

New Member Spotlight: Washington University School of Medicine



The **Washington University School of Medicine** in St. Louis (Missouri), is an academic emergency team staffing the Barnes-Jewish Hospital Level 1 Trauma & Emergency Department at the BJC Health System flagship hospital. BJH is a 1,250 bed hospital with 1,800 attending physicians, 1000 residents/fellows and 400 NPs and PAs. BJC Health System consists of 14 hospitals and one Rehab Institute. Wash U Emergency Medicine and BJH hospital are heavily focused on providing efficient, high quality, equitable care while building an even stronger connection to the local community.

Excerpts from a conversation with Rob Poirier, MD, MBA, FACEP, Clinical Chief, Emergency Medicine, and Darlene Huebner, MBA, Director of Business Operations

Dr. Poirier completed his Emergency Medicine residency at Washington University School of Medicine/BJH/St. Louis Children's Hospital, stayed with the organization and became Clinical Chief of the Emergency Department 15 years ago. He focuses on key operational issues such as hospital throughput, patient experience, and patient safety. Dr. Poirier is proud to announce after 20+ years of building Emergency Medicine at Wash U/BJH it is transitioning to a full academic Department in 2020. The last medical school Department created at Wash U was Orthopedics back in 1995.

Darlene Huebner has worked in academic medicine for over 20 years with eight years in the Emergency Medicine Division. As Director of Business Operations, Darlene has a wide range of duties including revenue cycle management, practice expansion, strategic planning, compliance, and managing the non-physician administrative team. Emergency Medicine, in collaboration with the hospital, has three main areas of focus, all parts equally weighted: education, clinical and research.

Dr. Poirier decided to join EDPMA in part due to an existing member's outreach and praise of EDPMA's advocacy focus and successes. Wash U EM increasingly is seeing new challenges from payers. Working together with EDPMA on advocacy and practice management issues, Wash U EM believes Emergency Physicians can be more effective at the local, State, and Federal levels.

Ms. Huebner commented that by participating in the Quality, Coding and Documentation Committee (QCDC), she has been able to get up-to-date information on what's happening on many issues in various states and apply them to her particular situations. At times, she has provided input into the Missouri based experience to assist in EDPMA's outreach on coding and billing policies that adversely affect Emergency Medicine. This broad based reach is difficult to replicate in other associations, according to Darlene. Darlene finds this practical, detailed information particularly useful to support her action plans in Missouri. Thus, the experience of a few members can provide insight and more efficient action steps for other members.

One of the issues Dr. Poirier is working on is developing innovative system thinking within Accountable Care Models (ACM). Learning ways to identify and protect the value of emergency medicine as hospitals and hospital systems move towards accountable care and bundled payment models (BPM) is vital. Dr. Poirier was pleased to see educational tracks dedicated towards ACMs and BPMs at the 2019 Solutions Summit. Rob said, "There is real value in the expansive knowledge,

networking, and advocacy EDPMA brings to the emergency medicine community." And, Dr. Poirier plans to attend the 2020 Solutions Summit, May 3-6 in Nashville, TN.