



North Coast Physician



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Cover Photo

"SUN CLOUDS ON THE BAY 1"

Stephen Kamelgarn, M.D.

The Editorial and Publications Committee encourages our member's comments for publication.

Please submit electronically prior to the 15th of the month preceding publication. hdncms@sbcglobal.net

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Vanishing Vasectomies

Scott Sattler, M.D..



We have a major public health problem here on the North Coast and it just got worse. Several years ago Eureka’s Urology Associates, Humboldt County’s only urologists, joined the St. Joseph’s Humboldt Medical Specialists group. This is now called St. Joseph Health Medical Group (SJHMG). As demanded by the ethical directives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and as enforced by Santa Rosa’s Bishop Vasa, they forfeited their capacity to provide vasectomy services to our community. This responsibility then fell upon our local general surgeons and family practitioners. Physicians at Eureka Family Practice (EFP) have performed this procedure for years, but now EFP has joined SJHMG and its physicians have also been denied the freedom to perform vasectomies. Simultaneously Planned Parenthood staff announced that they have unexpectedly lost one of their two vasectomy providers. Planned Parenthood (PP) is the major provider of vasectomies in Humboldt County.

Last week I looked online and found a WebMD site titled “Physicians Who Perform Vasectomy Near Eureka, CA,” and it listed eight physicians. I called their offices and discovered that six of those listed are no longer doing so.

So why is this a public health problem? Why all the fuss? It is because of all the permanent methods of birth control,

vasectomy is the most safe, reliable, and cost effective. While abstinence is theoretically more reliable, study after study has shown that as a birth control method it is waaaaay too unreliable. Here’s what the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists in the United Kingdom has to say about the success rate of the two most utilized forms of permanent birth control: (References available on request):

- According to the RCOG there is a 1 in 2,000 chance of a pregnancy resulting from vasectomy failure – 0.05%. This figure is based on men having been given clearance after submitting samples for analysis in order to rule out early failures and recanalization (spontaneous re-joining of the vas deferens). One study put the rate at 1 in 4,000 (0.025%) when DNA proven paternity of post-vasectomy babies was taken into account.
- Tubal ligation is considerably less reliable than vasectomy. Studies quote an ongoing pregnancy rate of 1 in 200 (0.5%). They report that tubal ligation is ten times more likely to result in an unplanned pregnancy than vasectomy.

Given these findings, I contacted other medical societies and individual offices in our region and compiled a list of current providers in the hope that this might enhance vasectomy availability. If I have missed someone, please let me know. Our local Medical Society office (Penny) has agreed to keep a current list of regional vasectomy providers at the Medical

Society office (707) 442-2367. Physician offices may call and request an electronic copy. It is too long and bulky to print here in its entirety so I offer a brief summary of its contents:

Local and Regional Resources for Vasectomy

Humboldt County:

At the present time we have only three public providers for this service in Humboldt: Dr. Luther Cobb at Mad River Community Hospital in Arcata, Dr. Tim Paik-Nicely at PP and at his With Open Arms clinic in Eureka, and Dr. Ruben Brinckhous at Fortuna Family Medical Group.

Drs. Paik-Nicely and Dr. Hugh Kent also provide vasectomies at the United Indian Health Services in Arcata but this service is limited to those on the Native American tribal rolls. The Open Door facilities in McKinleyville, Eureka and Fortuna currently do not currently provide the service, referring patients to Eureka’s Planned Parenthood, as do the Redwoods Rural Health Center in Redway and the Southern Humboldt Community Clinic in Garberville.

Planned Parenthood has been covering the remainder of Humboldt’s

“VASECTOMIES”, Cont on Pg 18

Like to Write?

Editorial and Publications Committee is looking for members who are interested in writing and helping to develop Medical Society member communications, directories, etc. Meetings are held quarterly at the Medical Society office. PLEASE let us know.

“VASECTOMIES”, Cont. From Pg. 5

vasectomy needs by scheduling twenty-eight cases per month with a two-month backlog. But as of this past month as mentioned above, one of their two providers, now a SJHMG physician, will no longer be providing these services. Subsequently Planned Parenthood’s capacity to provide vasectomies has been reduced to 14 cases per month, pushing its backlog to a four-month delay of service.

Trinity County:

There is one provider of vasectomy services in Trinity County, Dr. Daniel Harwood in Weaverville who provides the service in his office.

Lake County:

There are no vasectomy providers in Lake County.

Mendocino County:

I could find but one provider in Mendocino County, Dr. Peter Cho in Ukiah.

Del Norte County:

There are two family physicians at the Open Door’s Del Norte Community Health Center in Crescent City providing the service: Dr. Katrina Groves and Dr. Warren Rehwaldt.

Sonoma County:

A urologist in Sebastopol, Dr. Oreoluwa Ikeoye Ogunyemi, Stanford trained, provides the service in her office. Kaiser Permanente provides the service for members in Santa Rosa, as do Dr. Michael Lazar and Dr. Thomas Duckett, urologists with Santa Rosa’s Sutter Health. Dr. Douglas Jimenez takes referrals from other physicians at his Vista Family Health Center Clinic.

