

should be amenable to addition of new analytical codes as technologies evolve. The next stage of this activity has begun and involves the collection of cost analysis data from laboratories around the country. These data will be sent to Medicare (Health Care Financing Administration) and Medicaid Departments as well as to other payers so that they have up-to-date information on which to base reimbursement decisions.

David Flannery represented the ACMG at the AMA CPT Advisory Committee, which has begun work on proposals to develop CPT codes for Patient Education and Counseling, under the direction of, but not necessarily by a physician. The import of such codes for genetics was advocated to the working group and seemed to be appreciated by other specialties. This represents a potentially "great leap forward" for medical genetics, and feedback will be sought from ACMG members as language is developed and circulated. Debra Lochner Doyle has been working to educate the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) about the importance of medical genetics. The long-term goal is to encourage NCQA to incorporate key genetic services into the Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS) quality indicator sets used to assess quality of care of managed care plans. A final COEGS activity for the coming year will be a structured resource and time analysis of the work of providing genetic services. These data will be analyzed to determine whether we can make our case that clinical genetic services are unique and more complex than other types of commonly performed medical services and form the basis of new CPT proposals for clinical genetic services.

### **Test and Technology Transfer (TTT)**

*Michael S. Watson, PhD and Jonathan Zonana, MD, Co-chairs*

The TTT Committee is a joint activity of the ACMG and ASHG. The committee has several working groups in various stages of completion of position statements. Positions papers that have already been released include analyses of Prader-Willi and Angelman syndromes testing, chaired by Suzanne Cassidy and Merlin Butler; ApoE4 and Alzheimer's disease chaired by Lindsay Farrer (the ApoE4 and Alzheimer's Disease Working Group chaired by Lindsay Farrer has published its meta-analysis of the relationship between ApoE4 and Alzheimer's disease in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*); and a paper entitled "Laboratory Guidelines for Huntington Disease Genetic Testing" from the Huntington Disease Working Group, chaired by Martha Nance and William Seltzer. A report on "Measurement and Use of Total Plasma Homocysteine," chaired by Stephen Goodman, is in press.

Several position papers are currently under development in working groups. "Interphase FISH Testing," chaired by Maimon Cohen and Michael Watson, will separate the technical aspects of FISH that are

standardized and controllable from the clinical uses (which is where the questions about FISH testing arise). "First Trimester Screening for Down Syndrome," chaired by Linda Bradley and Ronald Wapner, is in final draft. A Working Group on Colon Cancer Genetic Testing, chaired by Patricia Murphy and Gloria Peterson, is also developing a position paper.

Newly established working groups include "Factor V Leiden Testing," chaired by Wayne Grody; "Preimplantation Genetics," chaired by Eugene Pregament; and "Tandem Mass Spectrometry in Newborn Screening," chaired by Stephen Goodman and Joel Charrow. Additional Working Groups on Subtelomeric Rearrangement Detection and Uniparental Disomy Testing are under development.

## **ACMG Announcements**

### **1999 Annual Meeting**

The Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting will be held March 19-21, 1999, in Miami, FL. The Call for Abstracts/Preliminary Program will be available in October 1998. If you are not on the mailing list of the March of Dimes or the American College of Medical Genetics but would like to receive information, contact the ACMG Administrative Office at 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814-3998. Phone: 301-571-1887, fax: 301-571-1895, or e-mail: mgross@faseb.org.

### **1999 Genetics Board Review Course**

The ACMG's 1999 Genetics Board Review Course (formerly offered by Baylor College of Medicine) will take place April 23-25 in Schaumburg, IL. Gail Herman, David Ledbetter, and Bruce Korf are the organizers for this program, which will serve as a solid review in the basics of medical genetics, as well as a preparation for the 1999 American Board of Medical Genetics examinations in general genetics, genetic counseling, and laboratory and clinical aspects of genetics. The course is approved for CME credit. The preliminary program and registration forms will be mailed in January 1999 to ACMG members and persons certified by the ABMG and the ABGC. If you are not on these lists or have further questions, contact the Administrative Office at the address above.

### **CME**

The American College of Medical Genetics has been surveyed by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and awarded accreditation for two years as a sponsor of continuing medical education for physicians. ACCME accreditation seeks to assure both physicians and the public that continuing medical education activities sponsored by the American College of Medical Genetics meet the high standards of the Essentials & Standards for Accreditation as specified by the ACCME.