The American Medical Association (AMA) continues its evolution as a national organization to serve and lead efforts to protect the rights of American patients, and the physicians who care for them.

As the representatives of Tennessee physicians and the Tennessee Medical Association (TMA) in the AMA House of Delegates, we sponsored two resolutions at the behest of the TMA House of Delegates – one seeking to amend the vision statement of the AMA to include the word “patients” in its mission and the second, seeking to make texting an acceptable, HIPAA compliant form for physicians to communicate about patient care more efficiently. Unfortunately, both of these resolutions failed.

In looking ahead to the work to be done by the House of Delegates, we are eager to engage in debate to find relief from burdensome prior authorization and transparency from the pharmaceutical industry on pricing formulas.

The following is an update of the last 12 months activities and advocacies of the AMA that benefit physicians of the Tennessee Medical Association:

The AMA empowered the AMA Opioid Task Force to bring more physician leadership to bear on this national epidemic

- Placing greater emphasis on overdose prevention and treatment
- Helping end the stigma of addiction and treatment
- Employing a strong “end the epidemic” best practices program for physicians nationwide
- Leading nearing 120,000 physicians thru training courses on opioid prescribing to ensure they had the necessary education and training to offer effective treatments for patients with pain and substance use disorders

The AMA continued working toward relieving the burden associated with Electronic Health Records (EHR) use

- Believing physicians should spend more time treating patients and less time on data entry
- Focusing industry attention on EHR usability and cost
- Focusing on reducing cost to the physician
- Focusing on reducing federal EHR program burden
- Meeting with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to make it clear that more of the care team can document information in the EHR so the burden does not rest solely on physicians
- Yielding more time for doing what you want to do—care for patients
The AMA blocked two insurance mega-mergers and effectively protected over $500 million in annual physicians’ payments.

The AMA continues as a leader to protect patients and to amplify the voice of the medical profession in the debate to shield patients from the loss of meaningful insurance coverage

- Thru the AMA’s website patientsbeforepolitics.org, the AMA generated more than seven million emails, social media messages and phone calls to help shape healthcare reform discussions on Capitol Hill, as well as in exam rooms, boardrooms, and town halls across the country

The AMA represented physicians’ rights in courtrooms across the country, not just in the halls of Congress

- Fighting abusive litigation against physicians
- Defending precedents protecting the patient-physician relationship
- Winning more than 400 key cases, winning judgments generating hundreds of millions of dollars in settlements for physicians and their patients

The AMA won a three-year battle to obtain federal guidance that prevents health plans from requiring physicians to accept payment by virtual credit card, a program that also required the receiving physician to pay fees for the use of the virtual credit card

- Allowing practices to collect payments by standard electronic payments instead
- Upending a plan to require a charge to a physician to be able to collect his/her payment
- Saving practices exorbitant credit card service fees, but also saving staff time fighting virtual credit cards

The AMA created the integrated Health Model Initiative, an ambitious healthcare collaboration that will help create a new era of better, more effective care

- More than three trillion dollars spent on healthcare in America per year, generating more health data than ever before, but are the dollars and data making people healthier or health care more efficient?
- AMA bringing data collaborators across health care and technology to crowdsource clinical expertise and build comprehensive model for health care data so we can improve patient care

The AMA created Prevent Diabetes Stat in partnership with the CDC to empower physicians and care teams with tools and support to reach their patients with pre-diabetes and get them referred to a National Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) - lifestyle change program

- Eighty four million adults in the US have pre-diabetes, yet 90 percent don’t know it yet
- Pre-diabetes public awareness program generated more than 1.4 million visits and almost a half million risk test screenings
- Millions of at-risk seniors will have free access to expanded Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program starting this calendar year

The AMA offers more than 40 award winning tools that help physicians and their practices with

- Managing stress
- Preventing burnout
- Improving workday routines
• Accessing AMA’s Steps Forward Program, offering strategies that allow physicians and their 
staffs to thrive in a constantly changing health care environment

The AMA has taken a lead in establishing standards for health care apps
• More than a quarter million healthcare-related apps have evolved
• AMA believes physicians should be at front in advancing health innovation to create safe and 
effective digital tools that protect and improve health
• AMA helped create Xcertia, a collaborative effort by top health and technology experts to 
establish industry-wide guidelines for safe, effective mobile health apps

The AMA launched the Physician Innovation Network, an online networking platform to connect 
physicians to health and tech companies and entrepreneurs, building a powerful network to help 
drive the future of health technology.

The AMA formed and maintains the Accelerating Change in Medical Education Consortium, a group 
of 32 leading medical schools
• Working to transform medical education and bring the voice of practicing physicians into the 
classroom
• Using technology to support better clinical decisions
• Working in teams and complex health systems
• Becoming physician leaders

The AMA represents American medicine
It’s not your daddy’s AMA.

Membership Moves Medicine
www.ama-assn.org/join

Respectfully submitted,

Donald B. Franklin, Jr., MD, Chair

2017-2018 Tennessee Delegation to the AMA
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1 From proprietary publication of the American Medical Association, James L. Madara, MD, Executive Vice
President, Chicago, IL

Informational report compiled from various available AMA resources: www.ama-assn.org