

MMDA's official newsletter serving members in Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, DC

Message from the President



ello fellow MMDA members:

It is with a heavy heart that we note the passing of two giants in the world of post-acute and long-term

care, Dr. Steve Levenson and Dr. Joe Berman.

Please find information on these beloved colleagues on pages 3-5 of this newsletter.

In addition, we would like to highlight some of the goings on in the legislature as well as an update on current COVID protocols in Maryland and the country at large.

[Clinician Letter_Source Control_2.23.24.pdf](#) (govdelivery.com) may be found on page 7.

Please remember that MMDA is *your* organization. Without you, we would not exist and we are here to help support you in the incredibly important work that you do on a daily basis. If there are specific topics that you would like to see MMDA address, please let us know. Finally, if you find the information and sense of community that MMDA provides helpful, please consider joining or re-joining your local chapter if

you have not already done so.

I am not able to attend the national AMDA meeting this year, but I wish those of you going a fruitful and productive conference.

MMDA is pleased to be a sponsor of **AMDA's Joint State Chapter Networking Reception and Board of Directors Candidate Meet & Greet** during **PALTC24**.

Date: Sunday, March 10, 2024

Time: 5:15 p.m.; Immediately following the conclusion of Sunday's education sessions.

Venue: Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center

Location: Stars at Night Ballroom Pre-Function Space

Additional Information: Hors-d'ouevres and beverages to be provided.

MMDA's State Chapter Membership Meeting will be held following the Joint Reception at **6 p.m.** in **Room 301**.

Many thanks and stay well!

Damien Doyle, MD, CMD; President



MMDA's President Dr. Damien Doyle toasts its 30th Anniversary during the Annual Conference on Nov. 3, 2023.



MMDA's 30th Anniversary Conference was held on Nov. 4, 2023, at the Hebrew Home of Greater Washington, and it was a huge success. Pictured here are some of the participants during the conference.

MMDA Leadership

2022–2024

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Ravi Passi, Vice President
Fatima Naqvi, Secretary
Elisa Gil-Pires, Treasurer

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Fatima Sheikh, Chair

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Barbara Resnick, Chair

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3123 Breakwater Court,
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Remembering Joe Berman



Joseph Berman, MD, MPH, of Frederick, MD, passed away on Saturday, Dec. 23, 2023, at the age of 88.

Upon completion of his medical internship and residency in Baltimore, Joe and his wife Marjorie remained in Baltimore and raised three children. From 1963-1965, Joe and Marjorie were stationed in Toul, France, where Joe was a physician in the Army. Following his Army posting, Joe began his career in Baltimore and began working at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore where he eventually served as the Chief of Community Medicine and the Director of Emergency and Ambulatory Services, while also serving as the Medical Director at the Levindale Hebrew Home and Hospital.

In 1980, Joe followed his work at Sinai with a position as the Deputy Secretary for the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, with an emphasis on local health services and health regulation. Numerous jobs followed, including Vice President for Medical Affairs at Wyman Park (MD), President of FreeState Health Plan (MD), and Chief Medical Officer at Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield (OH).

Throughout his career, Joe strove to help those in need. In 2000 he assumed the position of Medical Director for The Office of Health Care Quality (MD). In this role, Joe was responsible for review of quality-of-care complaints in Maryland HMOs, hospitals, and nursing homes. He also led the effort to enact regulations for Medical Directors and for infection control in long term care facilities. Joe's final job as a physician was at the Frederick Memorial Wound Center, treating patients.

Joe came from modest means and was a life-long supporter of the underprivileged. He was very passionate about public health and traveled the world treating people in

underdeveloped countries while helping build medical systems to assist those in need. He traveled on medical missions throughout his career, into his late 70s, to Brazil, Uganda, Kenya, The Gambia, India, and Haiti.

History of MMDA's Berman Medical Director of the Year Award

The Berman award was suggested originally by board member, Dr. Rebecca Elon, and was developed to honor Dr. Joseph Berman and subsequent recipients as a lifetime achievement award recognizing

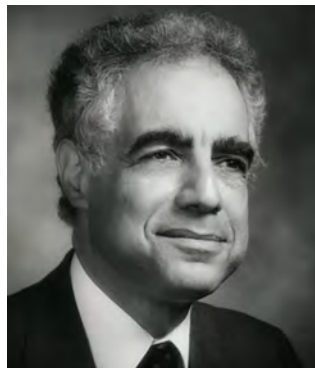
the physician for a career of significant contribution to the LTC continuum.

The award was intended to be given annually at the MMDA Annual Meeting, as voted by the Board of Directors. Dr. Berman received the inaugural award in November 2007.

