



OSMA News Now

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

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- State Health Commissioner to Retire -

Secretary of Health and Commissioner of Health Dr. Michael Crutcher announced today he plans to retire from his post with the Oklahoma State Department of Health early next year.

“Although I am excited about the opportunity to pursue other interests, I am also saddened to leave this agency and the outstanding professionals who work here,” Crutcher said. “I am very proud of the way in which our public health workforce devote their time and talents to addressing the myriad of issues that comprise the practice of public health.”

Crutcher, 55, was appointed State Health Commissioner by the Board of Health on Nov. 13, 2003. He replaced Dr. Leslie Beitsch, who resigned in October 2003.

Crutcher first joined the agency in 1995, serving as State Epidemiologist until 2001, when he was named Deputy Commissioner of Disease and Prevention Services for the agency. He retired as a Captain from the U.S. Naval Reserves in 2004. In February 2007, Crutcher was appointed Cabinet Secretary of Health by Gov. Brad Henry.

State Board of Health President Barry L. Smith said the board will begin a nationwide search for a new State Health Commissioner.

“Dr. Crutcher has been an outstanding leader in public health for Oklahoma. His oversight of the Strong and Healthy Oklahoma Initiative, the expansion of Turning Point projects throughout the state, and implementation of Oklahoma’s tobacco control laws are among many projects working to improve our state’s health,” Smith noted. “Most recently we have seen a positive result of these kinds of efforts in our state’s improved immunization coverage ranking for children, now 15th in the nation.”

The Oklahoma State Department of Health has a workforce of about 2,400 employees with annual expenditures of more than \$300 million. The agency is governed by the State Board of Health, which has nine members appointed by the governor with Senate confirmation. The Board of Health appoints the Commissioner of Health.

AMA Helps Physicians Evaluate Specific Health Insurers’ Physician Profiling Programs

To help physicians effectively identify and evaluate both problems and positive practices of specific health insurers’ physician profiling programs, the AMA has constructed a series of charts that analyze how components of these programs compare with the AMA’s five Principles for Pay for Performance Programs. Based on extensive research of public information and discussions with practicing physicians, these charts analyze the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ “Physician Quality Reporting Initiative” and the profiling programs of four private health insurers: United Healthcare, CIGNA, Aetna and Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. Each of these private health insurers has reviewed the chart on its program. Physicians can benefit from these analyses in their managed care contracting activities and through AMA and Federation application of these analyses in advocating for change in the design of programs that utilize physician profiling. The AMA anticipates preparing additional charts of major physician profiling programs in the future. Visit www.ama-assn.org/go/pfp to view these charts.

PLICO PLANS OPEN HOUSE

Physicians Liability Insurance Company (PLICO), the pre-eminent medical professional liability insurance company in Oklahoma, is planning an Open House on October 16, 2008 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. PLICO moved into its new headquarters in March of 2008. PLICO is now located in downtown Oklahoma City in the former headquarters of the Federal Reserve Bank located at the corner of Dean A. McGee Avenue and N. Harvey St., 226 Dean A. McGee Avenue. PLICO occupies the second floor of the building. Dr. Carl Hook, President and CEO said, “Our new headquarters is conveniently situated in the business district and close to the capitol and courts. The Reserve is a solid and sound building with historical significance to our city, just as PLICO is to our insured physicians.”



How Can Physicians and the Patients Make a Difference? Register and Vote!

Physicians and other health care providers have a big stake in setting the path for future health care policies. Our success depends on everyone's involvement in the election process at the local, state and national levels. Providing Oklahoma working families with access to quality health care, encouraging innovation and fostering meaningful reform is important to all of us.

Some of the best ways to do this include:

- Learning more about the issues and engaging patients in a dialogue how public policy affects their care;
- Making sure you, your family and your staff are registered to vote; and
- Voting on Election Day in the General Election this November.

You have an important voice in setting the path for future health care policies.

Make sure to register and vote on election day!



Ask the CIS

Answers from the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service

This article is sponsored by the Cancer Information Service (CIS) and OSMA's Physicians' Campaign for a Healthier Oklahoma (PCHO). The PCHO is a task force that was developed in partnership with the Oklahoma State Department of Health to address concerns about the health of Oklahomans. If you are a physician interested in clinical prevention and public health and would like to join the PCHO Task Force, please contact Melissa Johnson at Johnson@okmed.org or call 405-843-9571. To find out more about the Cancer Information Service, you can contact Jennifer Smith at Smith@okmed.org. For more information on PCHO and the CIS, please visit OSMA's web site at OKMED.org.

