



# Executive Leadership Summit 2015

## Summation Report



American College of  
PHLEBOLOGY  
FOUNDATION



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# INTRODUCTION

## An Open Letter to the Venous Disease Community

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Attendees at the ACP Foundation's (ACPF) Executive Leadership Summit (ELS) 2015 are calling for investment in the future treatment of venous and lymphatic patients in 2016 and beyond.

Sixty-five healthcare professionals and industry executives met in Chicago, IL at the Radisson Blu Aqua hotel on July 24th - 26th, 2015 to debate a vision for the future of this medical community.

Despite challenges experienced by practitioners and vendors alike in adapting to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the ELS attendees see growth opportunities for all through investing in:

1. Advocacy Initiatives
2. Public Education and Awareness Initiatives
3. Addressing Medical Training Gaps through Specialty Recognition

### **Collecting and Using Patient Treatment and Outcome Data**

Under each initiative, the ELS participants underscored the value of effectively deploying the ACP Patient Reported Outcome (PRO) Venous Registry to influence practices and their patient outcomes.

- Be proactive with payers to combat reflexive reimbursement responses
- Generate "One Voice" for all venous and lymphatic community professionals

A number of projects put forward for adoption by the ELS participants should serve as a call to action for venous and lymphatic organizations.

In reading this, we encourage you to join with us as we prepare for the needs of tomorrow!

Signed,

**ELS 2015 Attendees**

*(see pages 9-10 for a full list)*

# ADVOCACY

## Advocacy for Venous & Lymphatic Medicine

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Anecdotes have shaped our past, but we are now entering into the world of evidence-based medicine where our medical practices are scrutinized more than ever. However, never in our history has it been more possible for venous and lymphatic practitioners to shape their own identity medically, professionally and publicly. It will require a commitment of all stakeholders to secure our future.

Thanks to the recent expansion of data registries in the venous and lymphatic community, patient care decisions now can rely on practitioner experience, not actuarial tables. ACP members need to participate and become involved if we are to be effective in our desire to improve reimbursement for services.

Treatment requires fact-based content generated from statistical analysis of practical data to communicate with the public about various disease states.

While clinical interests continue to be studied, it is equally important that individual healthcare professionals working in this medical community educate the public on the demographic identity of diagnosed and undiagnosed venous and lymphatic patients. Seeking organizations that fulfill a service role as national advocates for practitioners and patients alike, venous and lymphatic healthcare professionals want membership organizations to actively demonstrate a fulltime commitment to advocacy on all levels.

It was the consensus of those persons attending the ELS that the time has come for collaboration in the venous and lymphatic community to speak with one voice in order to shape its destiny and avert those lacking clinical training from making decisions effecting patient care.

### **Venous and lymphatic medicine should:**

1. Identify and retain a consultant to follow field trends and advocate for patients and practitioners accordingly.
2. Enhance existing informational networks on venous and lymphatic interests.
3. Effectively promote awareness and acceptance of established guidelines developed by practitioners in the venous and lymphatic community to third-party payers.
4. Concentrate limited community resources inside a consensus vision through alignment, merger, and partnerships.
5. Benchmark and publish standards of care for venous and lymphatic patients using collected data. Information derived from the patient perspective is not only useful, but also informative on a publicly consumed level.

# ADVOCACY

## Public Education & Awareness for Venous & Lymphatic Medicine

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The importance of being able to respond rapidly to a given circumstance and situation cannot be overvalued by medical societies as they compete for relevancy.

Something as simple as an organization's name may actually prevent media and patients from finding resources and information about their condition. Overseas, Phlebology is an accepted term directly associated with the treatment of venous disease. In the United States, this term has served to confuse patients and referring physicians because its connection with venous disease is not understood. A name change reflecting common, well-known terms will increase the visibility of ACP members and vendors specializing in vein care. By including the term "vein" or "venous" in the organization's name, those seeking information and/or resources will be able to find them. ELS participants made a strong recommendation to change the ACP's name in order to better communicate our purpose and make the work we do more understandable to the public and medical community.

The public's reliance on spokespersons as a trusted source has never been higher.

To set messaging apart for consumers, identification and branding must define what makes venous and lymphatic practitioners unique.

### **Venous and lymphatic medicine should:**

1. Invest in professional marketing strategies to educate the potential referral base within the medical community.
2. Pursue grassroots educational platforms to elevate patient awareness of warning signs.
3. Secure notable spokespersons for venous and lymphatic patients.
4. Align with national initiatives (such as DVT Awareness Month) to educate the public about venous and lymphatic medicine.
5. Explore the merits of a name change.
6. Explore possible merger with competing organizations to build strength in numbers and size.
7. Seek expertise in working with media outlets from publicity specialists. Targeting professional audiences' streamlines messaging and accountability. Such professionals will rely on a grassroots mechanism (ours?) to convince referred patients with greater awareness of venous and lymphatic disease that treatment is a necessity, not a choice.

