



March 2014

A newsletter from:
AfPA Health Policy Council
Physician Legislators Promoting Patient Access

www.allianceforpatientaccess.org

CO-CHAIRS

Del. Dan K. Morhaim, M.D., MD
(Co-Chair)

Sen. Mark Green, M.D., TN
(Co-Chair)

MEMBERS

Sen. Donny Olson, M.D., AK

Rep. Robert Bentley, M.D., AR

Sen. Kelli Ward, M.D., AZ

Sen. Irene Aguilar, M.D., CO

Sen. Josh Green, M.D., HI

Rep. Barbara Bollier, M.D., KS

Rep. Ann E. Dorney, M.D., ME

Rep. Mike Ritze, D.O., OK

Sen. Steve Dickerson, M.D., TN

Sen. Charles Schwertner, M.D., TX

Sen. Donna Campbell, M.D., TX

Del. Christopher P. Stolle, M.D., VA

Del. Margaret Anne Staggers, M.D., WV

Sen. Ron Stollings, M.D., WV

ABOUT AfPA'S HEALTH POLICY COUNCIL

HPC serves as a physician led non-partisan forum to promote interstate communications between physicians serving in public office. HPC provides for a free exchange of ideas and best policies on issues impacting the practice of medicine. HPC members will join with AfPA's physician leadership to examine issues and promote policies that strengthen the physician-patient relationship while ensuring patient access to appropriate clinical care and approved therapies.

IN TENNESSEE, SEN. MARK GREEN, M.D. INTRODUCES BILL TO REFORM PREAUTHORIZATION PROCEDURES

Physicians and patients in Tennessee, like their counterparts in other states, have long been frustrated by health plans' seemingly arbitrary basis for determining if they will pay for a therapy, procedure, or other service. Senator Mark Green, an emergency room physician and Co-Chair of AfPA's Health Policy Council, has introduced legislation to reform the process and safeguard patients' access to the treatment their doctors prescribe.

SB 1142 amends state insurance laws, revising the requirements for utilization review of health care services preauthorization in three significant ways. First, the bill requires utilization review agents to base determinations about health care services on medical necessity and written clinical criteria. Those criteria will be evidenced-based, nationally recognized standards that offer reasonable flexibility and are evaluated annually for necessary updates.

Second, the bill revamps notification procedures. According to SB 1142, preauthorization requirements and restrictions – as well as their related criteria – must be available online. Statistics on preauthorization approvals and denials must also be available on the health plan's website. In addition, utilization review agents must notify contracted providers in writing of changes to restrictions or requirements at least 60 days before implementation.

Third, the bill requires that determinations be made by board-certified physicians who hold a current license in the state. Adverse determinations must occur under the clinical direction of a medical director who is also licensed in the state.

When the bill becomes law in Tennessee, preauthorization decisions will better reflect physicians' insight, and criteria will become more visible for affected patients and health care providers. Advocates argue that tying determinations to clinical criteria will also help curb bureaucratic limitations on patients' access to necessary treatment.

Senator Green, president and CEO of a medical emergency staffing company, holds an M.D. from Wright State University.

(more)



Sen. Mark Green, M.D., TN
(Co-Chair)

HPC AND AfPA

The Health Policy Council (HPC) functions as a non-partisan policy forum and there are no dues or fees to join, nor are its members compensated. HPC is sponsored by the Alliance for Patient Access (AfPA), a physician led 501(c) (4) non-profit corporation. HPC programming is also supported by the Institute for Patient Access (IfPA), a related 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. HPC is not a lobbying organization and its funding is derived from grants, donations, and sponsorships provided by both for-profit and non-profit entities. Visit AfPA's website at www.allianceforpatientaccess.org for more information.



