy. That is my prediction. If you do not attend, you will be missing out big time. [Click here](#) to see for yourself.

The Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health teamed up for an Acupuncture Workshop during the first week of February. I am still waiting to hear about the final recommendation statement from the program committee.

NATO Acupuncture Talks

In March, NATO will have a closed meeting in Paris about integrative medicine. Acupuncture will be a topic of discussion. The VA will have a one-day meeting in May involving acupuncture, so I have been told. This will take place in Washington DC. I do not have full information. Most important, I will have a meeting with the Air Force Surgeon General regarding the way forward for acupuncture. There is a lot of activity in the military complex.

I plan to be at the Symposium. Despite the fact that I will complete my duties as president, I have no intention to fade away into the sunset. I will be part of the Board as immediate past president. Of course, I plan to keep developing the journal, Medical Acupuncture, that I have been doing for the last 14 years.

Most important I wish to thank all of you for the honor of being your president. It has been a wonderful experience working together with all of you. If I can be of help to you, let me know. You are all very special people.

Richard C. Niemtzow, M.D.

Register by March 10 to save money on Symposium

Elements explained of theme, The Science and Art of Acupuncture

**By Richard F. Hobbs, III, MD, DABMA
Chair, AAMA Symposium 2011**

I sincerely hope that if you have not already done so, you will register soon for this year's AAMA Symposium. In fact, register by **March 10** to save money. We will be in beautiful San Diego with Pre-Symposium Workshops on Thursday, March 31, and the Symposium running from Friday, April 1, through Sunday, April 3. Information is on [our website](#), and you may register online.

Also, the Hyatt Regency Mission Bay is filling up rapidly. The deadline to reserve a hotel room at AAMA's discounted rate of \$189/night is **Feb. 28** or when our block sells out – whichever comes first. So please call or [go online](#) now and book your room.

In order to meet requirements of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), planning of programs such as the Symposium must address educational needs of the participants. This, by the way, is why it is so important for you to give us feedback at the end of each Symposium. In responding to this requirement, the Symposium Committee carefully reviewed evaluations from 2008, 2009 and 2010. We also looked at a member survey from 2006.

One thing we learned is that the AAMA is a wonderfully diverse group. We have strived to meet this diversity head-on by providing you with a program that is as diverse as we are. Another requirement of the ACCME is that presentations be evidence-based. To that end, we have a line-up of speakers who are tops in their respective fields and who are able to give you the evidence.

The Science...

Our theme this year is *The Science and Art of Acupuncture*. Consistently, members have indicated an interest in learning more about the scientific basis for what we do. We have speakers who will summarize what recent acupuncture research has shown and what the future might hold.

And the Art of Acupuncture

We also will have presentations by people who are actively involved in investigation of physical properties of points and channels; their findings are intriguing. Regarding the *Art*, we have planned an array of clinical topics, both in didactic sessions and in workshop formats, that we believe will broaden your horizons and provide you with important take-home skills.

In addition to the educational program, the Symposium offers a wonderful opportunity to connect with old friends, to meet new folks and to share the common ground enjoyed by all of us who practice medical acupuncture.

Hope to see you there!

Coding Fact Sheet from Membership Summit available

Now, coding and reimbursement practice elements to be assessed, revised

The Legal and Legislative Council of the AAMA has completed its Coding Fact Sheet.

This document was produced with monies raised by the special assessment, as an outcome of the AAMA [Membership Summit](#) in Dallas, TX in 2008. [Click here](#) for that document. It will be published in the Academy's Medical Acupuncture Journal and also presented during the Annual Membership Meeting at the Symposium March 31-April 3 in San Diego, CA.

The Committee is now turning its attention to the second, major phase of the project. That involves delineating those areas of coding and reimbursement practice that are in need of revision and forming strategies for the Academy to pursue those revisions.

Comments regarding the document may be forwarded to Legal and Legislative Council Chair Robert A. Schulman, MD, FAAMPR, FAAMA, at schulman@schulmanmd.com.

