



Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

**2015 State Society
Advocacy Conference &
Fellows Intensive**

September 25 – 26, 2015

Sheraton Chicago O'Hare Airport Hotel
Rosemont, IL



CSRO
COALITION OF STATE RHEUMATOLOGY ORGANIZATIONS



**PROGRAM
BOOK**

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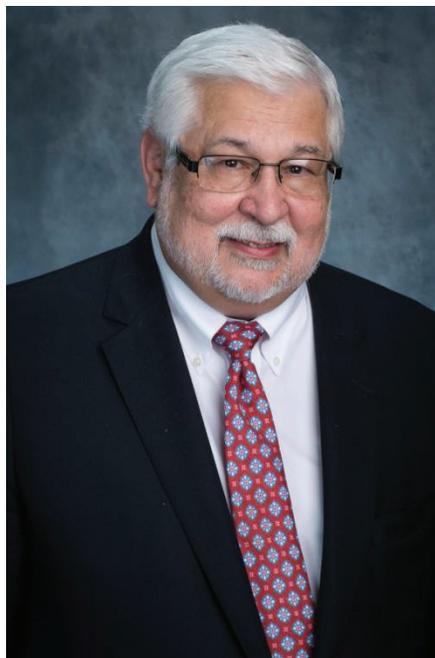
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No attendee/visitor at the CSRO 2015 State Society Advocacy Conference may record, film, tape, photograph, interview or use any other such media during any presentation, display or exhibit without the express, advance approval of the CSRO Executive Director. This policy applies to all CSRO members, non-members, guests and exhibitors, as well as members of the print, online or broadcast media.



Dear conference attendees,

Welcome to our 2015 State Society Advocacy Conference. We know the many laws and regulations that affect private practice are becoming increasingly complex and burdensome. Your attendance at this conference will increase your knowledge of the issues and prepare you to address these turbulent times.

This year, we have an extensive program that focuses on pressing issues faced by rheumatology, engagement strategies for state societies, and best practices for effective advocacy. You will find our speakers to be educational and informative, and I would like to thank each of them for taking the time to offer their expertise.

Ten years ago, when the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations was formed, we were just starting to grasp the impact that advocacy could have on our work. Each year, we have grown the reach of CSRO by supporting state societies and last year, we augmented our commitment by increasing staffing towards that goal. Today, CSRO is recognized in state capitols and on Capitol Hill as a voice for rheumatology and we are proud to include nearly every state society in our membership.

I am deeply appreciative of the time and talent that our physicians, advocates, and attendees have put into making this organization a success. We should be proud of what we have been able to accomplish. Although I am stepping down as president this year, I am pleased to continue my involvement as Federal Advocacy Chair and confident that events like this conference will continue to advance the mission of CSRO.

I invite you to attend our kick-off events with the Welcome Reception on Friday evening followed by a Welcome Dinner for all attendees. We hope you find our program stimulating and interesting, and take home valuable information that will help advance rheumatology in your state.

Thank you for your participation and for your advocacy,

Michael Schweitz, MD
President, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations



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The Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) is a group of state or regional professional rheumatology societies formed in order to advocate for excellence in rheumatologic disease care and to ensure access to the highest quality care for the management of rheumatologic and musculoskeletal diseases.

Founded in 2003, CSRO strives to achieve our mission with the following objectives:

- Through advocacy, awareness, communications, education and sharing of research, CSRO assists state or regional organizations to become formalized societies and provide leadership on rheumatologic and musculoskeletal health issues.
- Promote the state rheumatology societies activities that advocate access to the highest quality medical care for rheumatic disease patients with autoimmune inflammatory and degenerative diseases.
- State societies have the ability to exchange information regarding issues that pertain to the delivery of high quality care to rheumatic disease patients through the CSRO network.
- Educate insurers, government officials, corporations and other entities of the impact and importance of rheumatic diseases and rheumatologic care when considering policy/procedural changes that will affect that care.
- Encourage new studies of rheumatology care in the US through national, regional and individual sponsorship.
- Provide forums for state regional professional organizations to create and advance a rheumatologic and musculoskeletal health agenda at the private, public and political levels.

In order to promote these objectives, CSRO has several informative meetings held throughout the year:

- **CSRO Fellows Conference** – Since 2006, CSRO has been hosting an Annual Fellows Conference that offers fellows guidance, education and insight into the numerous opportunities in the area of private practice rheumatology.
- **CSRO State Society Advocacy Conference** – An annual conference that focuses on the top state rheumatology policy issues, state advocacy strategies and providing guidance to state-level CSRO-affiliated organizational members.
- **Federal Advocacy Conference** – Representatives from CSRO-affiliated organizations gather to meet and discuss health care issues with congressional members, administration personnel and key health regulatory agency department representatives as well as experts in health care outside of government. Attendees also have the opportunity to visit with their US Congressional Delegates on Capitol Hill and the opportunity to network with attendees from industry leaders and other medical specialties/sub-specialties attending the conference.