A newsletter from:
AfPA Health Policy Council
 Physician Legislators Promoting Patient Access

www.allianceforpatientaccess.org



CO-CHAIRS

Del. Dan K. Morhaim, M.D., MD
 (Co-Chair)

Sen. Mark Green, M.D., TN
 (Co-Chair)

MEMBERS

Sen. Donny Olson, M.D., AK

Rep. Robert Bently, M.D., AR

Sen. Kelli Ward, M.D., AZ

Sen. Irene Aguilar, M.D., CO

Sen. Josh Green, M.D., HI

Rep. Barbara Bollier, M.D., KS

Rep. Ann E. Dorney, M.D., ME

Rep. Mike Ritze, D.O., OK

Sen. Steve Dickerson, M.D., TN

Sen. Charles Schwertner, M.D., TX

Sen. Donna Campbell, M.D., TX

Del. Christopher P. Stolle, M.D., VA

Del. Margaret Anne Staggers, M.D., WV

Sen. Ron Stollings, M.D., WV

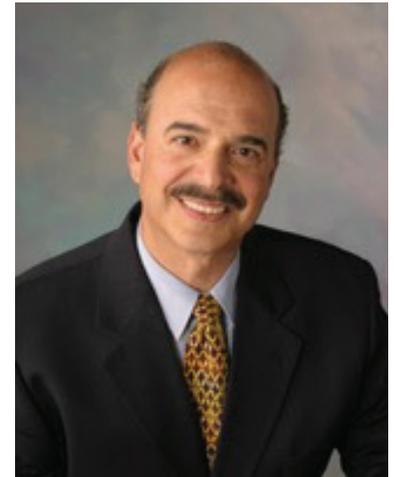
ABOUT AfPA'S HEALTH POLICY COUNCIL

HPC serves as a physician led non-partisan forum to promote interstate communications between physicians serving in public office. HPC provides for a free exchange of ideas and best policies on issues impacting the practice of medicine. HPC members will join with AfPA's physician leadership to examine issues and promote policies that strengthen the physician-patient relationship while ensuring patient access to appropriate clinical care and approved therapies.

(continued)

IN MARYLAND, DELEGATE DAN MORHAIM, M.D. URGES ACTION ON MEDICATION SHORTAGE CRISIS

A long-time leader in Maryland's House of Delegate, Dan Morhaim, M.D. recently shone a spotlight on an issue of increasing national significance, prescription drug shortages. Morhaim, a physician-legislator, penned a Baltimore Sun opinion-editorial on the subject, citing a problem of "crisis" proportions. Co-Chair of AfPA's Health Policy Council, Morhaim advocates for more streamline operations, better exchange networks and U.S.-based production of medications.



Del. Dan K. Morhaim, M.D., MD
 (Co-Chair)

"This crisis needs immediate attention on many levels," Morhaim states in the article. "The Food & Drug Administration's passive approach — limited to generating lists of impending drug shortages — should become proactive by expediting permits for qualified producers and creating an exchange system so medicines are distributed where needed. Hospitals could establish extensive buying consortiums and partner directly with manufacturers to eliminate the dozens of 'middle men' engaged in profiteering. State health departments could create medication repositories for sharing."

In his column, Morhaim depicts the crisis through anecdotes from health care providers, parents and pharmacists. Medications such as epinephrine, Compazine, Novocain and Ativan exist in limited quantities, Morhaim notes. Much more than a simple inconvenience, the shortages contribute to substandard care for many patients. "Patients are suffering and dying because they're not receiving optimal treatment," Morhaim explains.

A board-certified physician and House Chairman of Maryland's Joint Committee on Health Care Delivery & Finance, Delegate Morhaim has worked in the state legislature for nearly two decades to ensure patient access to approved therapies and appropriate clinical care.

JOIN HPC TODAY

As a physician serving in elected office you are invited to join the HPC. There are no membership dues, only a small investment of your time working with fellow physicians towards the promotion of health policies that strengthen the physician-patient relationship while ensuring patient access to appropriate clinical care and approved therapies. As a member of the HPC you will have the opportunity to network and collaborate with fellow physician-legislators in studying and crafting health policies, allowing a sharing of expertise across states.

To join or learn more about AfPA or the Health Policy Council contact Scott Migli at SMigli@allianceforpatientaccess.org or call (202) 499-4114.

