**Bills That Are Now Law**

Several bills passed during the 2019 legislative session and signed by the governor went into effect on August 28.

**Prior Authorization Reform**

Insurance companies will now have to provide physicians with a statement of their clinical rationale when a request is denied. Insurers will not be able to limit, condition, or revoke a prior authorization for 45 working days once it is received by the physician. Insurers will also provide physician offices with a unique confirmation number upon receipt of a request for prior authorization. Prior authorization certification now includes a stipulation that payment for the service will be made as long as the patient is an enrollee of the plan when the service is provided.

**Medication-Assisted Treatment**

It will now be easier to provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) to patients experiencing opioid abuse disorders. MAT pharmacological services for substance abuse disorders are now exempt from prior authorization requirements.

**Tobacco Cessation Products**

Pharmacists are now allowed to dispense FDA-approved tobacco cessation products to patients. However, these products are limited to nicotine-replacement therapies like patches, inhalers, and nasal sprays. Oral tobacco cessation medications, which can cause dangerous psychological side effects, must still be prescribed by a physician.

**Virtual Credit Cards**

Insurance providers will now be prohibited from insisting that physicians and other healthcare providers accept payment in the form of virtual credit cards, which sometimes carry a hefty transaction fee. If an insurance provider wishes to use virtual credit cards for reimbursement, they must offer physicians an alternative form of payment that does not include a transaction fee.

**Physician Assistants**

“Supervisory agreements” between physician assistants and physicians will now be known as “collaborative arrangements” in statute, to bring PAs in line with the already-existing collaborative practice arrangements between physicians and mid-levels like APRNs or assistant physicians.

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**Medical Marijuana Website Gets Largest Number of Hits**

MSMA's Medical Marijuana webpages at www.msma.org have been receiving the largest number of hits; more than 2,000 hits in the month of August.

- msma.org/marijuana-law.org - Outlines everything you need to know about the current law and process for prescribing medical marijuana.
- msma.org/marijuana-education-resources - A considerable amount of medical research exists, and is rapidly increasing, that regular marijuana use is associated with a wide variety of medical diseases especially in the young and pregnant women. States enacting medical and/or recreational marijuana laws have also seen many problems in education, domestic abuse, law enforcement, automobile accidents, and deaths under the influence of cannabis. This section connects the important studies published by Missouri Medicine: The Journal of the Missouri State Medical Association.
- msma.org/opioid-education-resources - Misuse of pain medication (opioids) has caused one of the worst healthcare crises in United States history. Public health statistics estimate that 72,287 people died from opioid overdoses in 2017, a 10% increase from the year before. This section highlights medical research published in Missouri Medicine: The Journal of the Missouri State Medical Association, and offers resources for physicians.

**MU Offers New ECHOs**

The University of Missouri is launching new ECHOs for Hypertension, Diabetes, Kidney Disease and Developmental Disabilities. Visit https://showmeecho.org/ to register for the online learning sessions, which will be held twice a month.

MU’s Show-Me ECHO program uses videoconferencing to connect an interdisciplinary team of experts with primary care and service providers. They collaborate in interactive case-based learning to help providers develop advanced skills and best practices.

Professionals from across Missouri are encouraged to join the new ECHOs, regardless of the ECHO area of emphasis. The Hypertension ECHO emphasizes improving care in the Kansas City area, while the SEMO Diabetes ECHO focuses on southeast Missouri. The Developmental Disabilities ECHO is designed for adult patients.

The ECHOs are provided at no cost to participating sites and individuals, and they offer no cost continuing education to professionals. Visit https://showmeecho.org/ to learn more.
MSMA, Medicare, and Board of Healing Arts Fraud/Scam Alerts

MSMA Phishing/Fake Invoice Scam
MSMA members have received fraudulent emails which use the MSMA logo, and/or official wording, and/or purport to be from an MSMA staff member, an MSMA leader, or someone posing as MSMA staff or an MSMA leader.

These are phishing/spam emails being used to gather your personal information. They are not from MSMA. If you receive an email similar to the below example, DO NOT OPEN ATTACHMENTS, CLICK ON LINKS, OR RESPOND in any way.

In order to recognize phishing emails, please know that official emails from MSMA will always be sent from an MSMA-affiliated email account. They will not “expire within 24 hours” or contain any other verbiage which requires members to click a link within a particular timeframe.

MSMA will never ask you to update your personal information through email or over the Internet without first logging into your secure account at www.msma.org. MSMA does not share members’ emails with outside entities.

If you have doubts about its source, call MSMA at 800-869-6762 or email anyone on staff directly.

Medicare Genetic Testing Scam
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General is alerting the public about a fraud scheme involving genetic testing. Genetic testing fraud occurs when Medicare is billed for a test or screening that was not medically necessary and/or was not ordered by a Medicare beneficiary’s treating physician.

Scammers offer Medicare beneficiaries “free” screenings or cheek swabs for genetic testing to obtain their Medicare information for identity theft or fraudulent billing purposes through telemarketing calls, booths at public events, health fairs, and door-to-door visits.