Our coalition serves the practicing rheumatologist. We are continually in the process of collecting information on issues that affect you in your area. Assembling this information in one place (www.csro.info) will help everyone work through the issues in a better informed manner.

Connect with CSRO on Social Media

<http://csro.info/home>



<https://www.facebook.com/CSROAdvocacy>



Twitter @CSROAdvocacy



Every year, our representatives in state houses and in Washington, DC look at thousands of issues that affect our lives in different ways. With so many concerns to track, these legislators rely on advocates to highlight the most important issues.

The Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations engages with rheumatologists around the country to help tell our story. Your involvement makes a huge impact on the way that legislators look at laws that will affect your patients and your practice.

CSRO encourages you to stay involved in this important work by participating in activities such as:

- Staying up to date on legislative issues by subscribing to and reading the CSRO Policy Update Newsletter. To subscribe, please e-mail Jeff@WJWeiser.com
- Participating in CSRO calls to action by sending a personalized letter or making a call to your representatives on priority bills.
- Inviting legislators to visit your practice and meet with patients and staff members about issues that affect their lives such as administrative burden, prior authorization, or step therapy restrictions.
- Visiting your state capitol to participate in advocacy days or to testify in front of legislators about rheumatology concerns.
- Joining CSRO for online educational sessions and programs to help keep you informed on state and federal issues that will affect you.
- Attending the CSRO State Society Advocacy Conference! Meetings like this give you the opportunity to learn and network with rheumatology leaders across the country.

In addition, CSRO also offers a host of resources to physicians who are looking to be more involved in advocacy work. You can visit the CSRO Advocacy Learning Center on our website at www.CSRO.info/advocacy to find information and tips on how to effectively connect with legislators and their staff.

CSRO has full time staff on hand to address legislative issues. You can also contact our office at any time to ask questions, get up-to-date information, or let us know about any concerns you're facing. To connect with us contact:

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State Advocacy Highlights

State Society Support

Part of the CSRO mission is to support individual state societies in their formation and growth. Following the CSRO State Society Advocacy Conference last fall, rheumatology physician leaders were encouraged to establish and lead organizations, including the Rheumatology Association of Iowa and the Rheumatology Association of Nevada.

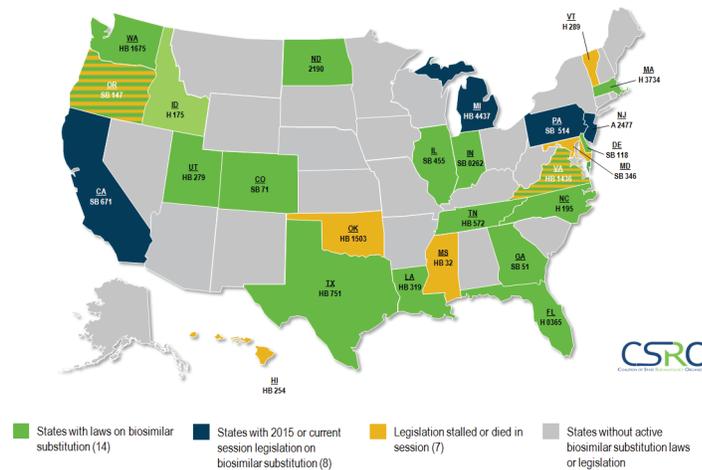
CSRO continues to strengthen its relationship with state rheumatology organization members representing approximately 35 states across the country. CSRO engages member organizations on federal and state legislative and regulatory issues of impact to the rheumatic community.

Regulating Interchangeable Biologic Substitution

FDA approval of the first biosimilar and its entry into the market this year has made legislation regulating the substitution of interchangeable biologics ripe for passage. This issue continues to be a top state legislative priority for CSRO.

In 2015, CSRO voiced its support for legislative proposals being considered by more than 20 state legislatures. CSRO was on the ground in a number of battleground states including Washington, California, Louisiana, and North Carolina. CSRO Board Members and state rheumatology organization leaders were key players in many of the discussions in these states and succeeded in including physician notification provisions in nearly all the bills. Dr. Madelaine Feldman, CSRO Board member and President of the Rheumatology Alliance of Louisiana, was instrumental in the passage of the Louisiana bill, participating in drafting discussions and meeting with legislative and regulatory leadership. CSRO and its coalition partners celebrated the enactment of 10 state laws.

