



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

In coordination with the Coalition for Collaborative Care (CCC), TMA will again work to preserve Tennessee physicians' ability to lead patient care and oppose unsafe scope of practice expansion by mid-level providers. Because of our influence, advanced practice nurses and physician assistants have not succeeded in changing state laws to do away with team-based health care in Tennessee. TMA will continue to collaborate with its multi-specialty partners and members of the General Assembly to identify and develop solutions that increase healthcare access without compromising patient care.

PHYSICIAN WELLNESS

TMA will work to enact safe harbor-reporting systems for medical professionals to prevent physician burnout and mitigate the risk of suicide. Currently in Tennessee, some health plans and hospital credentialing committees require physicians to disclose personal mental health information to be able to practice at facilities or serve on panels. These requirements serve as barriers to physicians seeking mental health treatment, ultimately contributing to reduced professional performance, high turnover rates, and the adverse consequences of medical errors.

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

In May 2022, TMA's House of Delegates voted to make prior authorization reform a priority of the association. The resolution aims to achieve four primary goals: reduce the number of medical and pharmacy services that require prior authorization; ensure patients gain quicker access to care through the reduction of denials; streamline the prior authorization process to reduce burdens and retroactively denied payments; and support federal efforts to reform prior authorization for Medicare advantage and other

government-regulated plans. TMA will be leading the charge to convince insurance plans that comprehensive prior authorization reform is in patients' best interest.

ABORTION TRIGGER LAW

The US Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022 thereby invoking the abortion "trigger law" in August. The trigger law makes most abortions illegal in Tennessee and subjects physicians who must terminate pregnancies to protect the life and health of the pregnant women to up to 15 years in prison. There is an affirmative defense that allows doctors to address life and health issues, but it can only be raised once a doctor is charged. The affirmative defense needs to be an exception to the criminal offense, which was intended to stop elective abortions. Other changes are needed in the law so physicians can feel safe addressing fetal anomalies and other common pregnancy complications. TMA is part of a coalition of medical and hospital interests trying to protect women's health.

BALANCE BILLING

For years, TMA has been a member of a coalition of hospital-based physician specialty organizations advocating for a balance billing solution that protects patients from narrow networks and ensures physicians are offered a fair, in-network rate for out-of-network services. In 2020, Congress passed the No Surprises Act (NSA) to protect patients from balance and surprise bills. Unfortunately, rules implementing the federal law have led to fewer in-network healthcare options and more out-of-pocket expenses for Tennessee patients. TMA will work to implement a fair state level solution that promotes network adequacy across all health plans.