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GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
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Your monthly GOMA news & update

Welcome to GOMA's monthly newsletter where you can stay up-to-date on the latest osteopathic news and happenings in the GOMA community.

On the Lookout!

Ransomware & Karen Turner DO

Malicious software that uses encryption to hold data for ransom has become wildly successful over the last few years. The purpose of this software is to extort money from the victims with promises of restoring encrypted data. Like other computer viruses, it usually finds its way onto a device by exploiting a security hole in vulnerable software or by tricking somebody into installing it. Ransomware, as it is known, scores high profile victims like hospitals, public schools and police departments. Now it has found its way into home computers.

The nefarious ransomware business model has turned out to be a lucrative industry for criminals. Over the years its ill repute has made law enforcement team up with international agencies to identify and bring down scam operators.

St Joseph's/Candler Hospital's two hospitals and its 4200 employees were greatly affected by a June 17th ransomware attack. Cyberattacks on hospitals have been growing exponentially in recent years, with one source calling health care the "No. 1 target for cybercrime," according to a report in Becker Hospital Review.



GOMA President Karen Turner, DO was one of the 4200 employees affected. She reported one week into the ransomware attack:

“It’s been a hard week. St Joe’s is still locked down. As one of their outpatient clinics, I have been affected also. We are on their network. Our computers were all brought down last Thursday. The hospital is still down. We are on backup protocol with paper and pens and paper charts with limited communication. I will not be able to contact anyone unless I run into them. No news is allowed out other than everyone is working hard at getting back to normal. Sound Familiar? From one virus to another. This could not have come at a worse time just as things were relaxing a little in the hospital with less COVID-19 and morale was improving. All of us were thrust to go back in time, put in another emergency protocol, and work overtime and extra shifts while continuing to take care of patients. And soon hurricane season will be on us. (She did not know at that time that Elsa was planning on hitting the Georgia coastline in early July) I have been working with my home laptop on a mobile hot spot in the office. All axillary services are down: Lab, x-ray, etc. I can order them, but I just can’t get results easily. I cannot use central referring office or any services. Even faxes and printers do not work. They are all on network. It feels like 40 years ago, but the worst part is that the patients are exasperated. After their struggles with Covid and change of lifestyle and social unrest they are not ready for our problem. They are impatient and frustrated and downright mean.”

Infection Prevention: Best Practices

No one wants this problem, and so it is good to review preventative strategies. Most of the ransomware attacks that have taken place in the past have been linked to poor protection practices by employees.

There are a few dos and don’ts when it comes to ransomware:

1. Do not pay the ransom. It only encourages and funds these attackers. Even if the ransom is paid, there is no guarantee that you will be able to regain access to your files. Have a contact for law enforcement for reporting ransomware attacks before reaching out to the cyber criminals. Paying the ransom may hit organizations with a huge [fine](#).
2. Restore any impacted files from a known good backup. Restoration of your files from a backup is the fastest way to regain access to your data. Ensure there is backup in a cold site and that steps are taken for verifying whether or not the

