

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

No Prop 67...And the End of Life Course

Shahram Lotfipour, MD, FAAEM

I am certain I am not the only one that was disappointed that Proposition 67 did not pass. With increasing numbers of uninsured in California and the persistent underinsured it would have been a shot in the arm for the California Emergency Care, Prehospital Care and On-Call services. It seemed to me it came down to most people just feeling that another tax is not something they wanted to vote for no matter how small.... Although they did not hesitate to vote for the billions in bonds for stem cell and the children's hospitals. We were outgunned and out-funded and perhaps we could have done more to promote it locally and regionally. Furthermore, the issue we were making to the California voters could not have been timelier given the closure of so many trauma centers in California over the past year and most recently the trauma center at MLK. I guess what makes it worse is that the trauma system closure could affect not only our trauma infrastructure, but also burden non-trauma emergency care centers at times of saturation as well. The opposition to Proposition 67 illustrates that no one is going to fix this system for us and we will have to use our creativity to preserve emergency care in California in every way we can.

I would like to thank all of our California members, readers and subscribers who joined us at the End of Life/Pain Management Preconference course at the 2005 AAEM Scientific Assembly. This was a two day Preconference course which was held on February 15th & 16th at the AAEM assembly in San Diego. The End of Life course will help satisfy the AB 487 state requirements. The Pain Management and End of Life credits are required for California licensure by 2006.

Some of the topics that were covered in this course included "Pathophysiology of Pain," "Pain Assessment in the Pediatric & Adult Populations," "Pain Medication Overdose in the Elderly," "The Dilemma of Drug Seekers," and "Risk Management

Issues in End of Life and Pain Management." The End of Life course was offered the two days immediately preceding the Assembly. Dr. Joanne Williams spent considerable volunteer time organizing this course for you. I hope this serves as a valuable resource to our members.

The Cal/AAEM Board of Directors recently voted to make Cal/AAEM membership free for all California medical students and residents. We welcome your participation and we will provide the California Journal of Emergency Medicine and full benefits to you at no cost. To become Cal/AAEM members please contact AAEM or talk to your program director.

I was glad to meet many of you who joined us on Thursday February 17th at 6 PM at the Cal/AAEM-sponsored Opening Reception. We are currently holding elections for upcoming open positions in our Board of Directors. Results will be forwarded to you as soon as possible. Please make your commitment to Cal/AAEM today and help us by volunteering your time serving on a committee or working with the Board. Email us at calaaem@aaem.org.

I want to encourage every AAEM member in California to not only join Cal/AAEM, but to contribute to the Political Action Committee in the united California PAC (EMPAC) as well as to our national AAEM (AAEM-PAC). I challenge every member to join me and the other Cal/AAEM board members in supporting and contributing through your Cal/AAEM society to the many challenges our state faces in emergency care each and every day. I welcome your comments and suggestions. God Bless.

Shahram Lotfipour, MD, FAAEM