

# **CMSA-SCC QUARTERLY MEETING**

**THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026**

**Location:**

**Institutes of Health  
1900 S. College Blvd, Ste 100  
(next to Angel Stadium (FREE parking))**

**Breakfast and 3 Contact Hours for  
Nurses and CCM**

**Meeting Time: 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

**Hosted by:**



**Institutes of Health  
Multi-Specialty Clinics**

**Anaheim, CA**

***SPRING INTO ACTION:  
A SEASON OF GROWTH***

**May is Mental Health Awareness Month,  
and we are celebrating YOU! Join us for this  
garden-inspired educational event.**

**Come dressed in your favorite flowery Spring  
outfit or bring a flower to add to our bouquet.**

**Let's bloom together!**



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**Presenters and Topics:**



**TITLE: Understanding When Substance Use is Industrial**

**Presenters: Clark Smith, MD, DFAPA, Chief Medical Officer, IOH**

**Ramsey Ali, PhD, PSY, LMFT, Clinical Director of the First Responder Institute and PTSD IOP at IOH**

**Minh Nguyen, DO, MPH, MHA, MGH, MBA, FACOEM, Chief Medical Officer, ProActive Work Health Services**



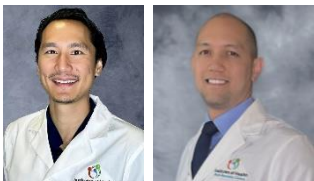
Substance use following a workplace injury is often misunderstood, overlooked, or addressed too late. Yet for many injured employees, especially first responders and those living with PTSD or chronic pain, substance use is not a moral failing but a physiological and neurological coping mechanism in response to trauma. This webinar will help attendees better understand the connection between trauma experienced on the job and substance use. In California, substance use/abuse on its own is not covered. However, as a comorbidity or barrier to treatment for an industrial injury or trauma, it can and should be treated. This educational

session focuses on substance use as an industrial injury and explores how to recognize *when it's time* to seek specialized, evidence-based treatment.

The discussion will address the unique cultural and social challenges faced by first responders. Many enter rehabilitation programs only to find themselves isolated from the very community that once gave them purpose and belonging, creating significant barriers to engagement and recovery. In addition, the pervasive acceptance of alcohol use within first responder culture can blur the line between coping and dependency, making it even harder to recognize when help is needed.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

1. Recognize when substance use is an industrial injury that often develops in response to trauma, pain, and workplace culture rather than as a personal failing.
2. Identify key warning signs and turning points that indicate when an injured employee may need a higher level of coordinated evidence-based care.
3. Describe the core elements of quality treatment programs, including trauma-informed practices, medical and psychological safety, cultural competence, and social connection.
4. Evaluate treatment options effectively by distinguishing evidence-based, integrated care from fragmented or isolating approaches that can hinder recovery and prolong disability.



**TITLE: Intractable Headaches-Understanding Resistant and Refractory Migraines**

**Presenters: Garland Tang, MD, MPH, Director of Neurological Services, IOH**

**Joseph Tessler, DO, PM&R, IOH**

Intractable headaches, particularly resistant and refractory migraine, present a major challenge in both clinical care and workers' compensation claims. These conditions are defined by repeated treatment failures and persistent disability, often leading to prolonged claims, high costs, and frustration for injured employees. Understanding the clinical criteria, mechanisms, and treatment landscape is essential for claims professionals, as many of these cases arise following head trauma or in the presence of chronic comorbid conditions.