Prostate Cancer Risk Assessment

The purpose of this section is to describe current approaches to assessing and counseling patients about susceptibility to prostate cancer. Genetic counseling for men at increased risk of prostate cancer encompasses all of the elements of genetic counseling for other hereditary cancers. (Refer to the PDQ summary on Elements of Cancer Genetics Risk Assessment and Counseling for more information.) The components of genetic counseling include concepts of risk for prostate cancer, reinforcing the importance of detailed family history, pedigree analysis to derive age-related risk, and offering participation in research studies to those individuals who have multiple affected family members. Genetic testing for prostate cancer susceptibility is not available outside of the context of a research study. Families with prostate cancer can be referred to ongoing research studies; however, these studies will not provide individual genetic results to participants.

Prostate cancer will affect an estimated 1 in 6 American men over their lifetime. Currently, evidence exists to support the hypothesis that approximately 5% to 10% of all prostate cancer is due to rare autosomal dominant prostate cancer susceptibility genes. The proportion of prostate cancer associated with an inherited susceptibility may be even larger. Men are generally considered to be candidates for genetic counseling regarding prostate cancer risk if they have a family history of prostate cancer. The Hopkins Criteria provide a working definition of hereditary prostate cancer families. The three criteria include:

1. Three or more first-degree relatives (father, brother, son),
2. Three successive generations of either the maternal or paternal lineages, and/or
3. At least two relatives affected at age 55 years or younger.

Families need to fulfill only one of these criteria to be considered to have hereditary prostate cancer. One study investigated attitudes regarding prostate cancer susceptibility among sons of men with prostate cancer. They found that 90% of sons were interested in knowing if there is an inherited susceptibility to prostate cancer and would be likely to undergo screening as well as consider genetic testing if there was a family history of prostate cancer; however, similar high levels of interest in genetic testing for other hereditary cancer syndromes have not generally been borne out in testing uptake once the clinical genetic test becomes available.

2008 AMPAC Federation Meeting - Washington DC

The Oklahoma Medical Political Action Committee (OMPAC) and OSMA were well represented at the recent 2008 AMPAC Federation Meeting, held September 19th and 20th in Washington, DC. Jack Beller, MD, OMPAC Chair and Chair of OSMA's Council on State Legislation along with George Caldwell, MD, Vice-Chair of OMPAC and OSMA's Council on Governmental Activities attended the meeting which is open to chairs and staff of state political action committees. Kathy Musson, OSMA Associate Executive Director also attended the meeting.

The goal of the AMPAC Federation meeting is twofold: to facilitate good communications among the members of the Federation involved in political action; and, to foster a better understanding of the shared goals for organized medicine. Topics for discussion included fundraising, compliance, innovative state programs and an update on the 2009 federal political and legislative races.

During the day on Friday, September 19th, Dr. Caldwell and Kathy Musson also met with OSMA's Federal Lobbyist John Montgomery to discuss OSMA's federal legislative accomplishments. That meeting was followed by meetings with the health staff from Congressman John Sullivan's and Senator Jim Inhofe's offices. A reception and dinner in honor of the state PAC attendees was held on Friday evening.

This conference provided leaders of political action committees from around the country the opportunity to gather and receive the latest information on various issues of interest. In addition to AMPAC Board members and staff, other speakers included Trey Richardson, SAGAC Public Affairs who provided information on Association PAC Best Practices and Amy Showalter with the Showalter Group who provided information on PAC membership recruitment and development.

Information on AMPAC's various political education programs were provided to all attendees. Several opportunities are available for leadership who want to become better educated and more involved in the political process as advocates and volunteers for medicine-friendly candidates.

- 1) AMPAC will be sponsoring a limited number of Regional Campaign and Grassroots Seminars. The Seminar planned by OSMA, in conjunction with the other Heart of America States (Arkansas, Kansas and Missouri) was highlighted which will be held January 23rd and 24th 2009 in Tulsa. The event will begin Friday evening, January 23 with an opening reception and dinner, with the education and training program to follow the next day at the Tulsa County Medical Society. Physicians and Alliance members are encouraged to set aside the dates now.
- 2) AMPAC's Candidate Workshop will be held February 13-15, in Arlington, Virginia. This workshop is aimed at physicians and other friends of medicine who are seriously considering a run for public office. The goal is to give them the tools they need to make an informed decision about running for office and to build an effective campaign should they choose to do so.
- 3) AMPAC's Campaign School will be held April 15-19, 2009. The Campaign School is geared towards those who are interested in becoming involved in the political process, particularly by helping other physicians and medicine friendly candidates get elected to office. The school provides the knowledge needed to work on a campaign.

The conference concluded with Stu Rothenberg, with the Rothenberg Political Report providing an analysis of the upcoming elections, including information on the Presidential Race as well as information on Senate and House races around the country.

Save The Date! 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.