# SPECIALTY RECOGNITION

## The Impact of Specialty Recognition for Venous & Lymphatic Medicine

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Standards of care and practical guidelines are at the forefront of patient and practitioner minds.

The influence an accepted professional standard of care has on patient treatment and reimbursement is critical to this medical community's future.

The American Board of Venous and Lymphatic Medicine (ABVLM) is pursuing accreditation of its standard of care by various medical, regulatory and professional bodies. The multi-year plan for its Diplomate credential to be embraced by medicine is well ahead of schedule.

With over 700 healthcare professionals achieving and maintaining their Diplomate certification, the next phase has come in the pursuit of ABVLM's goal for recognition of phlebology as a subspecialty by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

As the only publicly defined standard for practitioners working in the venous and lymphatic medical community, investment is therefore necessary to elevate the level of patient care.

Training fellowships in venous and lymphatic medicine must be established in greater numbers. Recent ABMS accredited inductees underscore adoption of practice centric rather than hospital centric training facilities (Hospice & Palliative Medicine; Sleep Medicine; Addiction Medicine).

### **Venous and lymphatic medicine should:**

1. Invest in establishment of ABVLM Practice Focused Fellowships.
2. Invest in the ACP's involvement with the AMA, including the:
  - a. House of Delegates
  - b. Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Advisory Committee
  - c. Relative Value Scale Update Committee (RUC) Advisory Committee
3. Invest in reinforcing the Patient Reported Outcomes (PRO) Venous Registry by:
  - a. Enhancing electronic medical record (EMR) submission processes
  - b. Increasing the number of records within the data warehouse
  - c. Increasing the number of contributing practices
4. Benchmark adherence value to a standard of care versus non-certified practitioners.

# SPECIALTY RECOGNITION

## The Impact of Specialty Recognition for Venous & Lymphatic Medicine (cont.)

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Medicine is going through a disruptive time. It is essential that medical organizations like the ACP demonstrate leadership by publishing best practices on their website with definable conclusions that allow payers, Medicare and the patients themselves to raise the value of procedures and physical relief.

# CONCLUSION

The ideas and concepts contained in this document represent a consensus of the participants at the 2015 Executive Leadership Summit, the intention of which is to stimulate discussion about the future of the specialty. These conversations will also inform the ACP strategic planning session to be held in March of 2016.

If you are interested in learning more, or how to get involved in the future course of the specialty, the ACP and ACP Foundation have a number of resources, as well as ways to get involved through committees and volunteer opportunities. Please visit the ACP and ACPF websites at:

**ACP:** [www.phlebology.org/about-us](http://www.phlebology.org/about-us)

**ACPF:** [www.phlebologyfoundation.org/donor-accountability](http://www.phlebologyfoundation.org/donor-accountability)

# PARTICIPANTS

## 2015 ELS Presenters

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The American College of Phlebology Foundation would like to extend a special thanks to all of the presenters at the 2015 Executive Leadership Summit.

### Presenters

**Melvin Rosenblatt, MD & Dean Bender**  
**Mark Forrestal, MD**  
**Steven Zimmet, MD ABVLM**  
**Neil Khilnani, MD**  
**Marlin Schul, MD PRO**  
**Diana Neuhardt, RVT**  
**Sandra Lesenfants**  
**AJ Riviezzo**

### Topic

Review of the ACPF Historical (2006 - 2014)  
Performance of ACP Strategic Plan (2012 - 2016)  
Strategic Plan  
Specialty Recognition & Training Gaps (Standards  
Venous Registry - Status & Next Steps  
Public Education Initiatives  
Lessons in Public Relations Initiatives (Medtronic)  
Financial Viability in Treating Venous Disease

## 2015 ELS Attendees

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The American College of Phlebology Foundation would like to extend a special thanks to all of the attendees at the 2015 Executive Leadership Summit.

**Skip Allen**  
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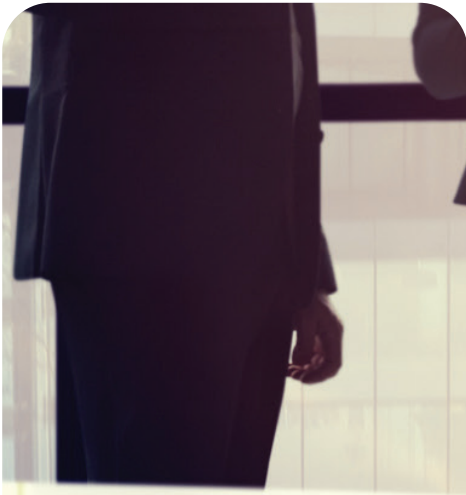
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