



ADVOCACY RESOURCE CENTER

**Bringing
the power of
the AMA to
all 50 states**

Expertise and commitment in action

The **AMA Advocacy Resource Center** is dedicated to working directly with national, state, and specialty medical societies to enact state laws and regulations that enhance the practice of medicine—and to defeat those that detract from this mission.

ROLLING UP OUR SLEEVES

We assist state lawmakers and policymakers and respond to the challenges of new laws and regulations in an evolving health care system. By providing expertise to stakeholders on critical health care issues—through direct advocacy, strategies, counsel on best practices, model legislation, useful tools and other resources—we help advance and address issues that matter to physicians and their patients.

ADVOCACY SUPPORT ALL YEAR LONG

Our attorneys provide medical societies with targeted support throughout the year. These efforts include providing technical assistance with legislative and regulatory drafting, testifying before legislative and regulatory committees, and meeting with legislators, regulators and national policymaking organizations on priority issues.

STATE LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

With access to an enhanced legislative tracking service our attorneys are able to provide timely analysis on national trends in state legislation, including legislative developments, bill status, sponsors and amendments.

SPONSORSHIP OF STATE LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCES

We host two national conferences—the AMA State Advocacy Summit and the AMA State Advocacy Roundtable. These meetings bring medical associations, national leaders and experts together to discuss, develop and coordinate advocacy strategies, and to anticipate and prepare for the important issues that come next.

STATE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN TOOLKITS

These useful toolkits combine knowledge and relevant resources from the AMA, national, state and specialty medical societies, and other organizations, and are distributed to states for implementation and guidance.

2022–2023: A few of the numbers



60+ PRESENTATIONS AND TESTIMONIES

At a moment's notice, the AMA Advocacy Resource Center is prepared to present and/or testify on the country's most complex issues that touch health care and the full spectrum of patients' and physicians' interests and rights. We are proud to work closely with our partners in the states and stand ready to assist when the need arises.



50+ RESOURCES CREATED OR UPDATED

The AMA Advocacy Resource Center team works tirelessly to create resources that are understandable, applicable, and easy for physicians and physician advocates to use in support of the AMA's core mission and initiatives.



100+ LETTERS SENT

After analyzing legislation and regulation, AMA Advocacy Resource Center attorneys write compelling letters—sent to state legislators, regulators and governors across the country, as well as national policymaking organizations—that center the needs of physicians and their patients and offer solutions to the most complex health care-related issues facing our nation. Words and ideas matter, and ours get results.

“ The attorneys I've worked with in the Advocacy Resource Center don't hide their passion for the work, but they always make sure to present the issues — ranging from the nation's drug overdose epidemic to prior authorization to telehealth — with the type of depth and intellectual honesty that generates trust from regulators.

— Joel Ario, JD, former Oregon and Pennsylvania insurance commissioner

Together, we're getting it done

We are proud to share highlights of our collaborative efforts and recent achievements.

PHYSICIAN WELLNESS

The AMA is leading the push to ensure physicians, graduate medical residents and medical students can seek and receive care for wellness, burnout or impairment with full confidentiality protections. AMA advocacy includes urging state medical boards, credentialing bodies, and others to remove from their applications stigmatizing and potentially discriminatory questions that may deter physicians from seeking care.

The AMA:

- Supported passage of new laws in Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Mississippi and Virginia in 2023 to protect physicians who seek mental health care from punitive actions
- Advocated to the Federation of State Medical Boards and state boards in Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Ohio, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia and others urging changes to questions that ask about "past diagnosis" of a mental illness rather than focusing on whether there is a current impairment; currently engaging multiple health systems to take similar action
- Partnered with the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation to secure changes to credentialing applications by more than 12 health systems, including 75 hospitals and 59 urgent care centers—positively impacting hundreds of thousands of physicians and other health care professionals
- Supports state physician health programs to help ensure that physicians seeking care have important confidentiality protections to support their treatment and safe return to practice. Recent AMA advocacy includes efforts in Colorado, Montana and New Hampshire

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The Advocacy Resource Center attorneys are excellent at balancing the need for legal accuracy and precision with developing advocacy tools that will work with state legislatures. Their national reach combined with their partnership with medical societies on the ground makes me feel that—despite representing a small medical association—I have a whole team helping me advocate for my members.

— Michelle S. McOmber, chief executive officer, Utah Medical Association

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PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

Prior authorization programs used by insurers to control health care costs are overused, burdensome, and present significant administrative and clinical concerns. The AMA advocates tirelessly to right-size prior authorization to eliminate care delays, patient harms and practice hassles. The AMA:

- Collaborated with state medical associations in the passage of prior authorization reform laws in 15+ states, and laid the groundwork for dozens of reform efforts in the coming year
- Developed an updated AMA model bill to include gold-carding language, a prohibition on retrospective denials, and the reporting of prior authorization by health plans to insurance commissioners in order to promote targeted, volume-reducing reforms
- Helped to coordinate—and participated in—stakeholder coalitions that have proven essential in accomplishing prior authorization reform
- Testified before state legislatures to highlight successful prior authorization reform efforts in other states and the need to reduce the prior authorization burden on patients and physicians
- Raised the importance of addressing prior authorization and other insurers' barriers to care with national policymakers through organizations such as the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, National Conference of Insurance Legislators and more

TELEHEALTH

Policymakers should seize the opportunity to make permanent policy that supports continued advancement of telehealth. The AMA is working to support the safe, appropriate growth of high-quality telehealth. The AMA:



