



To: RFS Governing Council

From: Megan L. Srinivas, MD MPH

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Subject: Council on Medical Service Update

The AMA Council on Medical Service focuses on the issues that impact the delivery of health care and medical practice, from both a patient and provider side. Prior to the pandemic, there were many issues regarding health equity and telehealth that had been presented to the HOD and referred to CMS for report back. The events of the last 18 months only heightened the urgency in many of these issues. Unfortunately, given the restrictions in place during the AMA's prior 2 meetings, many of the reports were held back during J21 and N21. However, many, but not all, are being presented at this meeting.

The RFS has been very united and vociferous in pushing for health equity, encouraging an overhaul of systems and investigation into innovative solutions. The advocacy that you have all shown has really helped bolster the push for health equity in all parts of the AMA, including CMS's work. To that effect, the CMS is currently prioritizing a joint report with CSAPH on Improving Maternal Health as a new report that we plan to present at I21. CMS has also taken an equity approach in reports supporting rural health infrastructures (report: Addressing Payment and Delivery in Rural Hospitals) and improving telehealth access (report: Addressing Equity in Telehealth).

CMS has additionally been very concerned with improving medical practice at all levels. We have looked into ways to improve the prior authorization process and medical care patient transfer policies. Moreover, while improving aspects of telehealth and our ability to provide/bill for such is critical to our patient care, there have been more telehealth ventures utilizing broadened scope of practice to abuse these new technologies. Thus, the council has been working intently on putting forth recommendations that enable us to provide essential telehealth services and expand access to care via telehealth without compromising quality of care to our patients (please see our report on Licensure and Telehealth).

With the change in administration, our Washington team has been working to establish new relationships to help promote the AMA's positions. We are very optimistic about many of these issues being well-received this year. The RFS voice has been a progressive and diplomatic leader in our HOD that enabled for much of this work to come forward. This next year will continue to be vital in this push.

Sincerely,
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