

Top Advocacy Issues



WINTER/SPRING 2020

Now that the 133rd Ohio General Assembly has reconvened for the 2020 legislative session, the Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) is picking up right where we left off in 2019 on six key issues.

Priorities we're working on:

1

Out-of-Network Billing or “Surprise Billing”

OSMA is working with legislators on several proposed solutions to surprise billing — that is, billing from an out-of-network provider at an in-network facility. While we agree it is important to relieve patients of the burden of surprise medical bills, we believe that an effective surprise billing solution must not have a negative ripple effect on the physician-insurer contracting process. To

that end, OSMA is supporting Senate Bill 198 as the most comprehensive and physician-friendly solution. We believe the framework of the other, House Bill 388, could hinder Ohio physicians' ability to contract appropriate and fair rates with insurers. We're working to educate legislators about this issue and encourage appropriate changes to HB 388.

2

Mental Health Parity

Several years of work with a coalition seeking to bring mental health insurance coverage parity to Ohio have culminated in the introduction of House Bill 443/ Senate Bill 254. A recent report assigns 32 states, including Ohio, a failing grade for ensuring equal access to mental health and addiction treatment for their

citizens, even though federal law requires that health insurers provide coverage for the treatment of mental health and addiction equal to the coverage for physical illnesses and conditions. We're working to support a robust state statute as proposed in HB 443/SB 254 to give regulators a strong tool for enforcement of parity.

3

Medicaid

OSMA submitted feedback we received from our members to the Ohio Department of Medicaid in response to a request for comments on the Medicaid managed care system as part of the upcoming rebid process. Our letter focused on key issues, including:

- The need for increased transparency and plan accountability

- Reforms to the grievances and appeals processes
- Bolstered provider support
- More streamlined and efficient patient care coordination and management.

We will continue to monitor the rebid process and any changes the state administration might seek to make to the Medicaid program.



4

Scope of Practice

Going into 2020, OSMA continues to advocate for a physician-led, team-based approach to care and is working on several ongoing scope-of-practice issues:

Prescriptive Authority – Psychologists

House Bill 323 would allow certain psychologists in Ohio to prescribe medications for the treatment of mental illness and/or substance use disorder. OSMA and the Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association (OPPA) continue to focus on this issue out of serious concerns about patient safety.

Expanded scope of practice – Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs)

OSMA’s work with legislators has led to a solution in House Bill 224 that ensures patient safety and sensibly fits into the care model utilized by anesthesia care teams. OSMA and the Ohio Society of Anesthesiologists (OSA) together have taken a neutral position on the latest version of the bill, as we believe the bill has appropriate safety guardrails. It maintains the current supervisory relationship between CRNAs and physicians, with the physician at the head of the care team overseeing critical treatment decisions.

Independent, Unsupervised Practice – Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs)

House Bill 177 would allow Ohio APRNs to practice independently, without physician oversight. The most recent version adds a stipulation that in order to gain independent practice authority, an APRN must complete 2,000 hours of “clinical practice,” under a standard care arrangement with a licensed health care practitioner. The term “clinical practice” is not clearly defined in the bill. For roughly the equivalent of one year, an APRN would be required to be in a standard care arrangement, but that does not have to be with a physician, and could be with another APRN. Along with other physician groups, we continue to advocate against this bill, reinforcing the positive impact of the current physician-led team-based model and stressing patient safety concerns.

5

Medical Price Transparency

OSMA expects the Ohio legislature will continue to deliberate over price transparency, which would allow Ohio patients to anticipate costs and make more informed decisions about their care. We are supporting

legislation on hospital-based price transparency for scheduled health care services, which has passed in the Senate and must now proceed through the House.

6

Tanning Ban for Minors

OSMA is joining the Ohio Dermatological Association in support of a measure that would prohibit individuals under age 18 from using tanning beds. If enacted, HB 329 would protect the youth in our state from exposure

to dangerous ultraviolet radiation that drastically increases the chance of developing skin cancer, particularly when exposure occurs before adulthood.

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