Academy working with NCCAM on strategic plan involving acupuncture

On Feb. 4, the National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) released its third strategic plan, [Exploring the Science of Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Third Strategic Plan 2011–2015](#). The plan presents a series of goals and objectives to guide NCCAM in determining priorities for future research in complementary and alternative medicine.

NCCAM enters its second decade at a time of both exciting scientific opportunity and heightened potential for making valuable contributions to health care practice and health promotion. This strategic plan is built around three long-range goals aimed at improving the state and use of scientific evidence regarding the two major reasons for use of CAM in the United States — treating health problems and supporting or promoting better health and well-being.

The following are some excerpts from the section, [Specific and Non Specific Outcomes](#):

“Many of the challenges of studying mind and body interventions are illustrated in the current state of research on acupuncture. Centuries of experience suggesting that acupuncture can be helpful in treating pain have stimulated considerable interest in scientific investigation of this ancient treatment, even though traditional teachings based on meridians and the flow of “qi” are difficult to reconcile with contemporary understanding of anatomy and neurophysiology.

“Research is warranted to better understand (1) the specific and the nonspecific effects involved and (2) whether either or both can be better and more intentionally employed to improve upon current strategies for treating pain. Finally, future clinical research on acupuncture must be carefully designed to ensure that controls are optimally suited for the research question being addressed.”

Marshall Sager, DO, FAAMA, has been communicating with the NCCAM regarding their proposed plan. In his Sept. 29, 2010 letter, he said AAMA and ICMART are very concerned about the acceptance and integration of physician-practiced medical acupuncture throughout the mainstream medical community. He emphasized the importance of the term, medical acupuncturists, and its meaning.

Dr. Sager went on to talk about the mis-characterization that the plan assumes all acupuncture is Traditional Chinese Medicine. He noted that NCCAM must consider all modalities to understand the efficacy of acupuncture – not just TCM, which is used primarily by non-physician practitioners. Dr. Sager pointed out medical problems that are especially amenable to medical acupuncture.

CAMBrella Initiative

Through ICMART, AAMA is participating in the CAMBrella initiative currently underway in Europe. Dr. Sager explained that CAMBrella is a pan-European research network for CAM that has been created to help boost the well-being of European citizens by establishing a EU-wide road map that encompasses the preconditions for future research within CAM in Europe.

CAMBrella’s eight working groups will focus on terminology, legal regulations, patients’ needs, the role of CAM treatments in healthcare systems and research methodology. The goal is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the current status of CAM in Europe, which will serve as a starting point for future research activities.

NCCAM responded on Feb. 4 that much more research is needed on acupuncture. [Click here](#) for their response, as well as Dr. Sager's full letter.

ABMA recertification process forms now posted online

The ABMA Board of Trustees has just posted the recertification application form and case report guidelines for designees approaching the 10-year recertification deadline.

Each candidate for recertification will be required to submit the following:

- Application for recertification.
- Copy of current active medical license.
- Documentation of 150 hours of continuing education credits in medical acupuncture since certification. CME credit is preferred. Topics must be primarily acupuncture. Independently awarded CEU credits may be acceptable, at the discretion of the Board.
- Submission of two written Case Reports on actual cases treated to demonstrate continued knowledge and proficiency in the discipline. Specific Case Report Guidelines will be provided.
- Payment of a recertification fee of \$250.

There will be no written examination required for recertification.

Applications for recertification should be submitted at least 90 days prior to the expiration of the original certification to assure sufficient time for Board review and approval. Each submission will be submitted to the Board for review to confirm the adequacy of the Case Reports and to confirm that the continuing education requirements are met. If all requirements are met, the Board will grant a new 10-year certification.

The first designees will be up for recertification by June 30, 2011. [Click here](#) for those forms.