- backup has also been compromised. Have an effective incident response plan developed and ensure your incident response team is capable. Have a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery plan that is frequently tested.
3. Do not provide personal information when answering an email, unsolicited phone call, text message or instant message. Phishers will try to trick employees into installing malware, or gain intelligence for attacks by claiming to be from IT. Be sure to contact your IT department if you or your coworkers receive suspicious calls. Learn how to spot phish/scams and to [stay vigilant](#).
 4. Use reputable antivirus software and a firewall. Maintaining a strong firewall and keeping your security software up to date are critical. It's important to use antivirus software from a reputable company because of all the fake software out there.
 5. Do employ content scanning and filtering on your mail servers. Inbound e-mails should be scanned for known threats and should block any attachment types that could pose a threat. Several security controls should be implemented across the environment to meet compliance requirements for appropriate industry standards and regulations (e.g., HIPAA, HITECH, PCI DSS, etc.)
 6. Do make sure that all systems and software are up-to-date with relevant patches. Exploit kits hosted on compromised websites are commonly used to spread malware. Regular patching of vulnerable software is necessary to help prevent infection. Devices that have reached their end-of-life should also be replaced because updates stop being provided by the vendors. Having an inventory of every device that connects to the internet is vital – include IoT devices such as your Smart TV, Nest thermostat, smart light bulbs, etc. It is advisable to secure the home network to include a strong wifi password and segment the network to connect IoT devices on a separate network from devices that are used for sensitive information (e.g., shopping, filling forms requiring PII, insulin pumps, etc).
 7. If traveling, alert your IT department beforehand, especially if you're going to be using public wireless Internet. Make sure you use a trustworthy Virtual Private Network (VPN) when accessing public Wi-Fi. Always enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) whenever possible, which is more secure than two-factor authentication (2FA). Even if your credentials have been compromised, attackers will be faced with another obstacle. And don't reuse your passwords for different accounts. Aim for passphrases or use a reputable password manager to store and generate strong passwords for you (e.g., LastPass).
 8. Ransomware criminals often attack small and medium sized businesses. Among other cyber-attacks, ransomware is one criminal activity that can be easily worked around with the above-mentioned solutions. Ransomware groups are trending toward Big Game Hunting (victims that they know have lots of money). Cyber criminals have optimized Ransomware as a Service (RaaS) to be a [lucrative business model](#).

The technical parts of this article come from [Norton.com](#) with additions by Ms. Julie Lee who is an incident and response analyst for a major health organization in Georgia.

Let's Talk

GOMA Promoting Georgians to Discuss COVID Vaccinations with their Doctors



The GOMA Executive Board voted to use a Facebook advertisement to encourage Georgians to discuss COVID vaccinations with their physicians. Only 53% of eligible Georgians having gotten one dose of the COVID vaccine. The ad combines advice to discuss the vaccine with a physician along with a video from UC Davis Medical School about the Delta Variant. GOMA feels that one of its purposes is promoting health in Georgia, and with so much misinformation being spread about the COVID vaccine, the Board felt that Georgia can prevent another spike in cases by encouraging Georgians to reconsider their vaccine hesitancy.

The post's verbiage is:

The Delta variant comprises 83% of the new cases of COVID-19. Over the past week, there has been a 100% increase in COVID-19 cases in the U.S. This could be another surge. Our neighbor, Florida is experiencing a major spike in cases. The Covid vaccine is effective against the Delta variant. GOMA recommends that you discuss the COVID-19 vaccination with your doctor. Act now because your health and your family's health may be impacted by the COVID-19 virus. 99.3% of the people dying from COVID-19 are UNVACCINATED.

GOMA will continue to promote health and osteopathic medicine in Georgia as part of its mission.

And the Medal Goes To...

DOs Caring for Athletes at Olympics



[Paul Business Journal](#).

Jonathan Finnoff, DO, the chief medical officer of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, is profiled in an article that covers the COVID safety protocols that Dr. Finnoff developed for Olympic athletes and event organizers. A summary of the article is available for free in the [Minneapolis/St.](#)

This Q&A with Naresh Rao, DO, the team physician for the U.S. men's water polo team, covers the ins and outs of working with athletes as a physician at the Olympics. "The ability to focus on that team and create an atmosphere where our athletes and our staff will be comfortable is important," Dr. Rao said. "So the daily duties are for me to be

primarily be there for men's water polo for Tokyo, as opposed to in Rio, where I was the medical doctor for both the women's and the men's teams." [Read more.](#)

Best of Atlanta

Congratulations to the physicians who were recently recognized in Atlanta Magazine for their high quality care. While GOMA would suggest to all magazines that all osteopathic physicians in Georgia deserve to be recognized for excellence, these are the ones that were selected this year:

