

Aug. 7, 2020: State Advocacy Update

Missouri voters approve Medicaid expansion

On Aug. 4, voters in Missouri approved a state ballot measure to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to childless adults with incomes up to 133% of the federal poverty level. An estimated 230,000 people will become eligible for Medicaid beginning on July 1, 2021.

Missouri is the 38th state to expand Medicaid and joins Idaho, Maine, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Utah as the sixth state to adopt Medicaid expansion via ballot measure. It is the second state after Oklahoma to do so this year. Twelve states still have yet to opt into Medicaid expansion.

AMA joins leading medical and health organizations in parity advocacy

The AMA joined more than 10 national medical specialty societies and leading mental and behavioral health organizations to urge the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) to develop meaningful tools and resources to better ensure health insurance company compliance with state and federal mental health and substance use disorder parity laws. The organizations urged a select NAIC working group to adopt tools to require health insurance companies to demonstrate compliance with parity laws prospectively to help ensure patients receive the benefits of their premium dollars.

"Whether this is in advance or at the time of the form and rate filing process, because the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA) is a comparative law, [health insurance companies] would help themselves and regulators in completing the comparative analysis in advance of offering plans to ensure that they are in compliance with the MHPAEA and applicable state law," the organizations wrote.

The organizations joining the AMA in signing the letter included the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American Psychiatric Association, American Society of Addiction Medicine, Mental Health America, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Council for Behavioral Health, National Health Law Program, Shatterproof and the Kennedy Forum.

Please contact the AMA's Daniel Blaney-Koen or Emily Carroll for more information.

AMA Advocacy Resource Center survey on pain management

The AMA Advocacy Resource Center is asking for your help to survey physicians specifically on the issue of treating patients with pain. While physicians have received many surveys, and the AMA is highly sympathetic to the time and other pressures on physician practices, this is the first to specifically address issues affecting physicians who treat patients with pain during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results will help inform future advocacy efforts. The survey is available here.

Due to the promotion of this survey, it is possible that a physician may receive this note from more than one organization. Please only take the survey once and send any questions to ARC@ama-assn.org.

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