

Top Advocacy Issues

WINTER/SPRING 2019

The 133rd General Assembly is underway, and Ohio has a new governor. Several ongoing health care issues are expected to remain in focus in 2019, and new proposals are on the horizon. The Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) looks forward to working with the new administration and the legislature on the following top issues, and other important matters facing our state:

1. Ohio's State Budget

The legislature will deliberate on a bill based on the state budget proposed by Governor DeWine this spring, which provides authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs for the next two years starting July 1.

The OSMA will: Monitor the deliberations for portions of the budget bill that impact health care, advocating for the outcomes most beneficial to the practice of medicine.

2. Medicaid

Governor DeWine has indicated plans to make changes to Ohio's Medicaid program.

The OSMA will: Watch for activity in from the governor's administration related to Medicaid and if needed, provide physician feedback about any proposed revisions.

3. Removing Barriers to Mental Health & Drug Addiction Treatment

Many groups in the medical community are engaging in collaborative movements that seek to reduce and eliminate obstacles that prevent Ohio patients from accessing needed medical treatment for these issues.

The OSMA will: Take part in efforts relating to removing barriers that patients face, including pursuit of mental health parity with regard to insurer coverage, and easier access to coverage of medication-assisted treatment for substance use disorder.

4. Deregulation of the Practice of Medicine

The OSMA continues to focus on decreasing the regulatory burden imposed upon physicians, and is confident that Ohio can regulate medical practice and keep patients safe without creating unnecessary barriers to care, which cause problems for physicians and impose undue burden on practices.

The OSMA will: Explore ways to reduce regulatory burden in order to make patient care easier and more efficient.



5. Scope of Practice

The following scope of practice issues are expected to re-surface this year.

- Independent Practice – Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs)
- Prescriptive Authority – Psychologists
- Expanded Scope of Practice & Prescriptive Authority – Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs)

The OSMA will: Continue to advocate for physician-led, team-based care with regard to the scope of practice issues expected to be reintroduced this year.

6. Telehealth

The issue of telehealth (also called telemedicine) will return to the legislature, with the telehealth proposal backed by the OSMA last general assembly (HB 546) likely to be reintroduced.

The OSMA will: Continue to support requiring health insurers to cover telehealth services to the same extent that they could cover an in-person service, increasing access to critical patient care, particularly in underserved areas of the state.

7. Mandated Health Benefits

A proposal opposed last General Assembly by the OSMA that would establish new requirements related to mandated health benefits could be reintroduced this year.

The OSMA will: Oppose limiting future legislatures from considering new benefits and the endangerment of previously-enacted mandated health benefits, because the legislative process already used to thoughtfully and deliberatively consider these items is adequate and appropriate.

8. Out-of-Network Billing & Price Transparency

The dialogue about medical price transparency continues. In addition, the OSMA expects possible legislation to arise relating to Ohio patients being billed by insurers for burdensome “out-of-network” costs following medical treatment.

The OSMA will: Continue working with interested parties toward an efficient, workable Ohio medical price transparency solution that does not risk disruption in patient care, and participate in efforts relating to “out-of-network” billing of patients by insurers.

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5115 PARKCENTER AVE, SUITE 200 • DUBLIN, OH 43017

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5115 Parkcenter Avenue • Suite 200 • Dublin, OH 43017 • ph (614) 527-6762 • info@osma.org • www.OSMA.org