As the third Medical Director of the Office of HealthCare Quality, Dr. Berman was noted not only for his diligence to his

office, but also for his unwavering commitment to best practices and his willingness to reach out to clinicians with the highest standard of care for the community being his goal. Last but not least, Dr. Berman spearheaded Maryland's efforts to develop and implement education requirements for medical directors.

In November 2008, the award was presented to Dr. Steve Levenson, Past President of both MMDA and AMDA, not only for his work with AMDA and CMS at the national level, editorship of *Caring for the Ages*, publications on the role of the medical director and contributions to AMDA's Clinical Practice Guidelines, but also for his time, effort, and commitment at the state chapter level to establish and strengthen MMDA to become one of the preeminent state chapters of AMDA.



Dr. Joseph Berman

In Memory of Dr. Berman

I was introduced to Dr. “Joe” Berman many years ago when he was the medical director for OHCQ. He had worked closely with Dr. Steve Levenson on crafting the Maryland regulations related to medical directors and attending physicians. Maryland was the first state to require training as a nursing home medical director and the AMDA CMD course was considered the “approved” course or evidence of alternative training. I also worked with Joe when the Maryland regulations for Infection Preventionist training were crafted. Joe created an informal group of medical directors that met with OHCQ and served as an informal advisory group.

He advocated for high quality care in the PALTC setting and holding medical directors, attendings, and all practitioners accountable hence the regulations. Joe had held my position at Levindale in Baltimore in the past as had Steve. After Joe left OHCQ, MMDA created the Berman Award in his honor. Appropriately, Dr. Steve Levenson was the first awardee. He retired to the Frederick area and remained active with health care mission work. I missed seeing him over the past several years. We did catch up on a visit we had when I had moved to Bethany Beach. He is another PALTC practitioner hero we have lost recently and his impact on our region was significant.

— *Susan Levy, MD, CMD*

I sat next to Dr. Berman when we were doing Maryland’s Official Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) form.

Dr. Berman shared that 40-50 years ago, when he was a fresh doctor, anyone who would fall on the ground would get a tube down his or her throat. He told us how cool it was when portable EKG machines were developed, and they would be ready or not to give the patient some shocks.

Afterwards, when they continued to do the same thing over and over again they realized that not everyone needed a tube down their throat and not everyone required a feeding tube.

Dr. Berman talked about the importance of staying abreast with the changes in society, technology, and changing research to assist our patients with the best possible answers.

His every word was deep and full of wisdom that you can’t find in any book or search engine.

With gratitude for his work!

— *Fatima Naqvi, MD, CMD*

MMDA’s Hot Topics

2024 Schedule

Day:	Wednesday, March 20, 2024
Time:	5:30-6:30 p.m.
Speakers:	Dr. Michele Bellantoni
Topic:	Osteoporosis Diagnosis and Management in PALTC
Moderator:	Dr. Fatima Sheikh
Day:	Wednesday, April 24, 2024
Time:	12-1 p.m.
Speakers:	Dr. Megan Buresh
Topic:	Using Buprenorphine for Pain Management
Moderator:	Dr. Fatima Sheikh
Day:	Monday, May 6, 2024
Time:	12-1 p.m.
Speakers:	Dr. Rebecca Elon
Topic:	Raising the Bar for Nursing Care: Strategies for Performance Improvement
Moderator:	Dr. Fatima Sheikh
Day:	Thursday, June 13, 2024
Time:	4-5 p.m.
Speakers:	Bill LeGallee, PharmD, BCGP
Topic:	Psychotropic Safety & Regulatory Updates in Long-Term Care
Moderator:	Dr. Fatima Sheikh

Hot Topics NOTES

1. This is a list of the first four of a total of six (6), 1.0-hour live/recorded webinars being planned between March and the end of the year. We have applied to AMDA for physician CME/CMD approval for these webinars.
2. Webinars will be free live or recorded and available to MMDA members only. Non-members are invited to join MMDA to register for these excellent webinars.
3. Attendees must register in advance to receive the webinar link. Each participant will be required to complete a session evaluation in order to earn CMEs/CMDs and receive a certificate of attendance.
4. Check your emails for the invitation to register for MMDA’s Hot Topics.

See You at AMDA in San Antonio!

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Remembering Steve Levenson

Steven Levenson, MD, CMD, spent 43 years working on-site in long-term and post-acute care settings as a physician and medical director in Maryland.

He is widely recognized for his pioneering work in medical direction and efforts to improve geriatrics and long-term care. He wrote four books and almost 100 articles. His book, *Medical Direction in Long-term Care*, was the first ever written about how to be a medical director. He also authored a major policy handbook for medical directors and the Subacute and Transitional Care Handbook, which is the only comprehensive clinically oriented reference on the topic of post-acute care.