Biosimilars 2015 Legislative Session Activity

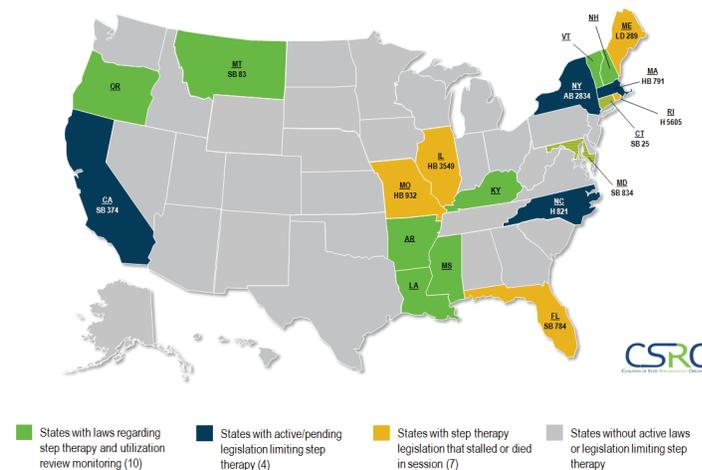


Step Therapy

In the 2015 legislative session, CSRO supported the introduction of legislation that would add more controls to the practice of step therapy. Fifteen states took up the issue and CSRO voiced its support through letters, calls and on-the-ground advocacy. CSRO advocates and society members visited capitols for multiple advocacy days in places like California, Missouri, and Ohio to advocate for step therapy limitations.

Included in those efforts is CSRO's continued involvement in the State Access to Innovative Medicine (SAIM) Coalition, which monitors and advocates for step therapy legislation in the states. In addition, CSRO has also been instrumental in supporting regional coalitions, including the Midwest Step Therapy Coalition. CSRO Board Member, Dr. Mark Box, has been involved with the local coalition's media effort and CSRO has worked with rheumatologists to help support state legislator education and issue discussion.

Step Therapy 2015 Legislative Activity



Non-Medical Switching

An increasing number of insurers and pharmacy benefit managers are forcing patients who are stable on a medication to switch to an alternative, less expensive therapy. CSRO believes that every patient currently being treated and stable on their medication has the right to continue with their therapy. Decisions about switching therapies for a patient with a chronic disease should be based on clinical evidence, not financial drivers by payers, and should be left to the treating physician in consultation with their patient. In 2015, CSRO expressed support for legislation seeking to keep stable patients on their medications that was introduced in such states as Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Prior Authorization

CSRO strongly supports state adoption of uniform prior authorization (UPA) policies to alleviate the administrative burden of interacting with insurers, including seeking prior authorization for treatment and medications. In 2015, relevant bills were introduced in states from Arizona to Virginia.

Out of Pocket Costs

CSRO has been intensely listening to patient and physician concerns about the high out-of-pocket costs patients are required to pay by insurers in order to access their medications. These costs are often augmented by high copays and deductibles as well as inappropriate drug tier placement by payers.

This year, CSRO has approached more than 20 bills in 15 states that address these practices in a variety of capacities. CSRO's position supports the idea that high percentage medication co-payments have become untenable and advocates for limited or reduced out-of-pocket liabilities for patients. At the national level, CSRO has closely followed the Patient Access to Treatment Act (H.R. 1600), which seeks to limit some out-of-pocket prescription costs.

In this area, CSRO is also an involved member of the SAIM Coalition. The SAIM Coalition efforts focused on state legislation to limit out-of-pocket costs to patients and were bolstered this year with the release of a study by the accounting firm Milliman, which found almost no increase in overall premiums would be required to save patients with high-cost medication thousands of dollars.

Legislative Visits

CSRO Board Members also kept active on a number of other issues and made legislative visits across the country.



CSRO Board Treasurer, Gregory Schimizzi, MD, meeting with Representative Jones and staff in North Carolina.



CSRO President Michael Schweitz poses with the Florida Delegation on Capitol Hill.



CSRO Board Secretary, Mark Box, MD, meeting with legislators in Missouri.

Federal Advocacy Highlights

Biosimilar Naming and Labeling

As the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continues to implement a regulatory pathway to approve biosimilars, CSRO has been at the forefront of the debate. Recently, CSRO Treasurer Dr. Gregory Schimizzi participated in a Capitol Hill panel discussion on the topic, which was attended by over 100 legislative staffers and other stakeholders. In addition, CSRO will provide input on the FDA's most recent guidance related to the naming of biosimilar products.



