



e-News for Friday, March 1, 2013

Upcoming Events

**CONTENTS:**

1. Doctor Newman Pushes Prior Auth Bills
2. Viviano Appt. Boosts Supreme Court's 'Rule of Law' Majority
3. Blue Cross Mutualization Bills Pass House
4. Watch for Medicaid Primary Care Rate Increase in 2013 & 2014
5. Tooth Decay Is Top Chronic Health Problem for Kids

**PCMH: Coordinated Care, Optimal Outcomes**

March 13, 2013  
Somerset Inn - Troy

Two tracks: (1) for practices exploring or just beginning PCMH; and (2) for practices needing more advanced information.

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**1. Doctor Newman Pushes Prior Auth Bills**



On Tuesday, MSMS Past President **Steven E. Newman, MD**, an Oakland County neurologist, testified before the House Health Policy Committee in support of prior authorization House bills (HB [4274](#) and [4275](#)) introduced by Committee Chair **Rep. Gail Haines** (R-Waterford Twp.).

"Excessive prior authorization is both redundant and wasteful, whereas a universal prior authorization form offers insurers cost control and enables physicians to spend more time with patients," said Doctor Newman. "These bills take a significant step in the right direction by providing a uniform outline for physicians to use. We can make Michigan a leader by developing pathways for physicians to be more accessible and, hence, effective in the years ahead."

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Also, the House approved legislation (HB 4111) yesterday allocating \$30.67 million in federal grant money to set up a federal-state health insurance exchange under the Affordable Care Act. The bill now heads to the Senate.

**The Weight of the State**

May 8, 2013  
The Inn at St. John's - Plymouth

This important conference will provide essential educational opportunities for health care professionals on advances in prevention strategies, treatment approaches, and health consequences of obesity.

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### Medicare Cut Headed Your Way

On the federal legislation front, Congress has until tomorrow to stop the sequester package of across-the-board federal budget cuts that would include a 2% reduction in Medicare physician reimbursement beginning April 1. [More >>](#)

### 2. Viviano Appointment Boosts Supreme Court's 'Rule of Law' Majority

Physicians scored a victory this week when **Gov. Rick Snyder** announced his appointment of Macomb County Circuit Court **Chief Judge David Viviano** to the Supreme Court. Judge Viviano will fill the spot that was vacated by former **Justice Diane Hathaway**, who resigned in January. The appointment increases the "rule of law" majority on the high court to 5-2, which means most of the justices hold a philosophy of interpreting the laws as written rather than legislating from the bench. Since our model tort reform laws passed in 1993, almost every aspect of the laws has been [challenged](#), and almost all of the Supreme Court challenges have come down to a narrow rule of law majority vote in favor of upholding them.

### MSMS at Tort Reform Bill Signing



Governor Snyder held a ceremonial bill signing this week for tort reform bills (SB 1115 and 1118) that were officially signed into law in January. Representing MSMS in the photo: MSMS State & Federal Government Relations Senior Director Colin Ford (far left); MSMS Chief Operating

Officer Ben Louagie (3rd from left); MSMS President-elect Kenneth Elmassian, DO (4th from left); MSMS Immediate Past President Steven Newman (5th from left); MSMS Treasurer Venkat Rao, MD (6th from left); and MSMS Chief Public Policy & Legislative Affairs Steve Japinga (2nd from right).

### 3. Blue Cross Mutualization Bills Pass House

Yesterday, the House passed amended legislation (SB [61](#) and [62](#)) that will transform Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan into a nonprofit mutual company. Despite discussions at the committee level about adding language regarding coverage for elective abortions, the language was left out. The bills include two Senate amendments: one would ensure some employees affiliated with a health care corporation or insurer, provider, or third party administrator are not eligible to be appointed to the board that will oversee the \$1.5 billion in an endowment fund set up by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan; and the other would ensure the endowment "improves the quality of health care and reduces the

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cost to everyone in the state of Michigan."

The bills now return to the Senate for a concurrence vote before they can head to the governor's desk for signature. Governor Snyder is expected to sign the bills.

Because of the broad support by the Governor's office, the legislature and BCBSM, the MSMS Board of Directors recognizes that opportunities for amending the legislation have been very limited. Legislators receptive to offering amendments have focused mainly on strengthening provisions involving Medigap subsidies. While we continue to advocate for improvements to the legislation, MSMS has also been working directly with BCBSM to assure certain protections such as physician input, independent review process, transparency, and physician representation on the BCBSM board.



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#### **4. Watch for Medicaid Primary Care Rate Increase in 2013 & 2014**

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is implementing a provision of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that provides increased payments for certain Medicaid primary care services. Under these regulatory provisions, certain physicians who provide eligible primary care services will be paid the Medicare rates in effect in calendar years 2013 and 2014 instead of the current state-established Medicaid rates.

For dates of service on and after January 1, 2013, and through December 31, 2014, MDCH will apply an increased payment rate to enrolled practitioners for primary care services delivered by a physician with a specialty designation of family medicine, general internal medicine, or pediatric medicine. The increase will apply to a specific set of services and procedures that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has designated as "primary care services." Requirements related to the increased payments will apply to services reimbursed by Medicaid fee-for-service and Medicaid Health Plans. [Read more >>](#)

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#### **5. Tooth Decay Is Top Chronic Health Problem for Kids**

Studies show tooth decay affects children in the United States more than any other chronic infectious disease and is five times as common as asthma. That's the bad news. The good news is that it's entirely preventable. Here are some simple ways parents can lead their children to good, healthy oral hygiene. [More >>](#)

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*Figure 6*



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