In Memory of Dr. Levenson

Steve, the Educator — Above all else, Dr. Steve Levenson was an educator. From the lost art of a thorough history and an attentive physical exam to the sometimes arcane and bureaucratic world of regulatory mandates and policies, Steve always strived to keep his North Star — that of the care of the person in front of you.

He was a true pioneer in post-acute and long-term care and continuously strove for doing the right thing — caring for the frail, elderly population he always felt honored to serve.

He will be missed by so many and his influence will continue on long after his passing. Go well into your good night, my friend.

— **Damien Doyle, MD, CMD**

Steve had a passion for accurate physical diagnosis and disseminating best medical practices in post-acute and long-term care. He made our chapter meetings lively with his challenges to our regional PALTC providers and medical directors to take a more active leadership role in our facilities.

He was a wealth of knowledge in QAPI activities among the many facilities he supervised as a corporate medical director.

— **Michelle Bellantoni, MD, CMD**

Over the past 37 years, Dr. Levenson had a major role in developing the American Medical Directors Association (AMDA) and extending its influence. He was the AMDA president from 2006-2007 and spent 25 years (1988-2013). He was a CMS advisor and consultant, helping develop clinically relevant surveyor guidance and training on most of the Quality-of-Care and many of the Quality-of-Life TAGs. This included

CMS' original Unnecessary Drug guidelines and the original OBRA guidance on Psychopharmacological Medications and GDR guidance, much of which is still used today.

Here are a few highlights of his long and distinguished career:

- In 1998, Steve was honored with the James Pattee Award for Excellence in Education and received the William Dodd Founder's Award in 2012.
- He was a long-time and frequent contributor to *JAMDA* and *Caring for the Ages*.
- He spoke about many PALTC topics to both state and national audiences.
- He strongly advocated for basic, routine, and effective quality assurance and quality improvement processes in nursing home settings.
- He worked as a consultant to the CMS Nursing Home Division and was also instrumental in getting regulations passed in his home state of Maryland, which was the first to require nursing home medical directors to have specific training in that role.



THE FOUNDATION
FOR POST-ACUTE AND
LONG-TERM
CARE MEDICINE



LIFESPAN
NETWORK
The BEACON
INSTITUTE

Dr. Steven Levenson Medical Direction Memorial Lectureship

Please join us in remembering and honoring Dr. Steve Levenson for his significant contributions and the indelible mark he left on our organization and the field of post-acute and long-term care medicine.



March 18, 1950 - January 24, 2024

The LifeSpan Network family mourns the loss of Dr. Steven Levenson. We were always amazed at his intellect, his kindness, and his respect for others. Beacon adopted and promoted his AMDA Clinical Practice Guidelines, which are still in use, about 25 years ago.

The Foundation for PALTC Medicine has created the **Steven Levenson Medical Direction Memorial Lectureship**. This endowed lectureship will support an **inspiring and dynamic lecture that delivers informative content** buttressing the roles and responsibilities of medical direction during a general session at the AMDA annual conference.

Donations may be made through the Foundation for PALTC Medicine's website and by designating your gift to the **Steven Levenson Medical Direction Memorial Lectureship**.



Scan the QR code to donate, or visit
<https://form-renderer-app.donorperfect.io/give/paltec-foundation/online-gift-card>

His books, articles, and lectures have provided a foundation for medical direction that remains pivotal to AMDA's mission and its membership. In fact, he wrote what many consider the most valuable and comprehensive textbook on the role of the medical director. He also wrote a textbook on subacute care.

Recently, AMDA announced that the Foundation for PALTC Medicine had created the Steven Levenson Medical Direction Memorial Lectureship to honor his memory. According to AMDA, this endowed lectureship will support an inspiring and dynamic lecture that delivers informative content buttressing the roles and responsibilities of medical direction during a general session at our annual conference. Donations may be made through the Foundation for PALTC Medicine's website and by designating your gift to the Steven Levenson Medical Direction Memorial Lectureship.

Please join us in remembering and honoring Dr. Steve Levenson for his significant contributions and the indelible mark he left on MMDA, AMDA and the field of PALTC medicine.

Join MMDA Today!

MMDA – The Mid-Atlantic Society for PALTC Medicine serves medical directors, attending physicians, advanced practice nurses, and consultant pharmacists practicing in SNFs throughout Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, DC.

Join us in advancing excellence!

Here are a few of the benefits of membership:

- ▶ Networking Opportunities
- ▶ Education and Training
- ▶ Advocacy and Recognition
- ▶ Resources and Support
- ▶ Exclusive Member Benefits
- ▶ Leadership Opportunities
- ▶ Join us in Advancing Excellence

www.midatlanticmda.org

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 MMDAwebsite@gmail.com



MMDA Membership Update

Visit our Website — www.midatlanticmda.org

“Hot Topics” Return! — MMDA’s Hot Topics webinars are returning in March and are free for MMDA members! See the list of excellent topics on page 4. As always, your topic and speaker recommendations are welcomed and encouraged.