Angela Beninga, DO – Atlanta, GA (PM&R Spinal Injuries)
 Christopher Borrego, DO – Johns Creek, GA (Internal Medicine)
 Michael Briones, DO – Atlanta, GA (Pediatric Hem/Onc)
 Ketan N. Desai, DO -- Austell, GA (Cardiology)
 Richard Jadick, DO – Stockbridge, GA (Urology)
 Jean Molinary, DO – Marietta, GA (Endocrinology)
 Robert D. Moore, DO – Alpharetta, GA (Urogynecology)
 Carrie Poline, DO – Marietta, GA (Psychiatry Eating Disorders)
 Eric Solomon, DO – Marietta, GA (PM&R)



OPAC Board Member Sonbol Shahid-Salles, DO Explains the Importance of OPAC



This past June, Sonbol Shahid-Salles, DO became an at-large board member for the Osteopathic Political Action Committee (OPAC). Dr. Shahid-Salles is an emergency room physician in Rome, Georgia as well as being a mother to an active 4 ½ year old son named Graham. She is married to oncologist Gregory Harris, DO, and serves GOMA as the Treasurer/Secretary. So, we knew that we didn't have much time to get some questions answered about her new position and OPAC, but she was very helpful.

The Osteopathic Political Action Committee (OPAC) is a federally registered political action committee (PAC) that works to elect and re-elect pro-physician candidates to Congress through direct contributions, voter education and targeted political activism. OPAC is the best resource to learn about who supports the osteopathic profession and how AOIA-OPAC members can help elect candidates to Congress that represent and support the osteopathic profession.

According to Dr. Shahid-Salles, there are nearly 800 active OPAC Members, and over 3,000 osteopathic physicians and students that are able to engage in advocacy currently living and working within the state of Georgia. OPAC supports members of Congress that fight for pro-physician legislation that can impact you and the patients you serve. Georgia is a growing hotbed for federal political activities and nationwide news. OPAC works to

support current federal candidates and rising candidates who promote the policy priorities of the osteopathic profession. In-addition to meeting with candidates running for office, OPAC staff work to set district meetings between members of congress and OPAC members. During these meetings, OPAC members have the opportunity to discuss the priorities and challenges osteopathic physicians are facing, and to educate their representatives about these issues.

Under the Federal Election Campaign Act, contributions are subject to annual limits and are strictly voluntary. There is no minimum contribution to OPAC required. However, there are benefits provided to OPAC members who contribute each year. An AIOA-OPAC Member may contribute a maximum of \$5,000 USD to OPAC annually. To engage all members at every level, OPAC has established tiered Club Level Circles, so that all whom wish to participate can do so at a comfortable contribution level. The OPAC Club levels are as follows:

McDevitt Circle: \$5,000
Kuchinski Circle: \$2,500
Premier Circle: \$1,000
Chairman's Circle: \$500
Resident's Circle: \$62
Student Chairman's Circle: \$52

Dr. Shahid-Salles is quick to point out that in addition to contributing to OPAC, another way for DO's to remain involved and engaged in political action is by joining the AOA Osteopathic Advocacy Network or the "OAN." AOA Members can use the OAN Action Center to advocate on behalf of their profession and patients by engaging lawmakers and their staff directly, and stay informed on any policy developments. The AOA frequently calls on OAN members to reach out directly to lawmakers when legislative activity significantly affects DOs and their patients. Additionally, all AOA members who join the OAN will receive the monthly DO Engage newsletter via email. The DO Engage is AOA's electronic newsletter detailing current legislative and regulatory activity, and updates on policy issues that directly affect members and the profession.

When asked about her two year term and her role on the OPAC Board, Dr. Shahid-Salles responded, "The Member-at-Large position is a full voting member of the OPAC Board of Directors, with the responsibilities of contributing to the governance and promotion of OPAC. I will be involved in fundraising activities as well as helping to increase engagement of OPAC Members."