Beneficiaries who agree to genetic testing or verify personal or Medicare information may receive a cheek swab, an in-person screening or a testing kit in the mail, even if it is not ordered by a physician or medically necessary. If Medicare denies the claim, the beneficiary could be responsible for the entire cost of the test, which could be thousands of dollars.

Alert your patients! Tell them:
• If they receive a genetic testing kit in the mail, don’t accept it unless it was ordered by their physician.
• Refuse the delivery or return it to the sender.
• Keep a record of the sender’s name and the date they returned the items.
• Be suspicious of anyone who offers “free” genetic testing and then requests the Medicare number.
• Medicare beneficiaries should be cautious of unsolicited requests for their Medicare numbers. If anyone other than their physician’s office requests their Medicare information, do not provide it.

If you or your patients suspect Medicare fraud, contact the HHS OIG Hotline at 1-800-MEDICARE.

Phone Scam Targets Medical License
The Missouri State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts has received several reports of phone scammers using the Missouri Board’s office phone number to make scam calls to licensed professionals. Licensees are advised not to share any identifying information on the phone. They are encouraged to report calls they receive and believe to be a scam by calling the Board office at 573-751-0106 or by email at legal@pr.mo.gov.

Got Drugs?
Turn in your unused or expired medication for safe disposal during National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, October 26. Visit https://takebackday.dea.gov to find a location near you.
MSMA Reaching Out and Representing YOU!
Want MSMA to come to you? Email Haley Wansing at hwansing@msma.org or Stephen Foutes at stephen@msma.org or call 800-869-6762.

West Central
On Aug. 29, MSMA President James DiRenna, DO, FAAFP, gave a presentation to the members of the West Central Medical Society in Nevada. DiRenna’s presentation focused on MSMA’s outreach efforts and the Phone2Action advocacy tool MSMA will use to connect with its members during the 2020 legislative session. See page four on how to sign up for this valuable legislative tool.

Boone
MSMA member Lisa Thomas, MD, gave a presentation on physician burnout and the Missouri Physicians Health Program (MPHP) to the Boone County Medical Society (BCMS) on Sept. 3 in Columbia. Dr. Thomas serves as a District 5 Councilor, a BCMS Board member, and Medical Director of the MPHP. The lively discussion addressed the varying causes and impacts of physician burnout and how the MPHP works to help physicians on their path to recovery.

Moberly Regional
MSMA Director of Legislative Affairs Heidi Geisbuhler gave a legislative update to physicians at Moberly Regional Medical Center on Sept. 9 in Moberly. Geisbuhler discussed MSMA’s advocacy efforts, including those related to prior authorization, medication-assisted treatment for substance-abuse disorders, and scope-of-practice issues.

Legislative Report Moves to Email – Must Opt in for Print Copy
IMPORTANT: If you want to receive a paper copy of the Legislative Report please email cwilliams@msma.org or call 800-869-6762.

Renew Your Membership
Start the fall season by renewing your MSMA membership for 2020. Watch your mailboxes and email to ensure you don’t miss out on important member benefits, including legislative support, member advocacy, and communication services.

Paying your MSMA dues on time saves your dues dollars for Association programs. If you have questions about your membership invoice, contact the MSMA membership division at 800-869-6762 or email cwilliams@msma.org.

CME Handbook Updated - Reflects New Regulations and Guidelines
MSMA’s official CME Handbook provides all the requirements and information concerning the policies, procedures, and criteria for accreditation by the MSMA, updated August 2019. As information is continually updated according to the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, you will be informed by MSMA’s CME division. Visit www.msma.org/cme-handbook for updates.

Looking to Install an HIE?
Funding Available
Missouri is the recipient of the Physicians Foundation grant for getting interconnected through the Show Me Health Information Network (SHINE) Health Information Exchange. The grant assists with the interface costs for independent physician practices. There is still funding available and here is how it is being allocated.

• Physician groups with signed participation agreements for SHINE will be considered eligible for grant funds.
• Each group can receive a grant equal to 75% of their interface fees.
• No group practice will receive more than $10,000 grant allocation.
• Funds issued on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For more information, contact Jonathan Smith, MPH, at jsmith@kammco.com or call 785-232-2224.
New Member Benefit - Advocacy App

A new MSMA benefit makes it easier for you to connect with your legislators.

MSMA has partnered with Phone2Action to give you the opportunity to quickly and conveniently send emails, post Tweets, and place phone calls directly to your elected leaders. The Phone2Action program will connect you directly to your local legislator’s office through phone or email, which makes getting involved in MSMA's advocacy efforts even easier!

When there’s an issue that impacts the medical profession and patient care, MSMA will notify you via text message. The message will contain a link that, when clicked, sends an email, Tweet, or places a phone call to your state representative or senator.

1. Sign up to start: Text MOMEDICAL to 52886 (message and data rates may apply)
2. Watch for notifications on legislation or policy changes
3. Act (click a link) to connect with your legislators

Physician advocacy is vital to your profession and your patients, and your voice does make a difference. More information at www.msma.org/action.

Coverage for Affluent Homes

Experience the peace of mind that comes from working with an insurance professional who understands your unique needs.