Members' input sought on study of acupuncture in wilderness medicine

AAMA was recently contacted by a final-year student at the College of Traditional Acupuncture in Hatton, United Kingdom. She is conducting research into the use of acupuncture as an aspect of healthcare in wilderness medicine and on remote expeditions and asking for Academy members' help.

The study will attempt to gauge the number of people who have used acupuncture in the wilderness or on remote expeditions, or who are interested in using acupuncture in this context, and will assess the value of acupuncture to these expeditions. From these findings, it will look at the question of whether acupuncture has the potential to enhance healthcare provided on future expeditions.

A short online survey has been created to assist in this research. Members who are interested in taking part can go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WildernessAcupuncture>. If you complete this survey, it will be understood that you have given consent to take part in this research.

Members who do not wish to take the survey but who would rather have a brief chat with the researcher, can e-mail Tisi Dutton at tisidutton@hotmail.com so that that can be arranged. Comments can also be e-mailed direct to her. If you do contact Tisi, it will be understood that you have given consent to take part in this research.

Any information provided will remain anonymous unless you give the researcher your permission to be identified. Individual responses will not be passed on to a third party.

Medical Acupuncture Research News

The following is a review of reported research results and related news recently announced or released through Internet outlets:

- The abstract, “Ear acupoint detection before and after hysteroscopy: is it possible to clarify the representation of the uterus on the outer ear?” was published in *Acupuncture in Medicine* (Vol. 28, Issue 4, December 2010). The objective was to identify distribution of points with increased tenderness on the outer ear of 78 women undergoing hysteroscopy. Researchers concluded that when auricular acupuncture is applied to reduce discomfort during hysteroscopy, particular attention must be paid when choosing the points/areas to be stimulated. [Click here](#) for details from the British Medical Acupuncture Society.

- The abstract, “Acupuncture effective for chronic shoulder pain,” was published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants* (Feb. 3, 2011). The 424 patients were randomly assigned to receive acupuncture performed by a trained orthopedist, sham acupuncture or conventional treatment. A treatment series of 15 acupuncture sessions produced significantly greater pain relief than sham acupuncture or conservative treatment in patients with chronic shoulder pain not due to osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis. This benefit lasted for at least three months after the end of treatment. [Click here](#) for details.

- The abstract, “Acupuncture for a patient with whiplash-type injury,” was published in *Acupuncture in Medicine* (Vol. 28, Issue 4, December 2010), the journal of the British Medical Acupuncture Society. A 69 year-old woman presented in the surgery because of a whiplash-type injury and was treated and released. Because of persisting headaches, and dizziness, her own general practitioner decided to use acupuncture. After six weeks treatment, the dizziness disappeared, and after two additional treatments the rhinitis and headache disappeared. Six months later, the patient had only intermittent dizziness, with no headaches, visual disturbances or rhinitis. [Click here](#) for details.

- The abstract, “Acupuncture Reduces Symptoms of Dry Eye Syndrome: A Preliminary Observational Study,” was published in the *Journal of Complementary and Alternative Medicine* (Vol. 16, No. 12, 2010). The study involved 36 people with dry eye syndrome. For four weeks, each participant received acupuncture three times weekly. At the end of the treatment, patients showed a decrease in dry eye symptoms and a significant increase in their eyes' watery secretion, with no adverse effects. [Click here](#) for details.

- The abstract, “Clinical effectiveness and safety of acupuncture in the treatment of irradiation-induced xerostomia in patients with head and neck cancer: a systematic review,” was published in the British Medical Acupuncture Society’s journal, *Acupuncture in Medicine* (Vol. 28, Issue 4, December 2010). Irradiation-induced xerostomia seriously reduces quality of life for patients with head and neck cancer. A search was performed to identify randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and systematic reviews of RCTs on acupuncture in irradiation-induced xerostomia. 18 articles underwent full-text review. Researchers concluded that acupuncture is beneficial for irradiation-induced xerostomia. [Click here](#) for details.

