



Physicians Committed  
to Quality

# monthly memo mvma ipa

## An important announcement from Richard B. Toll, M.D., MVMA President

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### Subscription to *The Medical Letter*

MVMA members can now receive a one-year subscription to *The Medical Letter* for only \$50. This is a 34 percent savings off the regular price of \$76. To qualify for this reduced rate, call **1-800-211-2769** and identify yourself as a Mohawk Valley Medical Associates (MVMA) member. At the menu prompt, **press 1** to connect to a live customer service representative. We are pleased to be able to offer this savings to our network physicians.

### What Medications Are Your Patients Taking?

Many of you may already be aware of a new Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) requirement that by the end of 2005 all accredited hospitals must adopt procedures that include collecting a complete medication list, verifying it, and ensuring that it is passed on to the next provider, whether **inside or outside the hospital**.

To provide good health care, physicians/providers must know each patient's medications (prescription and OTC), drug allergies/sensitivities, and use of herbal/alternative products. Many patients see multiple physicians in different specialties. Drug-to-drug interactions and duplicate prescribing of medications in the same drug class can inadvertently occur.

To aid our physicians in keeping track of medication changes initiated by other physician/providers, MVMA will be developing a form that patients and physicians/providers can use to keep track of patients' medication status. We hope that each office will provide their patients with a copy of the form to fill out. In conjunction with the JCAHO initiative, we encourage all MVMA providers to reinforce this program by asking patients if they have a current medication list at **every** encounter.

We plan on including a wallet-sized version of this "medication reconciliation list" that patients should be encouraged to carry at all times. These forms will be available on our Web site, **www.mvma.net**. In the meantime, please work with your staff and patients on this simple concept that can improve healthcare quality and decrease the chance of medication errors.

### Annual Meeting Reminder

MVMA's Annual Dinner Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 30 at Mallozzi's Restaurant in Schenectady. The invitations were mailed on March 1, along with a physician survey to complete and return to us with your dinner response. We would like to report on the feedback from the survey at the meeting. We hope you can attend!