Shasta County:

Redding Urology Associates in Redding has three physicians who provide the service.

Commentary:

When you add the fact that neither St. 18

Joseph Hospital in Eureka nor Redwood Memorial Hospital in Fortuna allows tubal ligations due to the USCCB directives, you begin to see the broad public health impact of losing access to vasectomy services. Pregnancy is one of the riskiest aspects of women’s health. Access to permanent contraception must remain an option for those men and women whose conscience and/or health condition demands them to take such action.

The USCCB’s nationwide ability to deny those in need the right to control their own reproductive life regardless of their personal spiritual path or lack thereof leads to increased suffering, morbidity and perinatal mortality. As a society we have allowed one specific religion to force unwilling physicians and patients to submit to its religious ideology to a degree that significantly compromises the medical standard of care. We would never allow a religiously based hospital to deny giving whole blood, platelets or white blood cells to patients in need because their religion considers it evil, yet even as a spiritually eclectic society that prides itself on the separation of church

and state we have somehow allowed the USCCB to act in this similar fashion. The USCCB’s spiritual intolerance significantly compromises reproductive health care not only in our county but also in our country as a whole, especially the rural regions, for now one in six admissions to a hospital falls under their command and control.

This situation must be adamantly addressed and corrected. All patients must insist on their right to access and receive treatment reflecting the current medical standard of care. No religion should be able to deny any care contained within these standards. The USCCB’s efforts to do so under the guise of ‘Freedom of Religion’ (interpreted by them as a religion’s mandate to freely impose its dogma on all comers) would be more accurately described as ‘Tyranny of Religion.’ True freedom of religion contains the element of ‘Spiritual Liberty.’ Every person must be allowed the freedom to follow their inner voice of innate wisdom and conscience with respect to their personal health care. There is no place for coercion on the spiritual path. §

Featured Member Benefit

Rental Cars: CMA members receive up to 15 percent off daily, weekend, weekly, and monthly rates from Avis. With Hertz, members can save up to 15 percent off daily rates and 10 percent off standard daily, weekly, and weekend rates on all car classes for business and leisure rentals. Special international discounts are also available. Upgrades and other special coupon offers are available.

Members-only codes are needed to take advantage of these discounts. Call the member service center at (800) 786-4262 (4CMA) to get your codes.

**Contact: CMA Member Resource Center,
(800) 786-4262 or memberservice@cmanet.org.**

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PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

Refer to Practice Opportunities on our website for a list of Practice Opportunities for Physicians. Separate listing for Advanced Practice Clinicians is also posted. Recruitment Brochure & Video; Links to Local Recreation; Links to Loan Repayment Programs; Norcal Medical Partners Facebook, and more....
www.hdncms.org

MISCELLANEOUS

MEDICAL STUDENT HOST HOUSING NEEDED.
 Do you have an extra room? Empty nest? Want to play a part in mentoring and welcoming a medical student to our rural county? Please call Kate McCaffrey at (707) 599-7832. In some cases a housing stipend is available.
 Thank You!

FIREWOOD for Sale. Contact Lee: (707) 499-2805

OFFICE EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

PROPERTY FOR SALE/ RENT/ LEASE

OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE. 4,000 sq. ft. medical office space to lease on the Mad River Hospital campus in Arcata. Contact John Biteman, MD (707) 499-0398.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

YOUR HELP IN RECRUITING YOUR
 COLLEAGUES AND STRENGTHENING
 THE "VOICE" OF YOUR PROFESSION
 AND YOUR PATIENTS IS IMPORTANT.
 YOUR MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
 NEEDS YOUR HELP.

PLEASE HELP IN IDENTIFYING
 LOCAL EDUCATIONAL GAPS.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING OUR CME
 PROGRAM ARE ALWAYS WELCOME -
 WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO GET INVOLVED.

CONTACT THE CONSORTIUM COORDINATOR - TERRI TAYLOR AT
 (707) 442-2353,
TTAYLOR_HDNCMS@SBCGLOBAL.NET

E-Mail Address Updates? Allied Health Practitioner Updates? Find information published in the Directory that needs to be updated? Please let the Medical Society know so we can keep records as up-to-date as possible.

Did You Know....

Members may run classified ads in *North Coast Physician* at no charge for the first six months for business-related ads and ½ price for personal ads (on space available basis).

Display Advertising Rate Schedule

<u>SIZE</u>	<u>MONTHLY</u>	<u>SIZE</u>
1/4 Page	\$140.00	7.45" x 2.61"
1/2 Page	\$160.00	7.45" x 5.23"
1/3 Page Vertical	\$150.00	2.37" x 9.95"
Full Page	\$200.00	7.45" x 9.95"
Inside Cover/Full Page	\$275.00	7.90" x 10.40"
Business Card Ad	\$65.00	Copy Ready 2" x 3.5"
Classified Ads	\$5.25 per line	

DEADLINE: 15th day of the preceding month to be published