



Indian Doctors Association

Greater Houston

March 2024 Edition

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LET'S SHAPE THE FUTURE

TOGETHER

Dear IDA Family,

I have spent most of February and March laying a foundation for the future planning of our organization so that we can create a 5-year vision for IDA. Upon my request, The IDA board of directors along with our advisory board have agreed to meet for a

virtual retreat where we will be brainstorming and addressing our efforts, vision and investments for the future.

This is the perfect time for each of you as members to reach out to me or any of the board members you know and communicate your thoughts, feedback, and ideas for our organization to invest in. You can shape the future of IDA.

I hope I will see you at our first event of this year this weekend where we are able to socialize with each other with a socially responsible investment in UNICEF. The **IDA members social with families at the POST on April 6th** is booked almost to capacity. Please read the details below. This event is being held at the same location as a unique UNICEF exhibit called **Heart Strings** so that we can all attend the UNICEF exhibit in support of their mission.

Feel free to reach out to me directly at arvind.bhimaraj@gmail.com or through the IDA email at idahoustontx@gmail.com.

Arvind Bhimaraj, MD MPH
IDA President

UPCOMING EVENT
IDA Family Social
in support of UNICEF.

April 6th, 2024



This year we are organizing our annual family social event with a twist of social responsibility. Registration is almost full- [Eventbrite](#). Hope you are planning to join us at **POST Houston, Franklin Street, Houston, TX, USA** for a day filled with fun activities and an opportunity to make a difference. Bring your family and friends to show your support for children in need around the world. Let's come together to create a positive impact and spread joy to those who need it most. We can't wait to see you there! This social event is free for IDA members (4 individuals per family) and \$20 per non-member (family of 4).

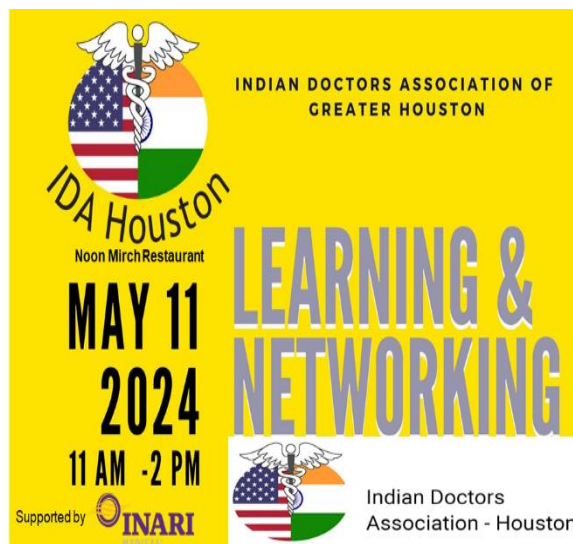
I AM HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE FIRST 50 ATTENDEES WILL GET FREE TICKETS TO THE UNICEF HEART STRINGS EXHIBIT. You can also use this

link [IDA Custom Link](#) to purchase discounted tickets for the UNICEF [Heart Strings](#) interactive experience to support their cause. This unique event is being introduced in Houston, Texas for the first time in the United States.

LEARNING AND NETWORKING EVENTS
(LNE)

IDA is excited to announce our Regional Learning and Networking events (LNEs) where our members can interact with each other while learning about a topic (that is broadly applicable to all specialties).

Clearlake LNE:
Location: Noon Mirch.
May 11th 11 AM-2pm



IDA's 41st Annual Gala
pictures available on
our website



For pictures, [click here](#).

**ADVOCACY: AN
IMPORTANT NEED FOR
DOCTORS: A MESSAGE
FROM THE PRESIDENT OF
HCMS.**

We had the pleasure of having Dr. Robert Jackson speak at our annual CME event where he stressed the importance of why we as doctors need to do more advocating for ourselves and our lives. He highlighted the large gap in what the reality of our worlds are and what the legislative vision of our world is. I invited Dr. Jackson to address this with a write-up so all our members can gain from his wealth of knowledge and leadership.

See below his article and I am grateful for his contribution to our newsletter-Arvind Bhimaraj



Dr. Robert Jackson

As the largest county medical society in the nation with more than 13,000 members, the Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) supports physicians across diverse specialties, practice settings, and career stages. Along with the Texas Medical Association (TMA), HCMS offers many benefits aimed at assisting our members and protecting the House of Medicine.

Advocacy

At the heart of HCMS's mission lies a steadfast commitment to advocating for physicians' legislative and regulatory interests. During each legislative session, the TMA and HCMS track and guide state legislators on healthcare-related bills. Additionally, the TMA and HCMS sponsor First Tuesdays at the Capitol so our members can provide a first-hand account of how regulations and laws impact physicians, their patients, and their practices.

