



February 7, 2019

To all Philadelphia Area Clinical Engineering Professionals,

In 1976, a local professional organization, the Philadelphia Area Medical Instrumentation Association (PAMIA), was created to provide a forum for people involved in the field of medical instrumentation technology to exchange ideas and technical information; to further provide a means of communication regarding new instrumentation, techniques, standards, government regulations, and other areas of mutual concern; to support and encourage continuing education; to promote and sponsor service training at a local level; and to encourage others to enter the field of biomedical technology.

The late 20th Century was quite different than today. Without the Internet and its many capabilities for collaboration, phone calls to colleagues and vendors, physically gathering with colleagues, etc., were the main methods of obtaining help, to further the field's body of knowledge, and to network among peers. E-mail, online forums, social media, and medical device information simply a "click away" via the Internet were non-existent.

Meeting face-to-face with colleagues, PAMIA's frequent meetings were forums offering ample exchange of ideas and assistance for technical and management issues. PAMIA supported and encouraged continuing education, sponsored service training at a local level to avoid costly travel and lodging, and offered a forum for local professionals to share their knowledge and experiences via presentations during PAMIA meetings. Roundtable discussions were frequently held to collaboratively share ideas and solutions of issues pertinent to our field.

As time progressed, changes in the field affected the basis of PAMIA (and all biomed societies.) Biomed in small hospitals, once isolated, progressively merged into larger departments as hospitals started rapidly merging in the 1990s. Larger biomed departments greatly increased inter-departmental knowledge and camaraderie, lessening the demand for networking outside of the workplace. And with the advent of the Internet and the changing nature of our field, some of the early benefits of professional societies have changed.

Regardless, many benefits remain. The needs of years ago differ than today, so a group of PAMIA leaders is now working to identify member benefits applicable to *today's needs*. The effort includes seeking the advice of other successful biomed societies and other experts in our field; to find out *what works*. Other than the reinstatement of previous PAMIA society benefits, we foresee an active future offering such things as live networking, career enhancement, opportunity for direct PAMIA Board participation, and a vibrant social media presence.

Because our e-mail list is very limited due to a few years of inactivity, please share this letter with your colleagues. Visit our website, <http://www.pamia.org>, and update your contact information via Constant Contact, or e-mail us at contactupdates@pamia.org.