



OSMA News Now

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

July 24, 2008

Go to the Polls Informed

As you may know many candidates running in the Primary Election next week (Tuesday, July 29th) have no track record on issues that affect Oklahoma's physicians and their patients. Yet the decisions made by Congress and the State Legislature affect your practice ability to treat your patients and make a living. They also affect your employees and their families' future. That is why the Oklahoma State Medical Association encourages physician employers like you to provide your employees with election information to help them go to the polls informed next Tuesday. Election information is now available on the OSMA website to help you, your employees and their families go to the polls informed. You can also visit <http://www.elections.state.ok.us/listbk08.pdf> and <http://www.capitolconnect.com/oklahoma/default.aspx>.

Oklahoma House of Representative Primary Races OMPAC is involved in:

HD 1 Mr. Hank Austin
HD 16 Rep. Jerry Shoemaker
HD 41 Rep. John Enns
HD 47 Ms. Leslie Osborn
HD 53 Rep. Randy Terrill
HD 54 Rep. Paul Wesselhoft
HD 57 Mr. Harold Wright
HD 68 Rep. Chris Bengel
HD 73 Rep. Jabar Shumate
HD 74 Rep. David Derby
HD 80 Dr. Mike Ritze
HD 85 Rep. David Dank
HD 95 Rep. Charlie Joyner
HD 97 Rep. Mike Shelton
HD 99 Rep. Anastasia Pittman
HD 101 Rep. Gary Banz

Oklahoma State Senate Primary Races OMPAC is involved in:

SD 11 Sen. Judy Eason McIntyre
SD 35 Mr. Jeff Applekamp
SD 45 Mr. Kyle Loveless

A DAY WITH THE JUDGES:

Medical Liability Issues

Presented by the American Board of Legal Medicine and joint sponsored by the OSMA and PLICO, "A Day with the Judges" will be held Friday, October 24, 2008. The seminar will begin at 8:30 am and conclude at 4:00 pm in the Conference Center at St. Francis Hospital at 6161 S. Yale Ave. in Tulsa, OK. 74136.

Sessions will include If Sued, What Should The Doctor Do?; Informed Consent and Informed Refusal in Oklahoma; Expert Witness: Ethical & Liability Issues; Public Health: All Hazard Preparedness and Medical Liability; End of Life: Ethical & Liability Issues; Tort Reform Update; Medical Negligence, Trial and Appeal; Patient Safety, Quality and Never Event Medical Errors; Unprofessional Medical Conduct; Criminalization of Negligence; SSA Disability Determination.

Speakers will include: S. Sandy Sanbar, MD, PhD, JD, FCLM, Program Chairman; Justice Marian P. Opala, Oklahoma Supreme Court, Co-Chairman; Judges Kenneth L. Buettner and John Fischer, Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals; Carl Hook, MD, FACS, President/CEO PLICO; Senator Glenn Coffee, Co-President Pro Tempore; Dale Bratzler, DO, MPH, QIOSC Medical Director; James Mike Crutcher, MD, MPH, FACPM, Oklahoma Secretary of Health, Oklahoma State Commissioner of Health; W.A. Drew Edmondson, JD, Oklahoma State Attorney General; Curtis Harris, MS, MD, JD, FCLM, and Gerald Zumwalt, MD, Secretary, Oklahoma State Board of Medical Licensure & Supervision.

The program cost is \$100 for Physician Members, PA's and Allied Health Professionals, Physician Non-Members \$150 and Attorneys \$195. To register or to inquire about CME and PLICO credits, contact Sandy Deeba at deeba@osmaonline.org or call (405) 843-9571.

Join the AMA's "Heal the Claims Process" Campaign

Physician practices are spending as much as 14 percent of their total collections to ensure accurate payment for their services. When physicians submit correctly coded health care claims, health insurers and other third-party payers may still inappropriately delay, deny or significantly reduce payments.

As part of an ongoing campaign to heal the claims process, the AMA's "Heal that Claim" month calls on all physicians to do their part to eliminate waste in the claims process by getting it right the first time. The AMA encourages physicians and their practice staff to submit timely and accurate claims the first time and calls on payers to comply fully with the electronic claims transactions standards and to pay accurately and in a timely manner the first time. This includes full transparency with respect to fee schedules, medical payment policies and other information necessary to maximize efficiency.

Physicians can join other physicians around the country in fighting for what's rightfully theirs by:

- Reviewing their practice's internal claims process to ensure claims are submitted accurately and in a timely manner to the appropriate payer.
- Not assuming the payment they receive is accurate.
- Reviewing claims payments for accuracy.
- Appealing inappropriately underpaid or denied claims.

The AMA offers a number of online resources to help physicians streamline their internal claims process and appeal inappropriately delayed, denied or underpaid claims. This library of educational materials and practical tools cover every step of the claims management revenue cycle.

Visit www.ama-assn.org/go/pmc to access these materials, as well as a variety of others on managing a physician practice. You can also visit the OSMA's web site at OKMED.org for a link to this information.

AMA Practice Tips

The American Medical Association Practice Management Center has compiled the following set of useful practice management tips to help physicians and their practice staff deal with various office issues, such as negotiating contracts, collecting payments and dealing with the claims submission process. Below are just a couple of examples of practice tips from the AMA.

AMA practice tip: Mastering the claims management cycle

The first step in the claims management cycle is to improve physician practice viability through efficient contracting. When entering into negotiations with the health insurer's representative, physicians need to be well prepared. The more physicians understand about health insurers, the better they will be able to decide if a health insurer is suitable for their practice.

Visit the American Medical Association (AMA) Practice Management Center Web site at www.ama-assn.org/go/pmc to access educational resources, such as "A guide to working with health insurer representatives" and "15 questions to ask before signing a managed care contract." AMA members can download these informative practice management resources free of charge.

As a physician, you know there is strength in numbers. The AMA helps all physicians, regardless of specialty or practice setting, speak with a unified voice on the most important issues facing medicine. Please encourage the physicians in your practice to join or renew their AMA membership by visiting www.ama-assn.org/go/membership or calling (800) 262-3211.

AMA practice tip: Establishing a cost-based practice fee schedule

The American Medical Association (AMA) has developed the educational resource, "Fee schedule analysis: Using your complete practice cost as a guide," to help physicians and their practice staff recognize the need to establish their practice fee schedule based on what it actually costs to provide a service rather than basing their fee schedule on what a third-party payer or other entity decides is fair payment. This resource includes a 12-step guide to help physician practices create their own unique physician practice fee schedule with an easy-to-complete spreadsheet that will allow physician practices to include additional markup percentages, profit contributions to reserves and future expenditures.

Visit the American Medical Association (AMA) Practice Management Center Web site at www.ama-assn.org/go/pmc to access educational resources, such as "Fee schedule analysis: Using your complete practice cost as a guide."

New resources are added frequently, so check back often for updates. A link to this information is also posted on OSMA's website at OKMED.org.