

Fostering a Lifestyle of Learning

These are exciting yet challenging times in medicine. More is being asked of physicians than ever before. We are being forced to see more patients, comply with increasingly extensive governmental regulations, develop improved medical diagnostic and treatment paradigms, and adjust to significant changes in the health care system. We must assimilate information at what often feels like a breathtaking pace. Moreover, the need for more cost-effective care is at an all-time high, as the amount of available resources dwindles while the US population grows and ages.

How best can we keep pace with a rapidly evolving medical landscape? Not long ago, textbooks were generally thought to become outdated in approximately 5 years. Today, they may be out of date by the time they reach the bookshelf. Major medical journals are available digitally, and many of us have given up our print subscriptions. Ophthalmic news publications, including *Glaucoma Today*, are available online as well.

Our attendance at regional or national ophthalmologic meetings has changed dramatically. With decreasing physician reimbursement, we feel more pressure to skip educational conferences in order to mind our clinical practices. Industry's role in our education has come under fire. The criteria for obtaining continuing medical education hours have become quite strict and frequently limit the off-label discussion of currently available tech-

nologies. As a result, the popularity of non-accredited meetings has risen, but I believe our relationships with our peers have suffered from our spending less time interacting face to face with each other.

Recent trends point to our increasing reliance on multimedia learning experiences. Audio educational products continue to play a significant role in our training, and our interest in surgical video instruction is growing. Interactive Web-based programs also appear to be gaining traction. Although print materials remain valuable, tablet and cell phone technologies provide additional resources. The explosion of medical "apps" puts important information at our fingertips.

In this issue of *GToday*, glaucoma subspecialists, fellows, and resident physicians share their thoughts on medical education. They also offer their suggestions on how we might enhance our ability to provide high-quality ophthalmic care to our patients. The continuing wish at *GToday* is to encourage medical careers of lifelong learning. To that end, readers' feedback is greatly appreciated. Together, let's make 2012 a breakthrough year for glaucoma care! □



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