SGR Reform

CSRO was among the prominent voices who helped advocate for a final push during this year's action on SGR reform. CSRO has been lobbying on Capitol Hill on this important issue year after year. On behalf of rheumatologists, CSRO submitted letters to both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives and encouraged state rheumatology organizations to submit letters to finally pass SGR reform after nearly two decades of waiting.

Medicare Physician Fee Schedule

Medicare physician payment remains an issue for rheumatology despite repeal of the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR). CSRO filed comments with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) this fall in response to the 2016 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule proposal. In the comments, CSRO urged CMS to remove certain misvalued rheumatology codes from its code list and improve payments by establishing new billing codes for specialty care providers that manage chronic conditions. Most importantly, the comments addressed longstanding issues with federal quality improvement programs including the failure to capture the cost of Part D drugs in resource use calculations and ensuring these programs take into account clinical practice improvement activities by rheumatologists.

Medicare Drug Reimbursement

CSRO continues to engage Washington, D.C. policymakers on this critical issue about the lack of clear guidance and transparency in policy making by local Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for coverage under Part B or Part D. Leadership from several CSRO state societies visited Capitol Hill, urging the Congress to consider legislative action that would require CMS to direct its contractors to establish clear guidelines for when administration of outpatient prescription drugs is medically necessary where clinically similar formulations exist.

Rheumatology Participation in ACOs

CSRO submitted formal comments to CMS urging the agency to eliminate rheumatology from its "exclusivity" requirements. This would ensure rheumatologists could engage in more than one of the Medicare Shared Savings Program's Accountable Care Organizations (ACO). CMS accepted CSRO's comments and finalized a policy that allows rheumatologists to participate in more than one Medicare ACO.

Provider Networks

Narrowing of provider networks has been an ongoing challenge for rheumatologists. CSRO leaders have met with leadership and staff in both the House and Senate to raise concerns and share potential solutions for ensuring access to rheumatologic care. CSRO has also shared concerns with CMS and other influential bodies including the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). CSRO continues to have a dialogue with NAIC, regulatory agency staff, and Capitol Hill on potential solutions to narrowing networks.

DXA Coalition

Plummeting Medicare reimbursements for DXA scanning has led to concerns about access to these services for Medicare beneficiaries. CSRO participates in the DXA Coalition which worked toward bipartisan introduction of H.R. 2461, which would establish a minimum payment amount under Medicare Part B for bone mass measurement. CSRO continues to engage on this issue with coalition members, which includes other patient and provider organizations.

Alliance for Specialty Medicine Fly-In

CSRO leadership participated in the Alliance for Specialty Medicine fly-in in Washington, D.C., in July to discuss issues of interest to specialty medicine, including Meaningful Use, ICD-10, 21st Century Cures Act, graduate medical education, and medical liability, among others.

**Arthritis Caucus Congressional Briefings**

CSRO has been deeply involved with the Congressional Arthritis Caucus. CSRO has jointly sponsored and headlined multiple well attended educational sessions with the Caucus for both legislators and their staff. This spring CSRO President Dr. Michael Schweitz presented on arthritis related issues and legislative and regulatory priorities, such as step therapy and non-medical switching.



All sessions will be located in Sheraton Grand Ballroom unless otherwise noted

Speakers and times are subject to change

Friday, September 25, 2015

4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. **Registration/Information Desk Open**
Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Board Lunch**
Location: Rosemont 2

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Board Meeting**
Location: Rosemont 2

5:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. **Welcome Reception**
Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **Welcome Dinner**
Location: Gibson's Bar & Steakhouse
The CSRO Board Members welcome all speakers and attendees.

Saturday, September 26, 2015

7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. **Registration/Information Desk Open**
Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch**
Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. **Breakfast Session - After the Treatment Decision: Understanding Access for Specialty Rheumatology Medications**
Michael Schweitz, MD
President, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. **CSRO Vision: 2015 and Beyond**
Michael Schweitz, MD
President, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. **KEYNOTE: Leadership Lessons from the Battlefield and the Emergency Room**
Sudip Bose, MD, FACEP, FAAEM
Attending Physician, Medical Center Hospital, Odessa, TX, Major, United States Army, Ret.

