

## Hisham El-Bayar, MD General Surgery

### *What did you think of the Paul Keckley event on healthcare reform held here last month?*

I thought he was right on, whether we like it or not. The medical delivery system is not sustainable and there is plenty of culpability from all players. We can fight it, complain about it, or be involved in creating a better system. Rather than think about ourselves and the next six months to a year, we need to think in terms of creating a different system for our children when they become adult patients or physicians. In a country like this it's inhumane and unacceptable that hard-working people can get a life-threatening illness but can't afford care. A free market system for health care doesn't work because patients don't choose to get sick.

There has been division and infighting at all levels of healthcare. If reform is done right we'll work together, with equal input and equitable distribution of resources. Our best hope is for doctors to speak with one voice and agree to certain standards of practice and outcome performance criteria, which is the



vision for the Clinical Institute.

Having been on several hospital medical staffs, I believe St. Joseph Hospital is the best hospital in the county. However, we have to communicate and not work in silos, which leads to the perception of conspiracy and a lack of transparency. Regardless of the model used, people want to feel heard and talked to and that will help bring cooperation. The hospital also has to be able to welcome on staff new physicians and surgeons to prevent stagnation and bring in new thinking, new techniques and specialties.

### *Tell us about your practice.*

It's evolved into surgical oncology, particularly hepatobiliary and breast cancers. I'm very excited about our cancer program. It's the best in Orange County, bar none, and one of the best on the West Coast if not the country. We're ahead of the curve on multidisciplinary approaches, and have great ancillary services and nurse navigators. It's an organ-specific program offering a full range of services. Conditions of participation for the physicians are merit- and quality-based. Our research department is outstanding and has increasing enrollment. And, we have great leadership.

### *How else are you involved at the hospital?*

Currently I'm chair of the Cancer Committee,

the Quality Committee for the NCCCP and the VTE Committee; physician liaison for the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer; an advisory board member and team leader for surgery for the Clinical Institute, and I serve on various other subcommittees. All of the meetings I attend do take time away from my practice and income, but I feel they're important in order to know what's going on and to have a voice in the direction of patient care.

### *Tell us about your medical legacy.*

My mother is a pathologist and my father is a surgeon (both retired), and my mother's parents were physicians. I worked with my dad in his practice for three years in Los Angeles, which was a great mentorship. He was very dedicated and professional, and he, too, believed that medicine is more of a profession than a business. My wife is an anesthesiologist, working in local surgery centers.

### *And outside of your profession?*

My wife and I purposely don't work as hard as we could so that we have more time with our three daughters, ages 11, 9 and 6. We spend a lot of time carting them around. I also enjoy playing soccer and other sports as well as watching sports – particularly the Lakers and UCLA, my undergraduate alma mater.



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