



OSMA News Now

*The Latest News, Views, Updates, and Information for Physicians
from the Oklahoma State Medical Association*

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OSMA Partners with the AMA Urging Insurer to Document Physician Profiling Accuracy.....

New evidence indicates that patients are receiving inaccurate physician profiles from health insurers. The AMA, OSMA and 45 other state medical associations called on the nation's largest health insurers to take immediate action to improve the accuracy, reliability and transparency of physician ratings.

In letters sent to each health insurer, physicians asked that they publicly document the accuracy of their physician cost profiles by submitting the programs for external review by unbiased, qualified experts. Physicians sent the letters after a series of studies recently conducted by researchers at RAND Corporation confirmed the AMA's longstanding contention that serious flaws exist in health insurer programs that attempt to rate individual physicians based on economic criteria.

"Patients should always be able to trust that insurers are providing accurate and reliable information on physicians," AMA President Cecil B. Wilson, MD, said. "Studies show that economic evaluations of individual physicians are so unreliable that they are more often wrong than right."

To read more, visit <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/news/news/physician-cost-profiling.shtml>.

THIS WEEK'S PRIMARY ELECTIONS:

Oklahoma will have its first female governor next year, as Lt. Governor Jari Askins (D) will face Representative Mary Fallin (R) in the November general election. Askins narrowly upset Attorney General Drew Edmondson by less than 1% (Askins won by fewer than 1,500 votes out of nearly 264,000 cast), while Fallin dispatched Senator Randy Brogdon 55% to 39%.

State Senator Todd Lamb (R) easily won the GOP primary for Lieutenant Governor. He will face Senator Kenneth Corn (D) in the general election.

There were some close calls for some legislative incumbents, but no major upsets in any of the primary races.

OMPAC has already made endorsements in several legislative races, and will continue monitoring these races and interviewing candidates to make sure we elect the most medicine-friendly lawmakers possible.

HHS Releases Regulations on Medicare / Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs

Last week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released the final regulation on the Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) incentive program often referred to as the "meaningful use" regulation. This final rule pertains to Stage 1, which covers the first two years of adoption and meaningful use of certified EHR technology. Stages 2 and 3 will be defined in future rulemaking.

The Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) published a separate final rule on required standards for certified EHRs. While the Administration did make some positive changes, the American Medical Association (AMA) believes that it will be challenging for many physicians to participate successfully in the program. This will be especially true for those physicians in solo or small group practices who have not previously used an EHR. The OSMA will work to educate physicians about how they can participate in the program. For more information please visit the AMA website at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/solutions-managing-your-practice/health-information-technology/hit-resources-activities.shtml> and the OSMA website at OKMED.org.

AMA and MGMA Offer Toolkit to Assist in Practice Management System Software Selection

The upcoming transition to the government's modified electronic transaction standards, coupled with the Medicare and Medicaid electronic health record incentive program, will require physician practices to upgrade or replace their current practice management software. To help you select and purchase the most appropriate software for your practice, the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) collaborated to develop a new online toolkit. Free to members of the AMA and the MGMA, the new "Selecting a Practice Management System" toolkit provides a roadmap to make this process easier for your practice. You can use this information to establish your practice needs and take advantage of recent improvements in automation. The toolkit resources include:

- A five-step guide to practice management system software selection.
- A comprehensive checklist that helps you determine which practice management system software features and functionalities are essential to your practice and which will enhance your revenue cycle management.
- A sample "request for proposal" that you can employ in your communications with practice management system software vendors.

Visit www.ama-assn.org/go/pmssoftware to start taking advantage of this valuable toolkit today.