And of course, she wanted to share the following links to try to achieve 100% participation amongst GOMA members:

1. AIOA-OPAC [Website](#)
2. Text "OPAC" to 71777
3. Direct Shareable Link: <https://app.mobilecause.com/form/vEQZaQ?vid=k1i5h>

Farmworker Clinic Gets Support from PCOM South Georgia Students

PCOM South Georgia students spent weeks of their summer break volunteering at the Farm Worker Family Health Program – a program that provides medical assistance to migrant workers and their families. Iris Rivera (DO '25) said that volunteering with programs like this clinic was one of the primary reasons she chose to attend medical school at PCOM South Georgia.



“The Ellenton Farmworker Clinic provides an opportunity to work with a population that too often goes unnoticed when it comes to healthcare access. A big influence on choosing medicine as a career path was my first shadowing experience at a migrant clinic during my undergraduate education. I knew from the first day that I walked out of the clinic that I wanted to provide medical care to migrants just as the physicians there were doing.”

Student volunteers from PCOM South Georgia took part in an immersive, clinical education opportunity June 14-25 at Ellenton Farms Migrant Clinic. The clinic, located 10 miles from Moultrie, Georgia, provides care to migrant farm workers and their families—more than 3,000 unique patients per year.

This year, PCOM South Georgia students assisted with non-medical needs including logistical support and other activities.\

The clinic is offered through the Farm Worker Family Health Program (FWFHP). The FWFHP, now in its 28th year, is held each summer and has served more than 15,000 individuals to date. The FWFHP provides health profession students with an opportunity to work with an inter-professional healthcare team to provide critical health services.

Read more about the clinic and student involvement [here](#).

Championship Belts Earned by Second-year PCOM Georgia Osteopathic Medical Students.



During the academic year, teams of second-year DO students participated in Simulation Battles, where they competed against their peers in how well they could diagnose and treat their “patient”, as judged by faculty instructors. These exercises help students practice applying their didactic knowledge in real-world scenarios. The teams completed rounds of challenges virtually this past December and January before competing in person during a single-day even in May, where they faced a simulated trauma case from a motorcycle accident.

PCOM Georgia Class of 2023 student doctors Abend Elrahman Naser, Andrew Manhan, Abdel-Rahman Naser, Kathryn DiVincenzo and Fahad Marmarchi (not pictured) were recently named GA-PCOM’s 2021 Simulation Battle Champions, earning their champion

belts. James Hogue, DO, FAAEM, FACEP, clinical assistant professor of emergency medicine, was also awarded a belt and recognized as an exceptional faculty instructor during the competition. Congratulations to all the awardees!

Soumare Re-Appointed to SNMA's National Osteopathic Affairs Committee as Co-Chair

Aldwin Soumare, MS, MBP was re-appointed to the position of National Osteopathic Affairs Committee Co-Chairperson of the SNMA. The Student National Medical Association (SNMA) is committed to supporting current and future underrepresented minority medical students, addressing the needs of underserved communities, and increasing the number of clinically excellent, culturally competent and socially conscious physicians. SNMA is a student-governed organization with more than 6,000 members nationwide and in the Caribbean.



Student Doctor Soumare is originally from the Bronx, NY and received his Bachelor's degree at Rutgers University-Newark in Psychology in 2013 which was followed by Master of Medical Science in 2016 from Morehouse. The last degree he acquired was in 2017 at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate TN which was a Master in Biomedical Professions degree. He is currently attending PCOM-Georgia as a rising fourth year medical student. During his time in medical school, he was elected as Chapter President of the PCOM-GA SNMA chapter from 2018-2019 and then was elected as MAPS Liaison for SNMA Region IV thereafter. Last year, Student Doctor Soumare was appointed as one of the National Osteopathic Committee Co-Chairpersons and will be continuing in that role for a second year.

Student Doctor Soumare aspires to apply to Neuropsychiatry residency in the future as he has a passion for the mental and physical manifestations of the brain. Recently, he was awarded a Diversity in Training Scholarship to participate in an away rotation at UCLA Neurology. He hopes to bridge the gap and utilize his clinical expertise to help communities of color and be an advocate for change.

