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Helping us with change: excerpts from my Presidential acceptance speech December 2017

I don't know about you all, but I find change difficult. We all know change, like the proverbial four letter word, happens. The inward change necessary for personal growth is quite frankly hard. When I am facing an opportunity to change, I often revisit Harvard Dean James Ryan's five essential questions for life. Ryan argues, and I agree, if we ask ourselves the following five questions regularly, it will lead to a successful and happy life. As an organization, these questions can help us clarify our goals and reach our Vision.

His first question, which we often hear from our children, is "Wait, What?" As in when we are talking with our kids about something, they hear blah, blah, blah... until we say something like "...and I want you to rake the leaves tomorrow with your brothers". They then say "wait, what?" This question allows time for clarification before making a conclusion or

a decision. Remember that the word decision is from the Latin Decider—to cut off. This question allows us to slow down, reinforcing inquiry over advocacy. It allows us to understand before cutting off alternatives.

His second question is "I wonder?" One phrasing is "I wonder why?" This encourages curiosity about the world—As in "I wonder why hospital administration chose the phone system Vocera?" Another way of phrasing this question is "I wonder if?" This way reminds us that we can change the world a little at a time (as in "I wonder if we can get rid of Vocera?")

The third question is "couldn't we at least?" This question helps to get us unstuck. It leads us past disagreement to consensus. The question "couldn't we at least...?" leads us to agreement in a world of increasing bipartisanship. An example would be "Couldn't we at least agree that patients should have access to affordable medicines?"

The fourth question is "how can I help?" We can't change the world by ourselves. "How can I help?" recognizes others have expertise and reminds us that others can help us as much as we can help them. Anyone who has ever done mission work understands the humility necessary to learn about and truly understand the needs of those we try to help, without forcing upon them our own expectations and bias. "How can I help?" keeps us focused on service.

Dean Ryan's fifth question is the following: "What truly matters to me or us". This question forces us to get to the heart of an issue. It can help us figure out where we should be spending our time and resources. In a retreat last year, your NKMS board helped define this question for our organization. Change is happening in Northern Kentucky!

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Upcoming Events



February 1, Winter Forum

February 7, KMA Physicians' Day at the Capitol

April 17, NKMS Executive Board Meeting

May Trustee Dinner (TBD)

July 17, NKMS Executive Board Meeting

August 24-26, KMA Annual Meeting

September 18, NKMS Executive Board Meeting

October 4, Meet Your Legislators Dinner

November 13, NKMS Executive Board Meeting

December 14, Holiday Party

Helping us with change: excerpts from my Presidential acceptance speech December 2017

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To summarize Dean Ryan's five questions for a successful life:

1. **Wait, What?** Underlies the root of all under-standing
2. **I wonder...** Is at the heart of all curiosity
3. **Couldn't we at least...** Is the beginning of all progress
4. **How can I help?** Is the base of all good relationships
5. **What truly matters to me? or us....** Is at the heart and meaning of life.

Five questions that can prepare us to change. These questions can be used as a tool to drive us forward. Practice these questions. I know they will lead you to success.

But wait; for extra credit, there is a bonus question

(as an educator and life-long learner, I can tell you there is always a bonus question). The bonus question comes from the poet Raymond Carter. "Late Fragment" is the final poem in his last published work *A New Path to the Waterfall*, a collection that was written while he was dying of cancer. Get ready. Here's the bonus question:

And did you get what you wanted from this life, even so?

I did.

And what did you want?

To call myself beloved, to feel myself beloved on the earth.

That's it. A short poem and final question that I hope we will all answer "I did" someday. I admire its simplicity and poignancy. The "even so" recognizes the pain and disappointment that inevitably makes up a full life. To be cherished, respected, be-

loved... I remind us all that this is what everyone wants: our partners, our families, our students, and most importantly from us, our patients. How different would our practice of medicine be if our patients all felt beloved?

Let me take this opportunity to wish you all a beloved 2018. I want to thank you for allowing me the privilege to serve as your president. I encourage you to answer the question "How can I help" The Northern Kentucky Medical Society. Give me a call or send me a text. We need your help. We need your talents, expertise, and we need your enthusiasm. Please join us as we grow and change in the New Year.

Mark A. Boyd, MD FAAFP
President, NKMS

Physicians' Day At The Capitol

KMA's Physicians' Day at the Capitol is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7 in Frankfort.

The day will begin with a legislative breakfast and briefing at the Capitol Annex building, followed by visits with legislators and lunch and a feedback session at the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.

Attendees are strongly encouraged to wear their white coats to Physicians' Day. This small gesture will allow KMA/NKMS members to stand out, as well as send a powerful message to policymakers by demonstrating strength and unity among the medical community.

For more information, contact Laura Hartz, hartz@kyma.org.

