

### The Performing Arts Medicine Association

Summer 1990 will see the unveiling of a number of "firsts" within performing arts medicine which, it is hoped, will provide further direction to this growing field. In an editorial entitled, "Performing Arts Medicine: A Checkup" (MPPA 9/89), an announcement was made about a new organization, The Performing Arts Medicine Association (PAMA), whose purpose is to "provide guidelines for the practice of performing arts medicine, encourage research, and further education in both the arts and medical communities."

On August 4, 1990 (during the 8th Annual Aspen Symposium) a breakfast meeting for members and prospective members of PAMA will be held at the Hotel Jerome in Aspen. Although this meeting represents the first public introduction of PAMA, we would like to report what has transpired in the two years prior to PAMA's debut.

During the 6th and 7th Aspen Symposia, a group of physicians actively involved in the development of the field of performing arts medicine was invited to attend preliminary discussions on the formation of an organization of physicians and trainees to "ensure the best quality medical care for performers." It was recognized that limitation of membership to physicians had many disadvantages, including the possibility of offending non-physicians active in the field. After lengthy dis-

ussion by PAMA's founding members, it was decided that for the initial phase of the organization, this restriction would be advantageous in the emphasis of a medical focus. However, it is clear to all that an exclusive club is not in the long-term interest of performing arts medicine. Therefore it is anticipated that membership will be broadened in the near future to accommodate a variety of disciplines, perhaps with PAMA as an umbrella organization.

The primary activities of the first year consisted of the election of officers, drafting of by-laws and constitution, and the establishment of accounting procedures, all processes necessary for qualification as a non-profit organization.

In addition to considerations such as establishing conditions of membership, the PAMA board took two other actions, both of which have been implemented. First, with the expectation that the Annual Aspen Symposium will eventually become a function of this organization, it was decided to take the first step in that direction immediately by having PAMA co-sponsor the symposium, along with the Aspen Music Festival and the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. PAMA has assumed responsibility for the "Open Communications" sessions, undertaking the role of peer review by establishing a Scientific Review committee. Second, with

the support of MPPA's publisher, Hanley & Belfus, MPPA has been designated the official publication of PAMA.

In order to further PAMA's activities a number of committees have been formed: Annual Meeting, Research, Policy, Education, Membership, and Liaison. Elsewhere in this issue of MPPA is the announcement of an annual prize to be awarded by PAMA for the best clinical or research paper in performing arts medicine to a medical student, resident, or fellow. The intent is to promote interest in this specialty among new practitioners as well as to stimulate advancement of the field. An important corollary to be discussed by the membership of PAMA and the Education Committee is the development of guidelines for training in this multidisciplinary practice.

The establishment of PAMA is not intended to impede the healthy development of an exciting and innovative area of medicine. The rapid growth and burgeoning interest in the field demand that those committed to its future also assume appropriate responsibility for its excellence.

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