

Chapters Face a Busy 2008 in State Legislatures

This year promises to be an active one when it comes to health care legislation at the state level. In 2008, ACC's advocacy division will be working with ACC Chapters on the following issues:

Medical Liability Reform

The New York Chapter will be working this year to enact a comprehensive medical malpractice reform law. The chapter is working with the Medical Society of the State of New York, which has formed a task force on the issue. Governor Eliot Spitzer (D) has also earmarked the issue as a priority for action in his administration. The emerging Delaware Chapter has identified medical liability reform as the most pressing advocacy issue facing cardiovas-

cular specialists in the state. Meanwhile, the ACC is looking to partner with other chapters interested in working on medical liability reform.

Certificate of Need (CON)/Imaging

The Maryland Chapter will continue its major push for patient access legislation that will remove restrictions in a current law permitting only radiologists to perform magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) or radiation therapy. The chapter has formed a broadbased coalition with stakeholders that include orthopaedic surgery, urology and medical oncology. It has also hired a contract lobbyist who is a former member of the House of Delegates. MD-ACC members will continue meeting with key delegates and senators as well as attending fundraisers for members of the health committees.

The West Virginia Chapter will also tackle imaging issues this year. The Chapter is seeking a final resolution on CT standards that allow cardiologists to perform CT imaging in the office setting. The West Virginia Health Care Authority has approved the standards, but Governor Joe Manchin (D) has partially disapproved them because he says they do not contain adequate protection for indigent care.

Challenging the Changemasters

Everybody is a "changemaster" in this presidential race, including the voters! The Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary reveal only that both party nominations are still up for grabs. What does that mean for the ACC? More time and leverage to influence health system reform.

Most of the candidates support universal access to quality care. But the details are lacking in their plans. Leading up to the conventions, the ACC needs to help fill in some of those details for all the candidates. A Blue Ribbon Panel appointed by ACC President Jim Dove is already thinking both about system reform principles and CV-related details we'd support. Stay tuned. And be ready to change! Let us know what you think. Join the conversation at lewinreport.acc.org.

**Public Health
(Smoking, Obesity, Nutrition, AEDs)**

The Michigan and Pennsylvania chapters have been working on smokefree legislation that could become law in 2008. The Michigan House passed a smokefree bill in early December, which now goes to the Senate. In Pennsylvania, both bodies have passed differing versions of smokefree legislation. However, the House and Senate have not yet resolved their differences. The Alabama Chapter will support a smokefree bill in the 2008 session of the legislature.

Other Issues

Agreements between New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo (D) and six insurance carriers will be incorporated in legislation to be introduced in the New York legislature. The legislation will —

- ensure that rankings for doctors are not based solely on cost and clearly identify the degree to which any ranking is based on cost
- use established national standards to measure quality, including measures endorsed by the National Quality Forum (NQF) and other generally accepted national standards
- employ several measures to foster more accurate physician comparisons, including risk adjustment and valid sampling
- disclose to consumers how the program is designed and how doctors are ranked and provide a process for consumers to register complaints about the system
- disclose to physicians how rankings are designed and provide a process to appeal incorrect ratings
- nominate and pay for the Ratings Examiner, subject to the approval of the Attorney General, who will oversee compliance with all aspects of the new ranking model and report to the Attorney General's office every six months.

The New York Chapter will obviously play a role. The Assembly Speaker and the Senate President have both agreed to push the bill through their respective houses.

For more information about these issues and others, contact James Boxall at jboxall@acc.org or Justin Beland at jbeland@acc.org. In addition, there is no better time to get involved with local advocacy efforts through ACC Chapters. Visit www.acc.org to find your Chapter's Web site for more information.

ACC Elects New Governors

Congratulations to the following newly elected ACC Governors who will take office in 2009:

Alabama: Phillip L. Laney, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Southern California: Dipti Itchhaporia, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Northern California: George L. Smith Jr., M.D., F.A.C.C.	
District of Columbia: Allen J. Solomon, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Illinois: Jerome Hines, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Louisiana: Stephen R. Ramee, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Maryland: Samuel D. Goldberg, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Montana: J. Scott Millikan, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
New Jersey: Louis E. Teichholz, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
New Mexico: Michael R. McGuire, M.D., F.A.C.C.*	
Upstate New York: John D. Bisognano, M.D. Ph.D., F.A.C.C.	
Metropolitan New York: Andrew M. Van Tosh, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Ohio: Robert E. Hobbs, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Ontario: Rob S. Beanlands, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
South Carolina: Charlie W. Devlin, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Tennessee: George H. Crossley III, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Utah: Peter J. Casterella, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
Virginia: John M. Dent, M.D., F.A.C.C.	
West Virginia: Steven L. McCormick, M.D., F.A.C.C.	

*Dr. McGuire will take office in 2008