- The abstract, “Effects of traditional Chinese acupuncture in post-viral olfactory dysfunction,” was published in the *Journal of Otolaryngology -- Head Neck Surgery* (Vol. 142, No. 4, 2010). This study sought to evaluate effects of acupuncture on olfactory function in patients with persistent post-viral olfactory dysfunction. Fifteen patients with PVOD were treated with 30-minute sessions over 10 weeks. Researchers concluded that Traditional Chinese Acupuncture possibly offers a new therapeutic regimen for post-viral dysosmia. [Click here](#) for details.

- The abstract, “Acupuncture reduces crying in infants with infantile colic: a randomised, controlled, blind clinical study,” was published in *Acupuncture in Medicine* (Vol. 28, Issue 4, December 2010). Ninety otherwise healthy infants, 2–8 weeks old, with infantile colic were randomized to investigate whether

acupuncture reduces the duration and intensity of crying in infants with colic. There was a difference ($p=0.034$) favoring the acupuncture group from inclusion until the infant no longer met the criteria for colic. Researchers concluded that minimal acupuncture lessened the duration and intensity of crying in infants with colic. [Click here](#) for details from the British Medical Acupuncture Society.

•The abstract, Perioperative acupuncture and postoperative acupressure can prevent postoperative vomiting following paediatric tonsillectomy or adenoidectomy: a pragmatic randomised controlled trial,” was published in *Acupuncture in Medicine* (Vol. 28, Issue 4, December 2010). This study sought to investigate the effectiveness of acupuncture and acupressure as supplements to standard treatment for postoperative vomiting in 154 children undergoing tonsillectomy and/or adenoidectomy. Children in the acustimulation group experienced less retching and vomiting than the control group. Researchers said results should encourage and promote the implementation of acustimulation for postoperative vomiting in children undergoing adenoidectomy or tonsillectomy. [Click here](#) for details.

Please send information you find on research involving the effectiveness of medical acupuncture to bart.ortberg@dowdenmanagement.com.

AAMA Member News

AAMA's 23rd Annual Symposium will be March 31-April 1-3, 2011. The Review Course will be on March 29-30, 2011, the Pre-Symposium Workshops on March 31, 2011 and the ABMA Certification Exam on April 3, 2011. The location will be at the [Hyatt Regency Mission Bay](#), 1441 Quivira Road in San Diego, CA. For the AAMA discounted room rate of \$189/night (single/double) pending availability, call the hotel by **Feb. 28, 2011** at 619/224-1234. [Click here](#) for the recently launched Symposium site, and watch for registration details coming soon.

Check out Global Mission Partner opportunities in 2011: Join **Bryan L Frank, MD, FAAMA**, past president of AAMA (1999-2001) for some travel with a purpose. Projects in 2011 include Nepal Feb. 18-March 2, Ecuador in June, Kenya in July, Mexico in September and India in November. Plan in advance; [click here](#) for an application. [Click here](#) for photos from 2010. GMP encourages physicians, dentists, therapists, nurses and non-medical general volunteers to help those with little or no access to health care. Dr. Frank says this may be the most fun you've had in medicine in years.

Helms Medical Institute announced that **Munich Acupuncture Days** will be held April 15-18, 2011, sponsored by the [German Medical Association of Acupuncture](#) (DAGFA). The event will be a unique and intimate clinical experience with teachers from Munich, Harvard and Stanford. For details, [click here](#), call 781/391-7518 or e-mail jaudette@partners.org.

From AAMA President Richard C. Niemtzwow, MD, PhD, MPH: “On behalf of AAMA, I wish to express our most sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to Dr. Michael Coomes on the untimely passing of his beloved wife, Kathleen. I know this is a most difficult time for you, Mike, and all of us can't imagine the sadness you must be feeling from your loss. May there be comfort in knowing that someone so special will never be forgotten. Our prayers and thoughts to you and your family, and may your strength prevail to help you through this difficult time.”

