



Connecticut State Medical Society 2019 Legislative Agenda



In 2019, the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) will continue to advocate for its physician and physician in training members, and the patients they serve. The continued need will exist for involvement in a wide range of issues potentially impacting our members, physician practices, patients, the health care system, public health, and the future of medicine. While we will promote efforts to strengthen the health care system, protect the interests of physicians and the patients they serve, and to ensure that the highest quality of care is available and able to be delivered, our legislative agenda also is developed within the realities facing our state in 2019. During the long session CSMS has more opportunities to introduce proactive legislation because the legislature is less focused on financial issues and the budget, and because individual representatives and senators are free to submit bills for consideration to any committee.

Contracting, Transparency and Fairness

CSMS has successfully been involved in advocacy that has led to significant changes to statutes regarding the health care system over the past few years. However, drastic changes, including a dramatic shift in physician practice models continues to put significant pressure on physicians and their ability to determine where, when, and how they can practice. CSMS will continue to focus on the need to identify existing issues of contracting, transparency, fairness, and independence. Legislative efforts to strengthen the position of physicians within the marketplace, allowing them to better serve their patients and community will be sought. These will include:

- **Priority given to continued efforts in addressing reimbursement deficiencies within “high deductible” plans. In 2018, CSMS became the first state medical society in the country to have introduced and had a public hearing on legislation to create fairness within “high deductible health plans.”**
- Reduce regulatory burdens, such as eliminating prior authorizations for procedures that are routinely approved and eliminate prior authorization for reduction of prescriptions
- Seek to prevent formulary changes mid-contract
- Strengthen protections for physicians obligated to provide “out-of-network” care
- Address retroactive denials of emergency services, protecting CT’s “prudent layperson’s statute”
- Require credentialing application decisions be made with 45 days of receipt of a complete application, and 30 days for previously credentialed physicians changing employment (billing under a different tax id number)
- Allow for retroactive billing of services to date of submission for an approved credentialing application
- Require reimbursement for any mandatory screening tests required by the state
- OPT IN for future products
- Eliminate co-pays and deductibles for mammograms associated with dense breasts

“CSMS has succeeded in a difficult environment and the ever changing landscape of the health care system. Much of this success comes from the dedication of members with support from, and coordination within, the House of Medicine. To continue down this path, it is important that every physician understand the need to support medicine and be involved in the process.”

~ David Emmel, MD

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Physician Workforce Issues, Including Professional Liability Insurance and Reform

CSMS will build on support within the general assembly to pass legislation for a complete review of all issues related to our difficulties in recruiting and retaining physicians, including the tort system and medical liability insurance. To continue to combat the erosion of physicians in Connecticut, CSMS will continue proactive measures to address workforce issues including:

- **Seek a task force to identify and remove barriers to attracting and retaining the best graduates of medical schools and post-graduate training programs**
- Address the issues of a highly concentrated health insurance market and seek state exemptions from federal laws to allow physicians to negotiate as a group to strengthen their contracting abilities. Benefits would include the ability to seek opportunities to implement electronic medical record systems, establish Accountable Care Organizations, and cover increased liability insurance costs.
- Reduce regulations that impede physician services such as those required by the Certificate of Need process. Eliminate the ASC tax
- Discussion on the efficacy of the tort system and an investigation in to alternatives to the current system such as health courts
- Oppose ongoing efforts that “devalue” the practice of medicine.

Proactive Public Health Initiatives

CSMS and its members have been leaders on many initiatives to protect and promote the public health of Connecticut residents. CSMS believes that it represents two groups of people: physician members and patients. Therefore, an important aspect of our agenda will continue to focus on the quality of the health of every person in our state. These will include:

- **Ongoing efforts to increase access to and availability of a comprehensive Health Information Exchange**
- **Continued efforts to address the issue of opioid and substance abuse including the use of Medication Assisted Therapy**
- Strengthen “Truth in Advertising laws” and others that require disclosure of accurate information about a health care provider’s training and abilities. Legislation should include the requirement that health care professionals clearly identify their level of independence and any involvement, collaboration, supervision, or delegation by a physician
- Support efforts to strengthen state vaccination laws by limiting exemptions and allowing properly trained medical assistants to provide vaccinations under the direct supervision of a physician.
- Partner with Legislative Leaders to review and strengthen state laws regarding childhood obesity, nutrition and “clean schools.”