

From the President:

Are We Doctors Criminals?

George R. Watson, D.O.

First, welcome to the new members who have joined the Delta Force of Medicine. If you have any military background, you can better appreciate what is happening in the United States of America right now, and why AAPS is so pivotal to the survival of private medicine.

I see so many doctors blindly jumping through the latest hoops: PECOS (the Provider Enrollment and Chain Ownership System); planning for their interoperable electronic records, expecting to get the paltry participation bonuses of 2 percent more on their Medicare payments; and so on. How many times do we have to be lied to before we get it? The government is gaming doctors.

At a conference in Atlanta, I reminded doctors that HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) was *government* fraud. Instead of our patients getting portability, the *government* signed away their confidentiality. Accountability? Federal prosecutors were given funding to prosecute doctors for “false claims.” And prosecutors now use the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act) laws against doctors—allowing increased damages and prison time for “corrupt” doctors caught in Medicare “fraud,” when reviewers claim that the doctors upcoded their services. Worse, the prosecutors seize and sell the doctor’s property before the jury has returned the verdict.

I next warned of the RACs (Recovery Audit Contractors) who earn a percentage of all the overcharges that they find in a sampling of your charts. But their percentage is not on just the 30-chart sample. They extrapolate to all of your charts and calculate their percentage on the total.

PECOS is a Medicare-mandated form that requires a National Provider Identifier (NPI). In the fine print, you agree to electronic funds transfers into your account—and *from* your account if the government thinks it has overpaid you.

Medicare is a bankrupt Ponzi scheme. Rather than deal with it, our legislators want to “save money” by rooting out all the “fraud, waste and abuse” by us doctors.

So how does a doctor survive such an attack? I will tell you how to avoid the attack later.

Prisoner-of-war training is a blueprint for survival. Understanding that the enemy will use solitary confinement, sleep deprivation, physical duress, and interrogation to crack you helps you to prepare yourself for the onslaught. Most of us know a doctor

who has been prosecuted, had his assets confiscated and sold, or has gone to prison, and we know some have committed suicide.

On July 18 I met a real POW and Medal of Honor recipient! He knew my three friends—Joe, Tom, and Mel—who were POWs with him.

Col. Leo Thorsness wrote *Surviving Hell, a POW’s Journey*. In the book, he tells about realizing how his captivity affected his family: “I realized sadly that they too were about to become prisoners, trapped by my captivity.” Of the heroics that earned him the Medal of Honor, he quotes Rabbi Hillel, “If not me, who? If not now, when?” And he told how the POW families tired of the passivity of the government’s efforts to bring the POWs home. “Growing increasingly impatient with the government’s failure to help the POWs, the families decided, in effect, that enough was enough. They had to do something to help their men.”

Col. Thorsness shares the cost of saying the Lord’s Prayer in their group. They all knew where they fit in the rank structure. The ranking man stood up to lead and had barely said, “Our Father” when the guards rushed in, dragged him off, and beat him. The second ranking man began “Our Father,” and the guards dragged him out and beat him.

The third and fourth ranking men were also dragged out and beaten. Finally, the fifth ranking man was able to lead the group in praying the Lord’s Prayer. They held church services every Sunday from that point on.

Are we physicians ready to stand together with fidelity toward one another even if it costs us a beating?

To paraphrase Gen. George Washington’s General Orders in 1776, the hour is fast approaching, on which the Honor and Success of this medical profession, and the safety of our sick and bleeding Patients depend. Remember, doctors and Patriots, that you are Freeman, fighting for the blessings of Liberty—that slavery will be your portion, and that of your posterity (and Patients), if you do not acquit yourselves like men.

The surest way to avoid the government’s attack is to OPT OUT of Medicare now! Enough is enough! Declare independence from third-party control. Then you will be able to fight as a Freeman to protect your Patients’ and your rights.

“If not now, when?”

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