



AMA 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.

2021–2022: A few of the numbers



**80 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.



**60+ 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.



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 Arizona and Delaware in 2022 to protect physicians who seek mental health care from punitive actions
- Advocated to the Federation of State Medical Boards and state boards in Alaska, Minnesota, Ohio, 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
- 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

“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.”

— Mark Brinton, Esq., general counsel and director of government affairs,
Utah Medical Association; immediate past president,
American Society of Medical Association Counsel



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 broad reform laws based on the AMA prior authorization model bill in 15+ states, and dozens more targeted reform laws
- Developed an updated model bill in 2022 to include gold-carding language and the prohibition of retrospective denials
- Sounded alarms nationally on the need to reduce prior authorization requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond to protect physician resources and patient access to care
- Helps to coordinate—and participates in—stakeholder coalitions that have proven essential in accomplishing prior authorization reform
- Testifies 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
- Raises 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

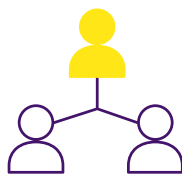
Policymakers should seize the opportunity to make permanent policy that supports telehealth advancement beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The AMA is working to support the safe, appropriate high-quality growth of telehealth.



- 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
- Most states have laws or regulations requiring coverage of telehealth and about half the states support fair payment for services provided via telehealth in large part due to AMA advocacy
- Worked closely with the Federation of State Medical Boards to update their model telemedicine guidelines
- At least 37 states plus Washington, D.C., and Guam have joined the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, which helps expand the reach of telehealth

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 40 state scope of practice bills in 2022, 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 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:

- Leads and participates in stakeholder coalitions to promote broad, equitable access to reproductive health care services, including abortion, contraception and fertility services
- Works tirelessly in states that have banned abortion to oppose criminalization of reproductive health care and amend vague and confusing laws that put patient health at risk

PROTECTING THE PATIENT-PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP (CONTINUED)

- Successfully defeated legislation in more than a dozen states that would have criminalized the provision of medically necessary gender-affirming care to minor patients; currently supporting legal challenges to laws enacted in Alabama and Arkansas
- Works to enact laws to protect physicians and other providers from out-of-state criminal and civil liability

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 Arizona, New Mexico and Washington to decriminalize fentanyl test strips; additional legislation also supported in Maryland, Minnesota and Wisconsin
- Supported the enactment of legislation or other policies in more than a dozen states to help ensure that opioid litigation settlement funds are focused on public health efforts
- Worked closely with the Rhode Island Medical Society to help develop regulations implementing the nation's first legally authorized harm reduction center
- Helped enact new law in Minnesota to protect patients with pain by supporting the removal of arbitrary prescribing thresholds
- 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 and insurance markets by sounding the alarm on potentially anticompetitive mergers. The AMA is:

- Encouraging the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to modernize their enforcement of antitrust laws regarding mergers and develop policy that protects against mergers that create or augment health insurer buyer power in physician markets
- Opposing, on antitrust grounds and in impactful ways, health insurer mergers and other conduct that injure physicians in their practices
- Supporting the opposition of anticompetitive 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 that the health insurance industry has on state insurance regulators

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;
chair, AMA Advocacy Resource Center Executive Committee

The AMA Council on Legislation for years has deeply relied on the attorneys in the AMA Advocacy Resource Center to bring to us the key state legislative and national policy issues affecting physicians across the country. The Advocacy Resource Center attorneys have spent tens of thousands of hours helping achieve legislative and regulatory victories to support physicians and protect the practice of medicine. They are among the AMA's most valuable resources without a doubt.

— Heather A. Smith, 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



Learn more about how the AMA
shapes policy at the state level.