- Recently updated model state telehealth legislation and continues to support state efforts to advance telehealth legislation and policy to ensure access to high-quality care
- Developed a new series of issue briefs highlighting emerging trends in state telehealth advocacy, including state licensure flexibilities
- Engaged in advocacy that led most states to enact laws or regulations requiring coverage of telehealth, and about half the states to support fair payment for services provided
- Worked closely with the Federation of State Medical Boards to update their model telemedicine guidelines
- Helped expand the reach of telehealth through advocacy that led 39 states plus Washington, D.C., and Guam to join the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Scope of practice is a top priority for the AMA. We strongly support physician-led care and vehemently oppose inappropriate scope expansions by non-physicians. We have developed a robust, multi-faceted campaign grounded in data and facts that states can use to educate and inform lawmakers, dispel common myths, and ensure patient safety is front and center in any debate. Every year, the AMA works in close collaboration with state medical associations and national specialty societies to support physician-led care and defeat legislative efforts to expand the scope of practice of non-physicians. The AMA:



- Worked alongside state medical and national specialty societies to help defeat more than 100 state scope of practice bills in 2023, including legislation that would have allowed physician assistants, nurse practitioners or certified registered nurse anesthetists to provide care to patients without any physician involvement, optometrists to perform surgery, pharmacists to diagnose and prescribe medications to patients, and psychologists to prescribe medication to patients
- Conducted surveys and research that help frame messaging and drive the policy discussion on scope of practice, including modules on the education, training and certification of non-physicians compared to physicians, surveys of U.S. voters' sentiment on scope of practice, and unique data tools like the GEOMAP series and the AMA's Health Workforce Mapper
- Creates turn-key advocacy tools for use by our state partners, such as talking points, model op-eds and handouts for lawmakers
- Testifies before state legislatures and other state entities to provide a national perspective on scope of practice, emphasize the differences in the education and training of physicians compared to non-physicians, and underscore why a physician-led care team is necessary to preserve patient safety
- Leads the AMA Scope of Practice Partnership, which has provided more than \$3.6 million in grants since its inception to support state medical association and specialty society efforts

PROTECTING THE PATIENT-PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP

Protecting the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship is a core priority for the AMA. We vigorously oppose interference by the government or other third parties that causes a physician to compromise his or her medical judgment as to what information or treatment is in the best interest of the patient. The AMA:

- Works tirelessly to oppose criminalization of abortion care and works with state medical associations to amend vague and confusing laws that put patient health at risk
- Opposes laws that prohibit the provision of medically necessary gender-affirming care to minor patients; supports legal challenges in numerous states to laws already enacted

PROTECTING THE PATIENT-PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP (CONTINUED)

- Leads stakeholder coalitions to promote broad, equitable access to reproductive health care services, including abortion, contraception and fertility services
- Provides up-to-the-minute information on rapidly changing policy issues and helps state partners develop effective advocacy strategies and hone messaging

DRUG OVERDOSE EPIDEMIC

Ending the nation's drug-related overdose and death epidemic—as well as improving care for patients with pain, mental illness or substance use disorder—requires partnership, collaboration and commitment to individualized patient care decision-making to implement impactful changes. The AMA:

- Helped enact legislation in Colorado, Mississippi, Montana and South Dakota to decriminalize fentanyl test strips
- Developed a new resource to help medical societies advocate for evidence-based options to help ensure that opioid litigation settlement funds are focused on public health efforts
- Continued efforts with the Rhode Island Medical Society to develop regulations implementing the nation's first legally authorized harm reduction center
- Provided technical assistance to help secure passage of a Vermont law that removes prior authorization for medications for opioid use disorder in Medicaid, commercial plans and other settings
- Working closely with the Federation of State Medical Boards to update opioid prescribing and pain management guidelines to support individualized care for patients with pain
- Developed model state legislation to support those who are pregnant and postpartum, as well as parents and caregivers with a substance use disorder in receiving evidence-based care rather than punishment

ANTITRUST

The AMA advocates for competitive health care provider, health insurance and pharmacy benefit manager markets. Currently, the AMA is on track to persuade the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to modernize their merger guidelines so that for the first time, they are expected to clearly protect against mergers that create or augment health insurer buyer power, or monopsony power, in physician markets. The AMA also:

- Opposes mergers at the state level through AMA model bills designed to bring transparency to merger review, protect physicians from retaliation from health insurers and reduce the influence the health insurance industry has on state insurance regulators
- Advocates for the repeal of state certificate-of-need laws and for the repeal of the federal ban on physician-owned hospitals

When I'm getting ready for a public hearing or a closed-door meeting with a legislative leader, I always find it helpful to check in with the attorneys at the Advocacy Resource Center. They recognize nuances of legislation or health care policy because they have seen it in other states and provide me with invaluable background and a national perspective to help ensure I can succeed for my physician members.

—Gene Ransom, CEO, MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society

For years the AMA Council on Legislation has substantially relied on the attorneys in the AMA Advocacy Resource Center to bring us the key state legislative and national policy issues affecting physicians across the country.

These attorneys have spent tens of thousands of hours helping achieve legislative and regulatory victories to support our physicians and protect the practice of medicine. These attorneys along with our Advocacy Resource Center are among the AMA's most valuable resources without a doubt.

—Gary Floyd, MD, chair, AMA Council on Legislation

Protecting patients from inappropriate and dangerous scope of practice expansions is one of those issues that we believe essential to upholding the art and science of medicine for the benefit of our patients. We are proud and honored that the Advocacy Resource Center has been at our side in every legislative battle—providing evidence, data and expertise to show legislators that our concerns are laser focused on patient safety.

—Claude Brunson, MD, executive director, Mississippi State Medical Association



If you've got questions, we've got answers.

Contact the AMA Advocacy Resource Center to learn how we can help advance your efforts.