

**THE FIFTH DISTRICT BRANCH
OF THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NY**
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Fifth District Report to the MSSNY Virtual Council Meeting January 14, 2021 *Kathleen E. Dyman
Executive Vice President*

The Fifth District includes Cayuga, Chenango, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties.

Onondaga County Medical Society Report to 5th District/MSSNY Council

Onondaga County Medical Society hosted its virtual Annual Awards and Meeting on December 10th, 2020. More than 125 people were able to join throughout the evening, which was hosted on Zoom but livestreamed for the public by News Channel 9 WSYR. The event kicked off with a members-only Legislative Briefing and Happy Hour (with food and drink specials from local businesses) featuring Moe Auster and a welcome from Dr. Sellers. The Annual Meeting itself featured special messages from Governor Andrew Cuomo, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, Congressperson John Katko, and Dr. Bonnie Litvack. The keynote was a comprehensive presentation on the Pfizer vaccine development, safety, and efficacy by Stephen Thomas, MD, Chief of the Upstate Medical University Infectious Disease Division and lead principal investigator for the Pfizer/BioNTech global phase 3 COVID-19 vaccine trial. Awards were given to Onondaga County Health Commissioner Dr. Indu Gupta, County Executive J. Ryan McMahon and Dr. Adeline Fagan (posthumously) for their dedication, service and sacrifice. As OCMS enters our 215th year, Dr. David Page was installed as the 193rd President and fourteen new members were added to the Executive Council.

Economic hardships felt by individual practices, coupled with institutional cuts and generational shifts, continue to take its toll, and OCMS ends the year deeply in the red. We have endeavored to continue offering our physicians the services they need most during this crisis, but we are hamstrung by a lack of earned income streams from in-person events, a residual lack of investment in marketing, member cultivation, and IT infrastructure, and a general decline in sponsorships and memberships. OCMS initial forecasts for 2021 project a 20% drop in active membership, necessitating broader conversations about strategic focus and the ways in which we work with other counties, within and across Districts, and with our State-level partners at MSSNY. We are hopeful these common challenges prompt creative problem-solving and greater collaboration. OCMS members continue to be concerned about the rollout of vaccines to community physicians, availability and affordability of PPE, staffing in hospitals and private offices, and cancellation of elective surgeries and in-person visits as COVID cases surge.