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## TCMA Vital Signs Dec 19, 2021

1 message

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Sun, Dec 19, 2021 at 10:34 AM

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Travis County



Medical Alliance



### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- January 9 - Book Group, *Last Days of Night* by Graham Moore
- January 11, 2022 - Executive Board Meeting
- February 8, 2022 - Executive Board Meeting
- February 15, 2022 - General Meeting
- February 23 - Book Group, *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang (rescheduled from November)
- March 23 - Book Group, *The Biggest Bluff* by Maria Konnikova
- March 24 - Saint Louise House meal prep
- April 2 - SAVE THE DATE for the PWAP!
- April 19 - General Meeting at Star Hill Ranch!



## Note from TCMA President Jenny Stern

I hope everyone is doing well this busy holiday season, staying safe and healthy. I want to remind everyone that we are still in APH's Covid Risk Guideline Stage 3, meaning masks are required when gathering indoors for Alliance programs, unless one is actively eating or drinking. This is especially important as the very contagious Omicron variant makes its way through the country. Again, we strongly encourage everyone to get vaccinated and to get that booster!!

I want to share some news from the TCMS, with an announcement from long-time TCMS CEO, Marshall Cothran:

"I am excited to announce that **Belinda Clare** has been appointed **Executive Vice President/CEO of Travis County Medical Society (TCMS)** effective January 1, 2022.

As Chief Operations Officer since 1994, Belinda has developed, directed, and evolved Medical Society operations and programs to serve a rapidly growing and changing membership. In 2020, Belinda redirected operations to provide PPE, vaccines, and COVID-19 information to the medical community. She has served on the board of the American Association of Medical Society Executives and has led national initiatives to develop replication models to help other medical societies establish Credentials Verification, Project Access, and Physician Wellness programs.

I will transition to **Chief Strategy Officer for Travis County Medical Society** and its affiliate organizations **We Are Blood** and **United Tissue Resources**, also effective January 1, 2022.

This year, my 28th as CEO of the group, we worked as a team to develop the executive succession and transition plan that was approved by our three boards in October. I'm looking forward to 2022 and my new role as Chief Strategy Officer, in which I will be reporting to and advising the three new CEOs of the affiliated group.

**Marshall Cothran**  
**Chief Executive Officer"**

Congratulations Belinda and Marshall on your new positions and thank you for your many years of exemplary leadership of the TCMS! Best wishes for a smooth transition.

Take care everyone,

Jenny



## **Saint Louise House**

SAVE THE DATE! Next year comes with new possibilities to volunteer and support Saint Louise House. On Thursday, March 24th we have the opportunity to provide a meal for the community. More details to come. Thank you to those that have said already said "Yes" to helping. Stay tuned for more....

Debbie Chilton, chair



## **HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR NEWSLETTER**

The next deadline will be Tuesday 12/28/2021 for a 12/30/2021 publication. Regular Sunday publication will resume on 1/9/2022!



# **Chic Ladies**

Thanks to all the beautiful ladies that came to our TCMA Chic Ladies Holiday luncheon yesterday! It was fun and we will do it bigger and better next year!! 🎄📺❤️



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## 2022 Party With a Purpose - Palm Springs Cool

As we *goose it* through this holiday season, PWAP co-chairs Christina Fenrich and Julie Cowan extend gratitude to our Palm Springs Cool Committee. This group of dedicated volunteers has been meeting regularly and working hard to plan a creative spring bash to ensure we all have a ball when we gather on April 2, 2022. Many thanks to our *nifty* committee members: Edie Finch, Christi Dammert, Karin Foster, Beth O'Farrell, Patty Loose, Jenny Stern, Shannon McNeil, Patti Hernandez, Inga Ruckman, Christina Romain, Deneitra Hutchison, and Brandi Shaw. They really are a *big deal!*

Please take a look at our list of sponsors to date and consider patronizing them through the holidays and into the new year. You might find some great holiday gift ideas.....

We are grateful to our Party With a Purpose - Palm Springs Cool sponsors and in-kind donors as of 12/19/21. If you or your spouse have a business interested in supporting the good work of the TCMA, please reach out to Patti Hernandez at [pattihernandez120@gmail.com](mailto:pattihernandez120@gmail.com) or Christina Romain at [christinaromain33@gmail.com](mailto:christinaromain33@gmail.com) for further sponsorship details.

