

LATE RESOLUTION 98-08A

Title: Opposition to the Blue Cross Policies Regarding Physician Assistants

Introduced by: James C. Mitchiner, MD, Washtenaw County

Original Author: Michigan Academy of Physician Assistants

Referred to: Reference Committee A

House Action: No Action

Whereas, according to the state of Michigan Licensing Division, there are in excess of 3,000 licensed physician assistants in Michigan, and

Whereas, physician assistants provide primary and specialty care that is well accepted by physicians, the medical community, and the patients they serve, and

Whereas, physician assistants provide a level of quality care on par with the same services provided by physicians, and

Whereas, physician assistants are known to provide critical access to patients in rural and underserved areas, and

Whereas, according to a 2005 Public Policy Associates study commissioned by the Michigan State Medical Society, Michigan will experience a shortfall of approximately 6,000 physicians by the year 2020, and

Whereas, physician assistants are well placed to augment the services of physicians and assist in alleviating the impending crisis relating to physician shortages in the state of Michigan, and

Whereas, BCBSM published in its April 2008 edition of *The Record* that “physician assistants are not payable providers for General Motors hourly retirees, GM non-UAW hourly active employees, Delphi hourly retirees and active employees, Ford hourly retirees and Chrysler bargaining unit retirees,” and

Whereas, BCBSM also has reduced in part, or in full, reimbursement for hospital services and other critical services provided by physician assistants, threatening the livelihood of physician assistants and denying or delaying access to care for thousands of patients; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS fully support our physician assistant colleagues in the “team approach” to providing high quality, cost effective care to the patients of Michigan under well established supervisory guidelines stated in the Michigan Public Health Code; and be it further

RESOLVED: That MSMS not support the policy changes by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan denying or reducing reimbursement for services performed by physician assistants; and be it further

RESOLVED: That MSMS take action to recommend and support changes to the recent policy revisions of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan that adversely affect physician practices and their physician assistant colleagues in respect to reimbursement for services performed.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE