



# THE PAIN PRACTITIONER

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### President's Message

Thomas J. Romano, MD, PhD, FACP, FACR

One more American Academy of Pain Management Annual Clinical Meeting has successfully concluded. Now that the dust has settled I am back to a more predictable routine (if that is possible in pain management). I find that I have a bit more time to reflect on pain management in general and especially the Academy. The meeting provided an escape from my day-to-day business of caring for patients whose medical problems, while treatable, continue to plague them. These problems pose a challenge to my diagnostic and therapeutic acumen. Physically removed from the pressures and concerns of my practice, I enjoyed attending a retreat with fellow pain practitioners. Although only for a brief few days, it was a privilege. Throughout the meeting I was ever mindful of the need to further develop and refine my skills.

During the time we gathered for the meeting in Reno, the world outside the Academy continued to be a threatening and downright scary place for the many chronic pain patients. These patients are often mistreated, untreated or under treated. Many are told that pain is "all in your head." Others do not have the resources to find a qualified pain practitioner. Still others are frustrated as the providers they go to for support and aid are themselves overwhelmed, overworked, and, in some cases, facing burnout.

The recent Annual Clinical Meeting gave clinicians an opportunity to take a break from the demands of their practices and not only learn more effective pain management strategies from their colleagues but also to recharge their batteries in an atmosphere that promoted healing and growth. It is the incredibly supportive atmosphere of the Academy that initially attracted me to it. When I attended the first Clinical Meeting I was impressed with the dedication of the staff, the farsightedness of the Board of Directors and the leadership of Drs. Kathryn and Richard Weiner. Although Richard was sorely missed at this past meeting, the Academy continues to live on and thrive due, in no small part, to an excellent support staff and the unwavering leadership of the new Executive Director, Kathryn Weiner. One must not forget however the importance of each and every individual member of the Academy. Each member supports the Academy in numerous ways, thus advancing the field of pain management.

I am a member of many different medical societies and groups and I can honestly attest that none can compare with the Academy in providing a supportive and nurturing environment for professional growth as well as the comradery necessary to make this growth a positive, fun experience. The interactions among

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(President's message continued)

members of varied disciplines, networking, the making of new friends and the cementing of old friendships all took place at our recent meeting as well as much, much more. Our attendees enjoyed the scientific and clinical presentations as well as the opportunity to interact with the speakers both during the individual sessions and the meeting at large.

The Academy did not end with the last lecture on Sunday, September 29th. It continues to be an invaluable resource to any clinician who treats patients afflicted with chronic pain. I am proud to announce that the utilization review process is still offered by the Academy. If you need help in answering inquiries from regulatory agencies or have disputes with third parties, the Academy may be able to help. Use it if you need it! The University of Integrated Studies continues to attract students. Check it out! There is much to learn. The Academy can help! The National Pain Data Bank is still tracking

treatment outcomes. Make a difference. Let the Academy know what modalities work for your patients or find out how others have fared. No need to reinvent the wheel! We are looking forward to continued growth in the future. Check out the Website! The Academy has a lot to offer! Our membership is growing and Dr. Kathryn Weiner and the Academy staff are working diligently to provide even more services to directly benefit our members and assist them in treating people suffering pain.

While at the meeting I had the opportunity to greet many old friends and make quite a few new ones. I welcome the new members to our Academy and hope that they will take full advantage of all the Academy has to offer. I hope they will suggest new and better ways that the Academy can serve its membership. Remember, it's your Academy! Get involved! Make your presence known! Together we can do remarkable things. Our patients deserve our best; our patients deserve no less.

## Thank You

to the following  
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for their generous  
donations to the  
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