All AAMA members should remember to register and participate in the [2011 IMCART Congress](#), The State of the Art of Acupuncture in Integrative Medicine, May 12-14, 2011 in The Hague, Netherlands. ICMART continues, along with the AAMA, to advance education and training standards for medical acupuncture and the privileges of medical acupuncturists around the globe. The International Congresses are a great way to both participate and teach, present a poster, and learn about the status of medical acupuncture with international colleagues.

Five Element Acupuncture for Physicians will be taught Oct. 20-23, 2011 in San Diego, CA by **Drs. Charles A. Moss and Ron Puhky**. Sponsored by Five Element Acupuncture Physician Training Program,

this course has been approved for 30 Category 1 CME hours by Palomar Medical Center. Visit www.FiveElementTraining.com for details.

The Medical Acupuncture Review Course is available on DVD. Visit the [AAMA Store](#) to purchase this valuable learning tool.

Members who are eligible to sit for Board Certification Exam in April have been sent forms to reserve a place. Those forms should be returned to the ABMA by **March 20** to assure a place.

Members participating in AAMA's referral program will be happy to hear that there were 2,457 unique visits to the [website referral page](#) in **January** from patients seeking medical acupuncturists in their area. Members interested in participating in the Patient Referral Program should visit the physician listings online to verify that they are listed. Only Practice level members are eligible to participate, and the Academy staff needs explicit notice to include a member in the program.

The International Conference on Integrative Care for the Future will be held March 11-12 outside of Amsterdam, Netherlands. The conference will open with a half-day Round-Table Symposium at which an international panel of health policy leaders will discuss the fiscal, organizational and policy challenges confronting integrative care. This will be followed by a full-day Plenary Session, when experts from around the world will discuss the state of integrative oncology in their regions. For details, log onto <http://www.integrativecareftfuture.org/>.

"Battlefield acupuncture," developed by Air Force physician Col. Richard Niemtow, AAMA president, and how it's helping heal soldiers with concussions so they can return more quickly to the front lines, was written up in the [Miami Herald](#) in February. Dr. Niemtow participated in an ear acupuncture observational study involving wounded US soldiers on an areomedical evacuation transport from Germany in January. [Click here](#) for photos.

AAMA reminds members who meet special qualifications in Medical Acupuncture about the certification mark to convey their accomplishments. The certification mark is available only to Full Members and Fellows of the AAMA who are currently Board Certified by the ABMA. See the image of logo [posted online](#). An application has been submitted to the US Patent Office to register this Certification Mark so that it is available for the exclusive use of those who meet the specified credentials. See the Certification Mark Guidelines [posted online](#) for standards on how the mark should be used in printed materials including acceptable type face, size, color, etc. For an electronic copy of a reproducible jpeg copy of the logo to provide your printer, Full Members and Fellows who are currently Board Certified through the ABMA may send a request to administrator@medicalacupuncture.org. Upon verification of your status, a jpg file will be sent to you.

The next **Medical Acupuncture for Physicians** 300 CME-hour course, Spring - Fall 2011, begins April 28-May 2 in Potomac, MD, followed by two clinical units. There are home study requirements before the introductory weekend and between each of the clinical units. Participants must attend all five-day units in sequence to complete the course. Visit <http://hmieducation.com/> for details.

Editor-in-Chief Dr. Richard Niemtow of the journal, *Medical Acupuncture*, is seeking volunteer reviewers to review manuscripts. Reviewers will access manuscripts [online](#). Reviews must be completed and returned within one business week. Reviewers successfully completing a series of timely, high-quality reviews may be invited to join the Editorial Board (at the discretion of the editor in chief). Please send brief qualifications and contact information to n5ev@aol.com.

As part of AAMA membership, practice members are being offered access to more than 400 journal articles categorized by disease/health application which promote the efficacy of Acupuncture. Contact Karyn Scurti at maf@hmieducation.com to obtain your unique password to access this information anytime. Then go to www.hmiacupuncture.com and click on "LINKS."