Call for Nominations for MMDA Awards — Your colleagues work tirelessly throughout the year! We invite you to consider nominating them for MMDA’s Medical Director of the Year Award or the Clinician of the Year Award. Be on the lookout for the e-notice, check the website for nomination forms www.midatlanticmda.org, request the forms via email from mmda-website@gmail.com, or call the business office at (561) 689-6321. The Awards will be presented during the business meeting at the annual conference in November.

Your Membership is Appreciated...Your Engagement is Requested — Share your professional expertise and knowledge of good governance practices by serving on one of MMDA’s committees. MMDA committee chairs and members are listed on page 2. If you would like to be considered for committee membership, send an email to MMDA staff at mmdawebsite@gmail.com.

Annual Conference Call for Speaker Presentation Proposals — The Mid-Atlantic Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine is dedicated to advancing the quality of healthcare in post-acute and long-term care settings. MMDA serves medical directors, attending physicians, and advanced practice nurses in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, as well as other post-acute care settings, throughout Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, DC. Our annual conference serves as a platform for learning, collaboration, and the exchange of cutting-edge medical knowledge.

We are inviting healthcare professionals, experts, and thought leaders to submit speaker presentation proposals. This is an excellent opportunity to contribute to the field and share your expertise with a diverse audience of healthcare practitioners.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

One (1) Membership Year: January to December

**MMDA –
The Mid-Atlantic
Society for Post-
Acute and Long-
Term Care Medicine,
Inc.**

Maryland
Washington, DC
Delaware
Chapter of AMDA

Name _____ Credential(s) _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

E-mail (**REQUIRED**) _____

Telephone (office) _____ Fax _____

I have served as a Medical Director for _____ years.

I have served as a clinician in long-term care for _____ years.

☐ **Yes, I would like to Join or Renew MMDA!**

**Membership
Fees:**

General: Physicians, APNs, PAs in practice _____ \$150

Affiliate: Nurses, DONs, DDSs, CNSs, DPMs, and other IDT members _____ \$75

Emeritus: Retired _____ \$40

Students of all disciplines, **Residents**, and **Fellows** _____ \$0

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

**Payment
Methods:**

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

You may go to the MMDA website at www.midatlanticmda.org and pay using a credit card that will be processed through our Stripe account.

☐ Check enclosed. Please make checks payable to **MMDA**.

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____

ZIP code of billing address _____

Print Name _____
(as it appears on the card)

Signature _____ Date _____

I am interested in working on the following committee(s) – Each are for 1-year terms.

☐ Quality Assurance/Patient Care ☐ Education/Program

☐ Finance ☐ Public Policy ☐ Membership

MMDA – The Mid-Atlantic Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine, Inc.
3123 Breakwater Court, West Palm Beach, FL 33411

**Mailing
Payment
Address:**

You may also email this form to mmdawebsite@gmail.com, fax to (561) 689-6324, or mail the check separately. If you have questions regarding membership, please visit www.midatlanticmda.org, email mmdawebsite@gmail.com, or call **Shane Bellotti, Director of Operations**, at (561) 689-6321.



Join Now at <https://midatlanticmda.org/mmda-membership-form/>



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 23, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

The Maryland Department of Health has previously recommended that broad facility-wide source control should be implemented in all patient care areas and patient-facing healthcare settings, including outpatient and long-term care, when the statewide combined weekly respiratory virus-associated hospitalization rate (as calculated by CDC) meets or exceeds 10 hospitalizations per 100,000 residents. **According to [CDC data](#), the combined weekly respiratory virus-associated hospitalization rate has now been below 10 hospitalizations per 100,000 residents for two consecutive weeks. Therefore, facilities may opt to discontinue broad facility-wide source control at this time.**

While COVID, influenza and RSV hospitalizations have decreased in recent weeks, there is still substantial respiratory virus activity and vaccination rates are significantly lower than in previous years. Therefore, we encourage Maryland health care providers to continue to monitor MDH's Source Control Metric webpage for the most up-to-date information:

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/Pages/resp-virus-metric.aspx>.

Clinicians are urged to continue to take the following key measures to prevent and contain the spread of respiratory infections:

- Vaccinate eligible patients and healthcare workers against COVID, influenza, and RSV
- Treat with antivirals early and when appropriate
- Test and isolate infected individuals quickly
- Use Personal Protective Equipment appropriately
- Identify and adhere to standard, contact, droplet, and airborne precautions
- Optimize ventilation in your facility

We appreciate your attention to this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Niles Kalyanaraman".

Niles Kalyanaraman, MD, FACP
Deputy Secretary
Public Health Services