9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. **Break**

9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. **The Future of Medicare: A Move Towards Value Driven Health**
Emily L. Graham, RHIA, CCS-P
Vice President of Regulatory Affairs, Hart Health Strategies

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. **Champions of Yes: Partnering with Patients and the Arthritis Foundation on Advocacy**
Speakers: Sandie Preiss
Vice President of Advocacy & Access
Mark Guimond
Director, State Legislative Affairs, Arthritis Foundation

Fellows Intensive Breakout Sessions Begin

Concurrent Session 1 of 1

10:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. **Fellows Intensive Breakout Program**
Location: O'Hare East

10:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Welcome & Introductions <i>Location: O'Hare East</i>
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	So You Want to go into Private Practice <i>Location: O'Hare East</i> <i>Herbert S. Baraf, MD, FACP, MACR</i> <i>Managing Partner, Arthritis & Rheumatism Associates</i>
11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.	Discussion and Q&A <i>Location: O'Hare East</i>
11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Break & Hotel Checkout
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Luncheon Session - Reconvene in Grand Ballroom
1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.	Early Career Financial Management <i>Location: O'Hare East</i> <i>James M. Dahle, MD FACEP</i> <i>Author, "The White Coat Investor"</i>
1:45 p.m. - 2:00 a.m.	Discussion and Q&A <i>Location: O'Hare East</i>
2:00 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	The Future of Rheumatology <i>Location: O'Hare East</i> <i>James Jenkins, PhD, MPH</i> <i>President, rheumRx, Inc.</i>
2:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Discussion and Wrap-Up <i>Location: O'Hare East</i>

Concurrent Sessions End

10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.	Breaking Out Your Base: State Society Members in Advocacy Moderator: <i>Gary R. Feldman, MD, FACR</i> President, California Rheumatology Alliance Panelists: <i>Michael S. Brooks, MD, FACP, FACR</i> President, Rheumatology Association of Iowa <i>Amar Majhoo, MD</i> President, Michigan Rheumatism Society
11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Break
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Luncheon Session: Preparing for ICD-10 Speakers: <i>Amiel Y. Tokayer, MD</i> Arthritis & Rheumatology Associates of Palm Beach <i>Ethel Owen, CPC</i> President, National Organization of Rheumatology Managers
1:00 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.	Evidence Based Advocacy: A Case Study <i>Seth Ginsberg</i> President, Global Healthy Living Foundation
1:45 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	Physician Power: CSRO Resources for the Physician Advocate Speaker: <i>Jeff Okazaki, MBA</i> Associate Director of Government Relations, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

2:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Biosimilars Today: Prescribing the Future of Substitution

Speakers: *Gregory F. Schimizzi, MD*
Treasurer, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Madelaine A. Feldman, MD
Board Member, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations

3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Access to Care: Limiting Step Therapy and Medication Switching

Moderator: *Michael W. Stevens, MD*
Vice President, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
Invited Speaker *Laura Fine, IL State Representative*
Panelists: *Amanda Chesley, JD*
Executive Director, Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations
James Jenkins, PhD, MPH
Vice President, California Rheumatology Alliance
Andrew Sperling, JD
Director of Federal Legislative Advocacy, National Alliance on
Mental Illness
Mark Guimond
Director, State Legislative Affairs, Arthritis Foundation

4:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Speaker: *Michael Schweitz, MD*
President, CSRO

4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Annual CSRO Business Meeting

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Cocktail Reception

Location: Myrick's Restaurant

Registration/Information Desk Hours

Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom

Friday, September 25, 2015 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 26, 2015 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Board Meeting

Location: Rosemont 2

Friday, September 25, 2015 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

General Session

Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom

Saturday, September 26, 2015 7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Annual Business Meeting

Location: Grand Ballroom C

Saturday, September 26, 2016 4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Evening Functions

Welcome Reception

Date: Friday, September 25, 2015
Time: 5:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.
Location: Sheraton Grand Ballroom
Attire: Business Casual

Meet your fellow CSRO SSAC attendees at this welcoming event. See old friends and greet new faces while enjoying hors d'oeuvres.

Welcome Dinner

Date: Friday, September 25, 2015
Time: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Location: Gibson's Bar & Steakhouse
Attire: Business Casual

The CSRO Board Members welcomes all attendees.

Cocktail Reception

Date: Saturday, September 26, 2015
Time: 5:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m.
Location:: O'Hare East
Attire: Business Casual

Network with fellow CSRO SSAC attendees and share insights from the conference while enjoying hors d'oeuvres.



Herbert S. B. Baraf, MD, FACP, MACR, is the senior member and managing partner of Arthritis and Rheumatism Associates, the largest private practice rheumatology group in the United States. He is a clinical professor of medicine at The George Washington University School of Medicine and a clinical associate professor of medicine at the University of Maryland.

As a former member of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee for the American College of Rheumatology, Dr. Baraf was responsible for the development of "Practice Issues," a lecture series on topics of particular interest to practicing rheumatologists. He has served on several other committees of the College, including RheumPac, the College's political advocacy committee, and the Professional Meetings Committee, where his efforts were instrumental in the development of dedicated musculoskeletal ultrasound courses for clinical rheumatologists.