Soumare aspires to be a physician journalist on a major TV outlet which will allow him to connect to a broader audience and population of people. He believes media is the key to instituting awareness and key changes in marginalized communities. He is one of the three co-hosts for the SNMA presents the Lounge Podcast and is also the founder/co-host of the "Melaninwhitecoats" podcast which educates and enlightens audiences about societal and cultural topics along with discussing his experiences as a medical student. He is also the curator of the "AmbitionsUnlimited" blog which highlights his challenges through writing and acknowledging the ups and downs of medical school. During his free time, Soumare enjoys being a mentor for countless students and providing inspiration for others to become the best version of themselves, doing yoga, writing, reading, and learning new recipes.

A Loss to the Community

1989 Alumnus of NOVA SECOM Gary Cohen, DO Dies in Surfside Condominium Collapse



On the morning of June 24, the world watched in disbelief as a portion of the 12-story Champlain Towers South building in Surfside, Florida, collapsed, claiming the lives of more than 150 people, including class of 1989 NOVA SECOM alumnus Gary Cohen, DO, whose body was recovered from the rubble and identified two weeks later.

After graduating from osteopathic medical school in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Cohen did a four years in residency at the Rusk Institute of Rehab in New York City.

Cohen, who practiced physiatry at the Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center in Alabama for the past 15 years, was in an 11th-floor condo in the Champlain Towers South building when the collapse occurred. He had come to South Florida to visit his terminally ill father and was staying with his brother Brad Cohen, M.D., who also perished. [Read more.](#)

Is Your Building at Risk of Collapsing?

(from article from South Florida Sun Sentinel in Fort Lauderdale)

Around the world, engineers are called by building owners, residents and government officials to scrutinize their buildings with fresh eyes. Signs include:

Cracked or crumbling concrete

Hairline cracks in concrete that widen then one sees bulging and possibly becomes soft on the surface. As the bulges get larger, the concrete begins falling in chunks, a process called spalling. Spalling can occur in several places along slabs or columns. Dark brown stains are signs that the steel reinforcement bars are corroding.

Interior cracks

Cracks in walls, window frames or floors can be signs of trouble. Even a slight movement of the foundation can cause difficulty opening or closing windows or doors. Straight-line cracks in floor tiles that run from wall to wall can be a sign of foundation damage. Chances are good that under the tile, the concrete foundation has developed cracks as well.

Uneven or bowing walls or floors

Sometimes areas of the floor will be sunken, heaved or sloped. Look for bowing floors or areas where floors are separating from walls.

Diagonal cracks at corners of windows and doors

Cracks that start at the top corners of doors or windows and extend toward the ceiling can be a sign of a shifting foundation. Hairline cracks might not be anything to worry about. I

happens when a new homes settle a bit or if a house is left vacant without climate control for a period of time. But if the cracks are large, that means a shift in the foundation.

Wall rotation

Wall rotation is a serious problem that occurs when water saturates the soil under a building. It can cause the weight of the building to push one side of the foundation deeper into the soil. Meanwhile the dry inside edge of the foundation pulls up.

Other warning signs:

- Stair-step cracks on the exterior or interior.
- Gaps between walls and the ceiling, between the ceiling and the floor, or both.
- Popping sounds from roof trusses.
- Porches or chimneys that have separated from the house.
- Cracked or out-of-place molding.

Sharing

Coming together is a beginning: keeping together is progress: working together is success.

American author & Unitarian Minister Edward Everett Hale



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Mona Masood, DO is a general adult psychiatrist in the greater Philadelphia area is the founder and chief organizer of the Physician Support Line. , a free confidential peer support line by volunteer psychiatrists was started. It is supported 8 AM to Midnight seven days a week.

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Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association | 2133 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Rd, Suite 12-347, Suwanee, GA
30024

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