Need for Syringe Exchange in NKY

There have been 18 new diagnosed cases of HIV among IV drug users in 2017 in Kenton and Campbell counties. We are all familiar with the story of Scott county Indiana HIV outbreak in 2015, with over 180 newly diagnosed IV drug users with HIV in a 4 month period. After that HIV outbreak the CDC studied all counties at risk for a similar HIV outbreak based on IV drug abuse rate, hepatitis C rates, and other factors. Grant, Kenton and Campbell counties were listed in the top 200 most at risk counties for an HIV outbreak, this was in 2015.



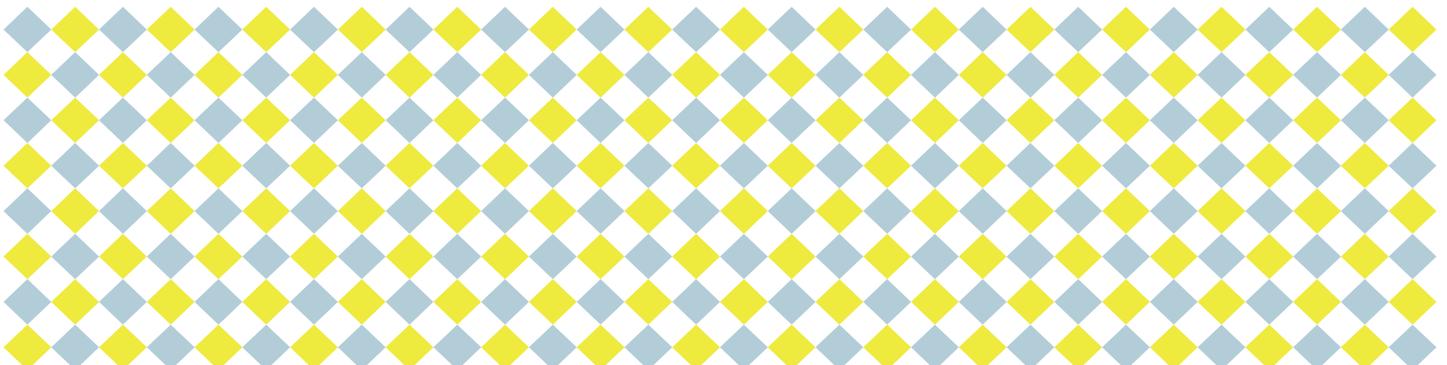
Since then Grant county has started a successful syringe exchange program that has been operating for over 1 year with 130 participants, 63 repeated participants. Kenton county has approved a syringe exchange program in Covington ON THE CONDITION that a syringe exchange becomes operational in Boone or Campbell county first. Campbell county made a few judicial approvals for the project but has remained idle on syringe exchange for the past 18 months. We can not afford to remain idle. This is a healthcare emergency for the safety of those struggling with addiction, first responders, and the public safety. This increase in HIV has been predicted for the past 2 years. If we don't do something now we risk the continued spread of hepatitis C and an explosion of HIV in NKY.

I ask that as NKMS members you aid in stirring the conversation and creating momentum on this issue. Syringe exchange is an often politicized issue, but from a public health standpoint it's common sense. It has been shown in repeated studies that syringe exchanges save over \$7.50 for every \$1 spent for HIV prevention ALONE. This does not factor in health savings for reducing the spread of Hepatic C which is rampant in NKY with population rates 3.5x that of the rest of the state and over 11x the average rate in the US. As a medical society our focus on this important issue is best turned to Campbell county. The Newport city council will be having a debate on this issue on February 12th. Members of the council are interested in the opinions of the public, specifically healthcare workers. I strongly encourage you to go to newportky.gov and email city council members BEFORE this meeting about the importance and medical necessity of a syringe exchange, especially if you practice or live in Campbell county. A vote to open a syringe exchange in Campbell county will create domino momentum by moving forward a syringe exchange in Kenton county. There is a train coming down the tracks, the crossing arms are down, the lights are flashing, the horn is blowing loudly. We have to wake up and get off the tracks. Don't let Northern Kentucky become the next Southern Indiana.

Thanks for all your help,

James Schack, MD

Board Member at Large, NKMS





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Northern Kentucky's
Physician Network

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NKMS Alliance Report

NKMSA/NKMS had their annual Holiday Party on December 8, 2017 at the beautiful Ft. Mitchell Country Club. A silent auction raised over \$1500 for the NKMS Foundation for scholarships. Attendees again brought white socks for the homeless and wrapped children gifts for Brighton. Several were in attendance to celebrate retiring physicians this year. Dr. Mark Schroer ended his term as President and Dr. Mark Boyd was installed as the new NKMS President.



The KMA Alliance will join KMA this year on February 7 for the annual Day at the Capitol. Please wear your white coats and come. Registration information can be found at the newly updated NKMS website at nkms.org. April 17-19, 2018, the KMA Alliance will be holding their annual meeting in The Grand Victorian Inn in Park City, Ky. More information will be coming in near future.



Nancy Swikert, MD
President, NKMSA