Dr. Baraf has lectured at regional and national meetings throughout the United States on practice management for rheumatologists. He has been invited by the ACR and CSRO to present workshops and lectures on clinical practice to graduating fellows for the past several years.

Dr. Baraf has co-authored several publications on therapeutics in the rheumatic diseases. He has presented his work on gout, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and the safety of NSAID therapy at meetings of the ACR and EULAR. He lectures widely on the manifestations of and treatment for the rheumatic diseases.

Dr. Baraf is a graduate of the University of Michigan and the State University of New York, Downstate where he received his medical degree. He completed his internal medicine training at The George Washington University Hospital, Washington, DC, and his fellowship in rheumatology at Duke University Medical Center, Durham, North Carolina. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Rheumatology.



Sudip Bose, MD, FACEP, FAAEM served one of the longest combat deployments of any physician since World War II, including his time at the front lines during the Second Battle of Fallujah. Notably during his deployment, Major Bose received the Bronze Star for meritorious service and was the physician responsible for treating notorious dictator, Saddam Hussein, shortly after his capture.

Today, in addition to his appearances in national media outlets including CNN, NBC, and the Washington Post, Dr. Bose continues to practice as an emergency medicine physician. He also supports combat veterans through his charity *The Battle Continues*, and speaks to audiences nationwide about his experience in leadership and command.



Michael S. Brooks, MD, FACP, FACR was born in Burbank, California. He earned his MD in 1980 from Loyola University, St. Louis School of Medicine, and went on to do his internship and residency in internal medicine through Loyola University Affiliated Hospitals. From 1983 to 1985, he had a research-intensive fellowship in rheumatology at the Indiana University School of Medicine. He is board certified in internal medicine and rheumatology. He currently serves as co-director of the IMC lab at the Physicians' Clinic of Iowa, PC, a private rheumatology practice in Cedar Rapids.



Amanda B. Chesley, JD serves as the executive director, rheumatology division, of WJ Weiser & Associates, Inc. In this role she manages government relations and association management activities for WJ Weiser's national and state rheumatology clients. Ms. Chesley is also the executive director of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) and developed CSRO's state government relations program.

Ms. Chesley is a licensed attorney possessing 15 years of government affairs and legal experience in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. She earned her Juris Doctorate and a Certificate in International and Comparative Law from DePaul University College of Law in Chicago, Illinois, after graduating from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Illinois. Pursuing her interest in legislation, she completed the Illinois Legislative Staff Graduate Internship Program through the University of Illinois at the Illinois state capitol. Ms. Chesley is admitted to practice law in the state of Illinois and the United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois.



James M. Dahle, MD, FACEP, grew up in Alaska, then went on to do his undergraduate work and play on the hockey team at Brigham Young University before attending medical school at the University of Utah. He then completed an emergency medicine residency at The University of Arizona, finishing in 2006. He subsequently spent four years on active duty working in Air Force and Navy hospitals on four continents before joining a small democratic group in suburban Utah in 2010, where he currently works full-time and serves as the department chair.



Gary Feldman, MD is the Medical Director of Pacific Arthritis Care Center and the Osteoporosis Diagnostic Medical Center. Dr. Feldman has been in practice for over 24 years and is Board Certified in rheumatology and internal medicine. He received his medical degree from Tufts University and completed his post-graduate training at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Dr. Feldman is an assistant clinical professor of medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He is active in teaching and clinical research.

Dr. Feldman is the president of the California Rheumatology Alliance, a Fellow of the American College of Rheumatology and a member of the Los Angeles County Medical Association, California Medical Association and the International Society for Clinical Densitometry. Dr. Feldman specializes in osteoporosis evaluation, treatment and prevention by providing DEXA evaluations, consultation and continuing care for this condition, as well as all other outpatient rheumatology.



Madelaine Feldman, MD is a partner of The Rheumatology Group in New Orleans, Louisiana. She is a founding member and president of the Rheumatology Alliance of Louisiana. Dr. Feldman is an associate professor of clinical medicine at Tulane University School of Medicine and has been named one of the "Top Doctors" in New Orleans for the last eight years. She is a member of the board of directors of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations and the Tulane Medical School alumni association. She is a member of the National Biologics Working Group of the Alliance for Patient Access and a member of the ACR insurance subcommittee.



Laura Fine is the Illinois State Representative for the 17th District and previously served as the Clerk in Northfield Township. She was also an instructor in the Political Science department at Northeastern Illinois University, where she taught American Government and the Constitution. Prior to teaching, she worked for many years in the media in various positions including producer, writer, reporter and anchor in both television and radio news. Laura holds a BA in Telecommunications from Indiana University, an MA in Political Science from Northeastern Illinois University and is a graduate of IWIL: the Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership. She lives in Glenview, Illinois with her husband Michael and their two boys, Jacob and Jeremy.