This session will provide an educational overview of intractable headaches with a focus on pharmacological management. Presenters will review the latest evidence-based approaches, including acute therapies, preventive medications, and newer targeted treatments such as CGRP monoclonal antibodies, gepants, and onabotulinumtoxinA. Participants will also gain insights into when and why treatments fail, the importance of avoiding medication overuse, and the role of multidisciplinary strategies. By bridging clinical expertise with claims perspectives, the session will equip attendees to better evaluate complex headache cases, support timely access to effective care, and improve both recovery and claim outcomes.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

1. Define intractable headaches and variations and describe the clinical features that distinguish them from more manageable headache conditions.
2. Explain the underlying pathophysiology of intractable headaches, including trigeminal system activation, central sensitization, and the role of comorbidities.
3. Identify evidence-based pharmacological treatments for resistant and refractory migraine, including acute and preventive options, and evaluate their effectiveness and limitations.
4. Recognize the implications for workers' compensation claims management, including when to escalate care, how to interpret medical records, and strategies to support earlier recovery and improved outcomes.



**TITLE: PTSD Awareness: Breaking the Cycle of Delayed Recovery**

**Presenters: Darshan Patel, MD, VP, Quality and Network Mgt, IOH  
Ramsey Ali, PhD, PSY, LMFT, Clinical Director, First Responder  
Institute/PTSD, IOP, IOH**

**Minh Nguyen, DO, MPH, MHA, MGH, MBA, FACOEM, Chief Medical  
Officer, ProActive Work Health Services**

Delayed recovery claims often stall not because treatment is unavailable, but because clinical decision-making, utilization review, and system expectations fall out of alignment once expected biomedical recovery timelines are exceeded. This one-hour session explores PTSD in workers’ compensation, how delayed and chronic claims evolve, the clinical red flags that signal the need for escalation, and the often-misunderstood psychological barriers that interfere with functional recovery, even in the absence of a formal psychological diagnosis or psych claim.

Using a practical, systems-based approach, our expert panelists will clarify how evidence-based interventions such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) function as a gold standard for restoring function under MTUS guidelines, how utilization review decisions are made, and why denials frequently occur. Attendees will gain insight into aligning clinical intent, documentation, and communication to reduce delays, improve return-to-work outcomes, and support defensible, guideline-consistent decision-making.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:

1. Identify key clinical and functional red flags that indicate delayed recovery and the need to escalate beyond standard conservative care.
2. Recognize common psychological and behavioral barriers that interfere with recovery and return to work in delayed or chronic claims, even without a formal psychological diagnosis.
3. Explain the evidence-based role of CBT under MTUS guidelines as a functional intervention for addressing psychosocial barriers to recovery.
4. Apply utilization review and communication best practices to reduce denials, improve peer-to-peer effectiveness, and align documentation with guideline-based decision-making.

**AGENDA (MAY 21, 2026):**

Registration/Breakfast:	7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.
Presentation:	8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. (Drs. Smith, Ali, Nguyen)
Break/Networking:	9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
Presentation:	9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. (Drs. Tang, Tessler)
Break/Networking:	10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Presentation:	10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (Drs. Patel, Ali, Nguyen)

**Target Audience:** RN, LVN, CCM, and other allied health care professionals

CMSA-SCC is an approved provider of the California BRN. Provider # CEP 14032, for three contact hours.

The Commission for 3 CCM Continuing Education Hours—Activity Code (pending); Approval Code (pending)

**Registration Fees (In-Person or Virtual)** Sorry, no refund for this event.

Photos or videos taken during CMSA events may be used for CMSA publicity. Please contact us if you have concerns or do not wish to be photographed.

<b>Early Bird Before April 25th:</b>	(CMSA Member): \$40	(Non-Member): \$50
After April 25th:	(CMSA Member): \$50	(Non-Member): \$60
Walk-ins:	(CMSA Member): \$55	(Non-Member): \$65

(Walk-ins: Please bring a check or cash; we do not have credit card functionality at the meeting.)

**PRE-REGISTRATION AND ONLINE PAYMENT IS RECOMMENDED.**

TO REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT AND FOR MORE INFORMATION, please visit us at: <https://cmsascc.org/>

Contact Us:



562-264-4783



[info@cmsascc.org](mailto:info@cmsascc.org)

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**NEXT MEETING – SAVE THE DATE**

**\*Note one-time date change**

**Thursday, September 10, 2026**

**Location: USC-Arcadia Campus**