

Rhode Island Medical Society Council

Meeting of Monday, February 23, 2015

Meeting Highlights

Legislative Advocacy: RIMS initiatives for 2015

Michael Migliori, MD, Public Laws Committee Chair, presented the Society's legislative agenda for the current General Assembly session. He invited members of the Council to avail themselves of RIMS' House Call program, spending part of a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday afternoon and evening at the State House with Steve DeToy.

Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Act Reauthorizes Good Samaritan immunity for individuals who expose their own illegal behavior by calling 911 to prevent an overdose death. Also expands immunity to include probation and parole violations. (McCaffrey /Craven H-5416)

Patient Access to Abuse Deterrent Formulation of Pain Medicines This is a reintroduction of a RIMS measure designed to help address the opioid addiction and overdose epidemic. (Miller S-0167/Edward H-5219)

Provider Tax Repeal RIMS' annual attempt to roll back the state's discriminatory and counter-productive tax on the gross receipts of physician-owned outpatient imaging, surgery and endoscopy facilities. (Gallo S-0212/Naughton)

Prior Authorization Requires transparency in the criteria used by payers in granting or denying prior authorization. (Ottiano/Shekarchi)

Electronic Health Records Requires EHR vendors in the Rhode Island market to facilitate data flow from one EHR into another. (Miller S-0231/McKiernan H-5482)

Interstate Physician Licensing Compact Would allow the Rhode Island Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline to participate in a process facilitated by the Federation of State Medical Boards to reduce red tape and facilitate licensing in multiple states for physicians who qualify. (McNamara)

Network Adequacy Strengthens the state's hand in regulating the limited networks of private payers, in part by transferring oversight authority for network adequacy from the Department of Health to the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner. (Goldin/Shekarchi)

Network Directories Seeks to ensure that insurers' directories of participating professionals are accurate and up to date. (Satchell/Regunberg H-5425)

Telemedicine Reimbursement Seeks to ensure reasonable compensation for telemedical services. (Goldin S-0321/Kennedy H-5422)

Physician Assistants RIMS and the Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants have drafted a number of needed technical changes in sections of the General Laws relating to physician assistants. (Ottiano S-0328/Bennett H-5384)

Regulatory Advocacy: opioids

RIMS has led a coalition of professional groups for more than a year in response to a Health Department initiative to promulgate new rules and regulations governing the prescription of opioids. Dr. Karczmar was finally able to testify in support of the new

regulations, which have been through multiple revisions, at a public hearing held February 2, 2015.

Optimal care reasonably compensated: RIMS programs March 26 & 27

RIMS members will have an opportunity to kick the tires of a powerful new low-cost, high ROI tool that harnesses Big Data to help independent physicians and small groups make “pay-for-performance,” including Medicare’s new “Value Modifier,” work for them and their patients -- with any EHR, or even with no EHR. To accommodate all schedules, RIMS plans an evening presentation followed by a morning presentation.

RIMS’ CME offerings on Saturday, April 25

In cooperation with Coverys, which will provide the CME accreditation, RIMS has arranged a half-day CME opportunity at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick, including breakfast, a full panel of exhibitors, and practical updates on coding and risk management. The program will conclude with a candid confrontation of the good and bad in the current generation of electronic medical records, courtesy of Dr. Norman Gordon and Dr. Yul Ejnes.

AMA matters

- Warren Alpert Medical School students hosted a regional meeting of the Medical Student Section of the AMA House of Delegates on Saturday-Sunday, February 7-8. By invitation, Steve DeToy conducted a workshop on state-level legislative advocacy, and Senator Christopher Ottiano, MD, addressed the students on the changing environment of medical practice.
- Russell Settignano, MD, President-Elect, is accompanying Steven DeToy to the annual AMA National Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC, February 24-25. Meetings with Rhode Island’s congressional delegation are on the agenda.

RIMS Physician Health Program

Advance materials for this RIMS Council meeting included the annual report on the work of the Physician Health Program during 2014. The scope, funding, staffing and impact of the Program were briefly reviewed. Several members of the Council testified to the long-term excellence of the Program’s leadership and staff, and praised the Program’s continued positive evolution under its new Director.

Governance of RIMS

The Council voted to approve, with minor additional amendments, changes in the RIMS Constitution and Bylaws. The intent of the changes, which the Council approved conceptually last year, is to achieve greater functional efficiency and a clearer division of responsibilities.

As part of the changes, a Board of Directors will be created, which will be the primary fiduciary body. The Council’s function will become more generally advisory in nature; however, the Council will retain sole authority to elect officers, amend the bylaws and approve the budget.