Seth D. Ginsberg began his 20-year career as a health advocate at age 13 when he was diagnosed with a form of arthritis called Spondyloarthritis. Since then, Seth has evolved into a passionate thought leader and social entrepreneur in the global healthcare conversation. He believes that all patients with chronic disease deserve the best access to care, and that it is everyone's responsibility to participate in patient-centered research to unlock the clues needed for better health outcomes in the future. Seth spends his energy engineering that future.

Emily L. Graham, RHIA, CCS-P, is Vice President of Regulatory Affairs. Before her move to Hart Health Strategies Inc., Ms. Graham served as the Assistant Dean and Program Director for the Health Information Management (HIM) and Clinical Data Coding (CDC) Programs at Northern Virginia Community College's (NVCC) Medical Education Campus (MEC). Ms. Graham continues to serve as an adjunct faculty member for the traditional HIM/CDC programs, as well as the Office of the National Coordinator's (ONC) Community College Consortium Health IT Workforce Development Program.

Prior to her time in academia, Ms. Graham served as the Associate Director of Regulatory Affairs for the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS), where she focused on a variety of regulatory issues, including Medicare physician reimbursement, Medicare's quality improvement initiatives and advancements in health information technology. In that role she had regular dealings with representatives of the Department of Health and Human Services, to include the CMS, the ONC, and the FDA. She also served as Chair of the Quality and Health Information Technology and Regulatory Committee's for the Alliance of Specialty Medicine and as a staff liaison to the AMA's Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Editorial Panel and Relative Value System Update Committee (RUC), the NQF, SQA, and AQA Alliance.

Ms. Graham previously held a position at the American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head Neck Surgery as a Practice Management Coordinator, where she focused on coding and reimbursement issues. She has also held positions in an acute care hospital billing office and in a physician practice.

Ms. Graham is a Past President of the District of Columbia Health Information Management Association (DCHIMA). Ms. Graham obtained her Bachelor of Science Degree in HIM from Stephens College.



Mark Guimond is the Director of State Legislative Affairs at the Arthritis Foundation.

Mark is extremely familiar with all aspects of legislative tracking, bill drafting, direct lobbying, grassroots mobilization, presentation of testimony and shepherding legislation. He has testified before the US Congress, testified before 43 state legislatures, advocated in nearly every state legislature and represented client interests before most every Committee in the US Congress. Mark was awarded "Special Congressional Recognition" for his work with the Congressional Black Caucus.



James Jenkins, PhD, MPH is president of rheumRx Inc., a rheumatology-consulting firm based in Los Angeles. He is also interim chief operating officer of Arthritis Associates of Southern California, vice president of the California Rheumatology Alliance, and chair of public policy and advocacy for the Arthritis Foundation, Pacific Region.

Dr. Jenkins has a PhD in health services and an Executive MPH in health policy and management from the Fielding School of Public Health at UCLA, where he is an occasional guest lecturer. He also has a BS in biology from Loyola Marymount University. He is an MGMA certified medical practice executive and has served on numerous committees of the American College of Rheumatology.



Amar Majhoo, MD received his medical degree from Wayne State University School of Medicine. He completed his Internal Medicine residency at St. John Hospital and Medical Center, followed by fellowships in both Rheumatology and Geriatric Medicine at Wayne State University and Detroit Medical Center. Dr. Majhoo has a special interest in the treatment of early rheumatoid arthritis. He is in practice with Shores Rheumatology, in St. Clair Shores, MI.



Jeffrey Okazaki, MBA currently serves as associate director of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO) where he manages government relations and legislative support to state rheumatology associations. His experiences include a broad communications and public relations background as well as grassroots advocacy at the state and national level.

Jeff holds an undergraduate degree in communications and political science and completed his MBA from Bradley University with a focus in economics. Before joining WJ Weiser and CSRO, Jeff most recently served as director of communications and business analysis for Rainbow Hospice and Palliative Care, one of the largest non-profit hospices serving Chicagoland.

Within the world of politics, Jeff has held positions on both sides of the aisle. He served as a legislative aide for former Illinois State Representative Rosemary Mulligan (R-65) as well as a campaign, district, and DC staff member for former Congresswoman Melissa Bean (D-8, IL).



Ethel Owen, CPC, is the practice administrator for Arthritis & Rheumatology Associates of Palm Beach, a seven physician rheumatology practice. Her responsibilities include managing three locations serving all of Palm Beach County. Ethel has been working in the medical community for more than 30 years.

