

New Member Spotlight: Westmoreland Emergency Medicine Specialists, P.C.

Westmoreland Emergency Medicine Specialists, P.C. (WEMS), is an independent physician group based outside of Pittsburgh, PA. Its 22 physicians and 15 advanced practice providers support three hospitals. For more information, please click [here](#)



Excerpts from a conversation with Greg Harbaugh, MD

WEMS has been serving the community for over 30 years led by Dr. Robert Whipkey. Dr. Harbaugh joined WEMS about 15 years ago and since 2012 has been part of the administrative team with specific interests in improving efficiency and technology oversight in addition to his clinical responsibilities. While WEMS has had the opportunity, more than once, to combine with larger groups, they have chosen the independent physician route. This strategy has enabled the physician group to be nimble and flexible in their approach with their hospital partner.

Dr. Harbaugh was introduced to EDPMA by their billing company and a current EDPMA Board member. After Greg did some research on EDPMA, he quickly saw the association's value. Dr. Harbaugh's main goal is to ensure that he and the management team stay informed and up-to-date on the legislative issues impacting emergency medicine. EDPMA provides a one-stop location to learn about the issues, gather talking points, identify who to reach out to, and take action. Plus, Dr. Harbaugh said, "the interaction with the other groups keeps us on the cutting edge of what is happening in emergency medicine."

Greg highlighted that receiving EDPMA's ongoing information through the weekly ED newsletter, monthly newsletters, action and news alerts and committee participation, he gains an understanding of the short- and longer-term issues facing emergency medicine. In particular, Dr. Harbaugh is looking for ideas and input on how to plan for the next six months and beyond. He said that recruiting, in particular, is a challenge in these times of the pandemic. While WEMS saw their volumes drop earlier in the year due to COVID-19, they have now returned almost to pre-pandemic days but the next six to twelve months are difficult to plan.

In addition to the recruiting challenges, some of the other key issues Dr. Harbaugh is focused on include the "budget neutrality" issue and the proposed cuts to Medicare. With the pandemic continuing, Greg sees these as critical issues for EDPMA to be acting on and advising the membership on how to interact with their representatives on Capitol Hill. Dr. Harbaugh emphasized that his approach is to take action and EDPMA's information and guidance is key to their ability to be proactive in supporting what emergency medicine needs on the legislative front.

Dr. Harbaugh participates in EDPMA's webinars as much as his schedule allows. He said, "he wants to be a sponge and soak up as much information as possible on emergency medicine issues so he can effectively support the needs of his practice."