In recent legislative sessions, HCMS played a pivotal role in advancing key priorities such as safeguarding physicians' scope of

practice, preserving standards of care, and addressing public health challenges. In 2023, HCMS and TMA were successful in getting the Texas State Legislature to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage to a full year.

Additionally, we successfully defended tort reform and did not allow liability caps to increase. Finally, TMA and HCMS followed up on the 2021 gold card success with a new prior authorization reform for vulnerable patients and other insurance-related policy wins.

These efforts underscore HCMS's dedication to ensuring a favorable environment for physicians to deliver high-quality care to their patients.

We also advocate for physicians with insurance companies to address burdensome policies that impact physicians, reimbursement, and patient care. For example, Cigna's proposed modifier 25 policy in 2023 would have increased administrative burdens for physicians, discouraging modifier 25's use and reducing payments. Through HCMS and TMA advocacy, this policy change was successfully blocked.

Also, for Texas county medical societies, HCMS led in offering its members crucial guidance on navigating the repercussions of the recent cyberattack on Change Healthcare. This attack led to the shutdown of Change Healthcare's systems and some of its key partners being disconnected. This incident had

national consequences, affecting physicians and patients alike, with disruptions in claims submissions, payments, prescriptions, and various other services.

Membership Benefits

HCMS membership opens doors to many benefits designed to meet the evolving needs of physicians and their practices. With more than 100 member benefits ranging from practice management resources to wellness programs, HCMS strives to provide unparalleled value to its members all for the minimal cost of HCMS's yearly membership.

One example is our Payment & Practice Help Program, which assists in resolving payer-related issues and practice management concerns and has helped physicians reclaim over \$30 million in improperly paid claims since its inception, all free of charge for HCMS members.

Additionally, HCMS offers educational opportunities, networking and social events, resources to grow patient referrals, and access to professional development resources to support physicians in navigating the complexities of modern healthcare.

Whether you are a seasoned practitioner or a young physician navigating the early stages of your career, HCMS offers opportunities to expand your network and get valuable continuing medical education through our seven geographical branch meetings. HCMS holds multiple

social events throughout the year. In 2023, we held two social events for members and their families. Both events had over 100 participants and provided our members with the opportunity to build relationships with other physicians from all practice settings and specialties. Our next member social event, Porsche and Prosecco, will be held April 18 at the Porsche West Houston dealership from 7 to 10 p.m. All HCMS members are invited to join me, so please RSVP.

Your membership with HCMS/TMA strengthens and shapes your own future as well as healthcare in Harris County and Texas. Through collaborative efforts and grassroots initiatives, HCMS enables its members to make positive changes in the practice of medicine and the profession. So thank you for being a member and part of HCMS. For more information on HCMS membership and benefits, visit www.hcms.org or contact us at 713-524-4267. Your membership matters.

KNOW YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

Each month we will feature one of our board members so all of you can get to know them at a personal level and see who they really are as human beings. Our Board of Directors are amazing people who have invested a lot of their volunteering spirit for IDA, its mission, and your benefit.

Secretary
Dr. Niral Patel



Dr. Niral Patel is a board-certified family medicine provider. He completed his MBBS at Dr. D.Y. Patil Medical College in Mumbai, India. He completed his residency in Family Medicine at the University of North Dakota. Dr. Patel is a versatile physician blending family medicine, urgent care, and emergency medicine expertise with a deep understanding of clinical informatics, electronic health records (EHR), and artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare solutions. He worked with Memorial Hermann as an urgent care physician and director of medical operations in urgent care before transitioning to his current role as Physician champion for MedExpress Urgent Care division under Optum. Along with his administrative role, Dr. Patel continues to practice as an Urgent care and Emergency medicine

provider in the greater Houston area. With an additional master's in business administration in healthcare management, he spearheads innovative approaches to patient care and organizational efficiency. Dr. Patel excels in high-pressure environments, seamlessly integrating technology to optimize diagnostic accuracy and treatment efficacy. His leadership extends beyond the clinical realm, driving strategic initiatives to enhance operational efficiency and foster interdisciplinary collaboration. Dr. Patel's visionary approach ensures that he remains at the forefront of healthcare innovation, shaping medicine's future landscape through clinical excellence, technological proficiency, and strategic foresight.

Dr. Patel is happily married with two daughters and enjoys spending time with the family. He loves reading books, exercising, staying up to date with technology, and occasionally programming and coding. Dr. Patel is also a registered Apple developer.

NON-PROFIT ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 10th: Interactive Evening to learn about the First Free Rural Medical College in India.

Register [here](#)

Organized by



At the



WORDS OF WISDOM



And now that you don't have to be perfect, you can be good.

JOHN STEINBECK



If you have a famous quote, you want featured in the "Words of Wisdom section please email to idahoustontx@gmail.com

If you are interested in contributing content to this newsletter please email us.

Any ideas regarding activities of IDA are welcome as feedback. We want to hear from you.

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social media channels.



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