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Renee Stanley

Total Wine & More

PWAP Chairs:

Julie Cowan 512/659-8593

Christina Feinrich 512/739-4534



## Medical Affairs

While our Alliance's call to action regarding contacting Congress regarding scheduled Medicare cuts came to us late, Congress heard the cry of others and on Dec. 10, the US Senate followed the lead of the US House of Representatives to pass the [Protecting Medicare and American Farmers from Sequester Cuts Act](#), which eliminated almost the entirety of three cuts that would have hit physician payments by 9.75% in 2022. As of Dec. 13, the bill is awaiting consideration by President Joe Biden.

Throughout the fall, TMA and the American Medical Association mobilized physicians to impress upon lawmakers the potential impact of such a deep payment reduction. A [TMA survey](#) of nearly 1,400 members showed that if faced with the cuts, 62% of Texas physicians might be forced to stop seeing new Medicare patients. Nearly 60% said they would consider opting out of Medicare entirely, and 43% said they might consider retirement.

The three cuts that Congress has almost entirely staved off for now – if President Biden signs the bill – include:

- A 3.75% reduction to the 2022 Medicare physician fee schedule conversion factor, a multiplier that's part of the calculations for payment rates for a particular service. The bill passed last week substitutes a 3% increase to the conversion factor to replace the previous 3.75%, leaving an overall .75% cut;
- A 2% across-the-board cut known as sequestration, which Congress has delayed several times before and during the pandemic; and
- An additional 4% sequestration cut resulting from the American Rescue Plan Act, because that COVID-19 relief law's price tag also surpassed a threshold in federal law meant to rein in deficit spending.

Under the bill, the 2% sequestration cut would be eliminated until the beginning of April 2022, when a 1% cut would take effect for three months. The oft-delayed 2% cut would then take effect in July 2022 unless Congress defers it once again.

TMA President E. Linda Villarreal, MD, noted, "What's really needed is a more meaningful, permanent policy for how Medicare pays physicians, so Congress doesn't have to revisit this issue," she said, and TMA will continue to work in the coming year "to effect a substantial, permanent, and predictable solution to this recurring problem."

(Information gathered from 12/13/21 TMA Medicine email)

Julie Cowan  
512/659-8593 cell



## Annual Fund Drive

Thank you to all of you who have already made your donation to the Annual Fund Drive!

Your generosity is funding the health-improving programs of our grant recipients and our own Community Service initiatives. You may donate by mail using the remittance envelope from the fund drive mailing, or you can go to [www.tcmalliance.org](http://www.tcmalliance.org) and donate online. Any amount is greatly appreciated! Thank you in advance!

-Inga Ruckman, Annual Fund Drive Chair

### Foundational Believer (\$1,000+)

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 Karen and Michael Teneriello  
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 Kathy and Zoltan Trizna



# TMA Resources

The TMA website has lots of resources on Covid-19 and other Public Health issues – be sure to check out [www.texmed.org](http://www.texmed.org). Here are a few of the articles you can find there:

## Omicron Variant Underscores Importance of Proven Tools to Fight COVID



The omicron variant of COVID-19 has sparked fears about increased transmissibility heading into the holiday season. But TMA experts and public health officials say physicians and patients can lean into proven prevention strategies as scientists continue to study omicron.

**[How to Minimize the New Threat](#)**



# COVID-19 Resources, All in One Place

## [COVID-19 Resources](#)

### [Latest Vaccine Info](#)



### **TCMS Physician Wellness Program**

Here is a link to a beautifully written post by Dr. Brian Sayers, Chair of the PWP, entitled "Standing on Holy Ground."

[PWP Blog Post - Dec. 2021](#)



### **Book Group**

**January 9, 2022** - evening meeting - *The Last Days of Night* by Graham Moore, Sharon Kronberg will review

GUEST NIGHT: bring a friend, partner, spouse for a light dinner, cocktails and talk at Marina's, 5pm. Pot Luck. Please RSVP to Marina and let her know the category of dish you're bringing.

**Feb 23** - *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang ( previously scheduled but canceled)

**March 23** - *The Biggest Bluff* by Maria Konnikova.

To join the Book Group, visit [tcmalliance.org](http://tcmalliance.org) and click on the Book Review tab, under News & Events.



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[www.tcmalliance.org](http://www.tcmalliance.org) 

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