Ethel has been a certified Professional Coder and a member of the American Academy of Professional Coders since 1997. Her coding responsibilities have included surgical, E & M coding and chart documentation training for physicians and support staff.

Ethel has been a member of the National Organization of Rheumatology Managers (NORM) since 2006. She has served as a board member since 2006. Her duties have included recruiting new members, helping to plan conferences and obtaining event sponsorship. Currently she has the privilege of serving as President of NORM.



Sandie Preiss is the Vice President, Advocacy and Access at the Arthritis Foundation. Based in the legislative office in Washington, DC, Preiss leads a team of advocacy staff across the nation and mobilizes the network of 125,000 advocacy volunteers to pass legislation on Capitol Hill and in states that will ensure that people with arthritis have access to affordable medications. Nationally, Preiss and her team are working as part of the Coalition for Accessible Treatments to pass the Patients' Access to Treatments Act, which limits specialty tier practices that keep patients from accessing the medications they need.



Gregory F. Schimizzi, MD graduated from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan before moving on to complete his medical degree at the same school. Dr. Schimizzi then began his residency in internal medicine at Wayne State University Affiliated Hospitals in Detroit, Michigan before moving to complete a residency in rheumatology and clinical immunology at the University of California in Irvine, California. Dr. Schimizzi has been involved with multiple organizations and was a co-founder of CSRO. He currently serves as treasurer of CSRO.



Michael Schweitz, MD, FACR, MACR, completed a seven year undergraduate and medical school program at the George Washington University in Washington, DC, in 1972. He completed his internal medicine training at GW and his rheumatology fellowship at Georgetown University in 1977. He then entered private practice in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Dr. Schweitz is a partner in Arthritis and Rheumatology Associates of Palm Beach, an eight physician single specialty practice in Palm Beach County. He is fellow of the American College of Physicians and the American College of Rheumatology. He served as a member of the Committee on Rheumatologic Care. He is a past president of the Florida Society of Rheumatology and continues to sit on its Executive Committee. He is an active member of the American Society of Clinical Rheumatology.

He has served on the Board of Directors of the Arthritis Foundation at both state and local levels for many years and for the past 33 years has donated his time in helping to staff a free arthritis clinic for medically indigent patients in Palm Beach County.

Currently, he is president of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations (CSRO), an advocacy group comprised of state and regional rheumatology societies, which he helped form in 2003. In this capacity, he has been an active proponent of advocacy for rheumatic diseases in the nation's capital. He is also a frequent lecturer on topics related to rheumatology and practice management.

Dr. Schweitz has been recognized in "Best Doctors of South Florida" and "America's Top Physicians". His personal interests include wine collecting and wine education, as well as collecting first edition crime fiction.



Andrew Sperling, JD is the director of federal legislative advocacy for NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. In this position, he leads NAMI's legislative advocacy initiatives in Congress and before federal agencies. Mr. Sperling works on issues affecting the mental health community with a focus on improving the lives of people with severe mental illnesses.

Since 1994, Mr. Sperling has also served as co-chair of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Housing Task Force.

Prior to joining NAMI, Mr. Sperling held the position of deputy director of government relations for the National Community Mental Healthcare Council and was a legislative assistant for U.S. Representative Dick Swett (D-NH).

Mr. Sperling earned his bachelor's of arts degree from Tulane University. After graduating from Tulane, Sperling attended George Washington University where he received a masters of arts, and in 1992, he earned a law degree from the Franklin Pierce Law Center.



Michael Stevens, MD graduated from Boston University School of Medicine in 1985 and immediately began his residency at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in San Francisco. He completed his residency in 1988 and began his fellowship in rheumatology at the University of California San Francisco Medical Center, finishing in 1990. Dr. Stevens is affiliated with Mills-Peninsula Medical Group, Mills-Peninsula Physician Network and Sutter Medical Network and has been certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine for 22 years in internal medicine and 21 years in rheumatology. His clinical interests are focused around autoimmune diseases and disorders.



Amiel Y. Tokayer, MD teaches medical residents at JFK Medical Center, and medical students in his capacity as clinical associate professor at the Charles E. Schmidt School of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University. He has also worked closely with the National Organization of Rheumatology Managers (NORM) to develop "I Can Do ICD-10", an online training for rheumatologists to help prepare for the October 1, 2015 ICD-10 implementation.

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CSRO/CRA Fellows Exchange
Sunday, November 8 & Monday, November 9
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The Metropolitan Condo
355 1st Street
San Francisco, California



**CSRO Fellows Conference &
Fellows Intensive**
February 19 - 20, 2016
JW Marriott San Francisco Union Square
515 Mason Street
San Francisco, California

SAVE THE DATES!