

**“Special Delivery”**  
**Society of Maternal-Fetal Medicine Newsletter**  
**January/February 2009**

*A word from our President, Mike Foley, MD*

“On behalf of the Board of Directors for the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural edition of "Special Delivery"!

In an effort to improve communication with our members, we have created a new committee of the Board, the Communications Committee. This committee, co-chaired by Drs. Laura Riley and Carol Major have innovated many new approaches to facilitate communication both among members of the Society, and external to the society. We are committed to improving the transparency of the Society; keeping the public more informed about who we are and what we do, and more effectively keeping the membership informed about organizational developments. Congratulations to our Communications Committee for embarking, so elegantly, on this journey!”

***I. Board News***

"The Pregnancy Meeting" beginning January 26<sup>th</sup> in San Diego will feature full and half day courses on critical care management, ob safety, fetal growth and developmental programming, diabetes and obesity, clinical genetics, diagnosis, counseling and management of fetal anomalies, methods for perinatal clinical research and fetal cardiology. In addition, there is a workshop for MFM fellowship directors and the always popular, nuchal translucency credentialing. The welcome address given by the Program Chair, Dr. Alessandro Ghidini begins promptly at 7:45 am on Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup>.

A record 1,236 abstracts were submitted and 750 posters were accepted! There are 86 platform presentations to be presented over the course of our 3 day meeting. The job fair is in year 2—don’t miss the opportunity to see what is out there. Don't worry-- there is still time for all the important networking with old friends and connecting with lots of young and enthusiastic fellows.

See you in sunny San Diego!

## ***II. Clinical Update:***

Have you gotten your **flu shot**? November to March is peak influenza season and the CDC recommends that all adults particularly those at high risk, like health care workers receive the influenza vaccination. Vaccinate all of your pregnant patients at any gestational age. It is a recombinant vaccine and is available in thimerisol free vials for your vaccine phobic patients. Even multi-use vials have only trace thimerisol which is not harmful to pregnant women. New data shows that influenza vaccination is not only protective for the mother against serious flu related illness; it is protective for newborns that are born during flu season. So get out those VIS forms and start vaccinating!!!!

## ***III. Research on the horizon:***

Did you ever wonder if the standards that we use for fetal size and growth are applicable to all ethnic groups? Hopefully, that question will soon be answered.

### **National Standard for Normal Fetal Growth**

The National Fetal Growth Study (NFGS) is a multi-center prospective observational study designed to establish a standard for normal fetal growth and size for gestational age in the U.S. population. The NFGS is also designed to create an individualized standard for optimal fetal growth in different ethnic groups (Caucasian, African American, Asian, and Hispanic) in different locations within the country.

The study will recruit 2,400 non-obese, low risk women chosen from 4 clinical centers. Each woman chosen for this study will receive 5 scheduled ultrasound exams. A growth velocity will then be calculated for each patient.

The national standard for normal fetal growth will have important implications in clinical practice and research.

The chosen sites for this study are:

Columbia (PI - Wapner); Northwestern University (PI - Grobman); Medical University of South Carolina (PI – Newman); University of California, Irvine (PI – Wing).

#### ***IV. What is going on in Washington in this election year?***

Did you know that SMFM is represented in Washington by the firm, Cavarocchi Ruscio Dennis Associates, L.L.C. Here is what they have to say:

With health care reform high on both Obama's and Congress' priority list, change is in the air!

Look for fixing Medicare reimbursement. One of Obama's stimulus package items is putting money into Health IT---computerized medical record. Just about all of the Democratic players are talking about:

- universal health coverage for all
- increasing support for vulnerable populations served by Medicaid, SCHIP, and the Indian Health Service
- promoting comparative effectiveness research
- Creating payment systems that emphasize primary care, prevention, and chronic care management

#### ***V. Coming soon!!! Redesign of the SMFM website***

Launch is anticipated at the 2009 annual meeting in San Diego

The goal of the redesigned website is to provide the public with information about the specialty of Maternal Fetal medicine AND to provide members with useful and readily accessible professional resources. The new organization of the site will help members locate the wealth of information that is available through the Society. Current functions are preserved such as online meeting registration, membership renewal, job postings, the physician locator and posting of timely announcements. New features include the Fellows lecture series and posting of videos of the 2009 SMFM Annual meeting plenary sessions accessible after the meeting through member login. The 2009 launch of the redesigned site will also highlight the life and contributions of a "featured" member.

Numerous additional improvements are planned. Please visit the new website. If you have ideas about how the site can be improved, the Informatics Committee chairman, Dr. Kate Menard [kmenard@med.unc.edu](mailto:kmenard@med.unc.edu) welcomes your suggestions.