

Rhode Island Medical Society Council

Meeting of Monday, June 1, 2015

Meeting Highlights

Director of the RI Department of Health

Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH, outlined the conceptual framework of her plans to lead the Department of Health. She gives priority to promoting health equity and access to quality health services for all. To achieve these ends, she plans to collaborate in new ways with academic institutions, other state agencies, and RIMS.

In response to comments from the Council, Dr. Alexander-Scott disclosed that streamlining Rhode Island's medical licensure and re-licensure process is a current priority of the Department. She was receptive to suggestions that improving the user-friendliness of both the Prescription Monitoring Program and Currentcare, and promoting the interoperability of electronic health records are additional areas that deserve priority.

General Assembly update: RIMS 2015 legislative initiatives

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 S-0576/Craven H-5416)

Patient Access to Abuse Deterrent Formulation of Pain Medicines A RIMS initiative to address opioid addiction and overdose. (Miller S-0167/Edward H-5219)

Provider Tax Repeal RIMS' campaign to roll back the state tax on gross receipts of physician-owned outpatient imaging, surgery and endoscopy facilities is incorporated in the Governor's budget proposal for FY 2016. The measure would phase out the tax over four years.

Prior Authorization Requires transparency in the criteria used by payers in granting or denying prior authorization. (Ottiano S-0422/Shekarchi H-5604)

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 Creates a fast-track alternative path to medical licensure in multiple states for physicians who qualify. (McNamara H-5571/Ottiano S-0423) *

Network Adequacy Strengthens the state's hand in regulating the limited networks of private payers, in part by transferring oversight of network adequacy from the Department of Health to the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner. (Goldin S-0382/Shekarchi H-5597)

Network Directories Requires health insurers' directories of participating professionals to be accurate and up-to-date. (Satchell S0491/Regunberg H-5425)

Telemedicine Reimbursement Requires reasonable compensation for telemedicine services. (Goldin S-0321/Kennedy H-5422)

Physician Assistants RIMS and the Rhode Island Academy of Physician Assistants jointly propose certain technical legal changes relating to physician assistants. (Ottiano S-0328/Bennett H-5384)

*The Rhode Island version of the licensure Compact legislation carries an additional clarifying provision inserted by RIMS: “Nothing in this act shall be construed to require maintenance of specialty certification as a condition of obtaining a license to practice allopathic or osteopathic medicine pursuant to RIGL 5-37.2.”

Prescriber restrictions for Sofosbuvir (Sovaldi)

Rhode Island Medicaid permits gastroenterologists, hepatologists and infectious disease specialists to prescribe Sofosbuvir for Hepatitis C. Other physicians may be approved as prescribers upon submission of a written request.

2015-2016 RIMS leadership

The Council voted to approve the Report of the Nominating Committee. The following will be officially installed in office with a RIMS celebration and awards ceremony to be held at the headquarters of Save the Bay in Providence on Saturday evening, September 26:

President:	Russell Settipane, MD
President-Elect:	Sarah Fessler, MD
Vice President:	Bradley Collins, MD
Treasurer:	Jose Polanco, MD
Secretary:	Christine Brousseau, MD

Re-elected as Councilors-at-Large and Directors:

Catherine Cummings, MD
Dieter Pohl, MD
Joel Kaufman, MD
Patrick Sweeney, MD, PhD, MPH

Elected as Adjunct Councilors-at-Large and Directors:

Thomas Bledsoe, MD
Kenneth Williams, MD

Re-elected Delegate to the AMA (2-year term commencing 1/1/16):

Alyn Adrain, MD