CONTENTS

September 2014 • Volume 31 • Number 3

138 Medicalizing Sadness
by Soloman Goldenberg

142 Re-Entering the Laboratory Work Force
by Karen Appold

144 9 Things That Can Undermine Your Vitamin D Level

148 Views From the 76th Educational Program and Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL

123 President’s Comments
by Everett Bloodworth

124 AMTIE Update
by Norma “Taffy” Durfee

126 Government News
by Michael McCarty

130 RMA Update
by Janet Sesser

132 State Societies

136 Armed Services Report

162 Book Reviews

164 New Certificants

174 AMT Directory

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION
From the Home Office

AMT Partners with American Kidney Fund to Fight Kidney Disease

AMT is proud to announce our partnership with the American Kidney Fund (AKF) to foster and promote collaborative work focusing on the role of allied health professionals in the prevention and treatment of Chronic Kidney Disease and End-Stage Renal Disease. We have taken this step as a result of requests from you, our members, for a national charitable platform that will “Do Good” for our community while simultaneously elevating the profile of allied health professionals.

Chronic kidney disease is a common and often preventable disease which affects 31 million Americans. The AKF fights kidney disease through direct financial support to patients in need, health education, and prevention efforts. We are partnering with AKF to fight this disease, and YOU will be our greatest resource. Together, we will raise awareness of kidney disease through professional and public education and communications, and through fundraising for AKF’s programs and services.

Learn more at our partnership page:
http://www.americanmedtech.org/AboutUs/
AmericanKidneyFundPartnership.aspx

(l-r) Christopher Damon, AMT Executive Director; Mary Burden, MT, AMT President; David Frazer, Vice President of Patient Services and Kidney Disease Education, American Kidney Fund; Connie Bell, MPH, RN, Education Manager, American Kidney Fund
Medicalizing Sadness

Soloman Goldenberg

In the western world, almost 20% of the population has been diagnosed with DEPRESSION at some time in their life. The US National Center for Health Statistics reported that about 11% of the US population aged over 11 is now taking antidepressants (BMJ Vol.347, p. 22, Dowrick C. and Frances A.). Of these 23% are women in their 40s and 50s. The prevalence of depressive episodes in the US is between 6.1% and 6.6% as compared to 2.3% to 2.6% in England in 2007. The over-diagnosis of major depressive disorder has been in part due to excessive consumer advertising on television by drug companies marketing their drugs and in part by the right of “the pursuit of happiness” as affirmed in the Declaration of Independence.

Until the classification of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM III 1980), no formal definition of depression existed. Melancholia at that time was described as severe disabling and sometimes life threatening depression characterized by diurnal variation, suicidal thoughts and somatic symptoms. The nine symptoms relating to mood, interest, activity, fatigue, weight/appetite, sleep, guilt, concentration and suicide were included in the definition of MDD. The main emphasis was determined in the severity ratings of mild, moderate and deep depression:

- **Mild Depression** was defined as 5 or 6 symptoms including either low mood or loss of interest;
- **Moderate Depression** was defined as 7 to 8 symptoms with moderate impairment;
- **Severe Depression** was defined as 6 or more symptoms associated with severe impairment or psychotic features of suicide.

**Reactive Depression** contrasted with Melancholia and was closely linked to major life events like grief, loss of a job, broken love affair, etc. The symptoms of guilt unworthiness and loss of interest were believed to get better “with time.” The recent DSM-5 definition of Major Depressive Disorder includes a new dimension of time allowing the condition to be diagnosed after only TWO WEEKS. This was possibly intended to provide more patients access to effective treatment and is probably more relevant to the insurance based health system in the US, which requires a specific diagnosis before payment can be approved. In my opinion, this causes more controversy and concern by medicalizing the normal experience of loss.

**Coping With Grief**

Losing someone or something you love or care deeply about is very painful. Even the loss of a favorite pet can cause mild depression and feeling of guilt unworthiness. The more significant the loss, the more intense the grief. These are some examples of loss:
- Divorce or loss of a relationship
- Deteriorating health
- Loss of a job

“**The remark of ‘you will get over it’ is a fallacy.”**
Kathy has been a stay-at-home mom for the past ten years. Prior to having her first child, she worked as a medical technologist at a hospital in her home town. She is now looking to re-enter the workforce in a similar position that she left.

Julie Stiak, M.Ed, MT(ASCP), program director, Phoenix College, Phoenix, AZ, and Jeff Wolz, M.Ed, MT(ASCP), director, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ, offer Kathy advice.

Q: Will Kathy need any education/certification prior to obtaining a job similar to her last job? Please discuss.

If Kathy had previous certification, American Medical Technologists (AMT) offers a program called the Certification Continuation Program (CCP). AMT requires certified members to document activities supporting continuation of AMT certification every three years demonstrating that the certified member has attained ongoing competence. ASCP has a similar program. If she had no prior certification, it would be advised to obtain it by meeting the criteria of the certifying agency.

Stiak: It is important for Kathy to validate that her professional practice competency is current and relevant through continuing education (CE) provided by various laboratory organizations and publications.

Q: What other skill sets might Kathy want to master while job hunting that would give her an advantage over other candidates?

Wolz: Kathy may want to partake in some online CE programs or attend workshops in the field. Providing documentation of the CE credits or workshop attendance would be advantageous.

Stiak: Reconnecting with professional contacts or networking is essential to understanding the current laboratory environment and fostering potential job opportunities. Kathy could employ a professional development coach to evaluate her skill sets to ensure alignment with today’s laboratory practice setting. She could become familiar with online application and resume submission hiring processes. Community colleges offer free training for updating resumes and applying in the online employment domain.
The 76th Educational Program and Annual Meeting took place at The Drake Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, July 7-10, 2014. The following pages are a photographic review of that gathering which also commemorated AMT’s 75th anniversary.

US Naval Color Guard from the Great Lakes Naval Center presented the flag at the Opening Ceremony.

Executive Director Chris Damon and outgoing President Mary Burden welcome convention attendees.

Keynote Speaker Bill Kurtis presented “The Hidden Solution to Global Climate Change.”