Please send news items and photos to bart.ortberg@dowdenmanagement.com.

AAMA Chapter News

Arizona

Arizona Chapter meetings are held at 9 am the second Saturday of the month at Dr. Martha Grout's office, Arizona Center for Advanced Medicine, 9328 E. Raintree Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85260. For details, call 480/240-2600 or e-mail drmartha@arizonaadvancedmedicine.com. There are monthly speakers on topics related to medical acupuncture, as well as Chinese and Functional/Integrative medicine. E-mail Dr. Grout to get on the e-mail list for meeting announcements.

California

Chapter officers are working hard to come up with innovative ideas for CME credits. They are continuing their membership drive to make the Chapter stronger. Academy members interested in joining the California Chapter are encouraged to contact President Haleh Sheikholeslami, MD, at calchapaama@hotmail.com.

Georgia

The Georgia Association of Medical Acupuncturists' 9th Annual Educational Meeting will be April 15-17, 2011 at the midtown Atlanta Loews Hotel. Lonny Jarrett will speak on, "Evolutionary Perspectives on Five Element Acupuncture." This meeting has been approved for 21 CME's by AAMA.

Carlos Parrado, MD, is now president-elect for GAMA.

GAMA invites everyone to visit [their website](#) to learn more about their organization's philosophy, mission, events and much more. Their site includes a "Member" page, which includes contact information for each GAMA member. For information regarding membership and seminars, contact GAMA President Anna C. Kelly, MD, at 404/255-8388 or annakellymd@gmail.com.

Illinois

The goal of President Lorene Wu, MD, DiplAc, and Secretary/Treasurer Anthony DeLorenzo, DO is to provide education and support to members. They plan to interface more with the wider acupuncture community by serving on the Illinois Acupuncture Board and by attending meetings of the local acupuncture society.

Meetings are held every other month at Memorial Hospital in LaGrange, IL.

Maryland

Joan Ordman, MD, FAAMA, is the new president of the Maryland Society of Medical Acupuncturists (MSMA). Dr. Ordman is board certified in Internal Medicine, Holistic Medicine, and Medical Acupuncture. She works at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.

The next meeting of the MSMA will be at 7 pm Thursday, Feb. 17. June Morfe will speak on, "Acupuncture Billing - Updates and Obstacles." All are invited to attend the lecture at the Nichi Bei Kai restaurant in Columbia, MD. Phone number is (410) 381-5800.

The Maryland Society of Medical Acupuncturists offers educational programs and wants to increase participation. Treat yourself to a nice evening. It is free, and members whose dues are paid receive a nice free meal. The lecture is on the Chapter. Contact Chapter President Joan Ordman, MD, FAAMA, at jordman@aol.com to join MSMA.

Ohio

An educational event is in the early planning stages. Dr. Yun-Tao Ma is scheduled for Oct. 29, 2011 at the Alliance Institute for Integrative Medicine in Cincinnati, Ohio. More details will follow.

Ohio Chapter members would love to see more active participation of the current membership. Please join them and invite medical acupuncture colleagues. For more information or questions, contact Liz Woolford, MD, at Liz.Woolford@myhealingpartner.com.

New Jersey & Pennsylvania

John Kohler, MD, FAAMA, is the president of the Pennsylvania Chapter. Visit www.pamedicalacupuncture.com/ for details on this chapter.

[Click here](#) for an up-to-date listing of AAMA Regional Chapter officers, their contact information, Websites and members. Think about joining a Chapter to learn more about medical acupuncture specific to your area. And if there's not a Chapter in your region, please consider forming one by contacting Jim Dowden, AAMA executive administrator, at administrator@medicalacupuncture.org. Chapters provide fellowship, professional camaraderie, education and curbside consults.

Chapter representatives, please send your news and photos for the AAMA Newsletter via e-mail to bart.ortberg@dowdenmanagement.com.