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FROM
the PRESIDENT

Our Tennessee Medical Association is the state’s largest and most influential advocacy organization for us physicians and our patients. Period. And our TMA delivers legislative successes with regularity for all of us and our patients.

This is why we must support our TMA with our membership and our time, and this is why each of us must encourage our fellow physicians to join us as members of our TMA!

When important issues are addressed, and the true work of our organization is apparent, the enormous value of our TMA becomes clear to friend and foe alike, and the membership gains we seek should be realized.

Take the issue of Scope of Practice, for example, and the great work conducted by the Coalition for Collaborative Care (CCC). The CCC is a coalition of Tennessee specialty societies initially organized by our TMA, which advocates against independent practice for midlevel providers. For optimal patient safety, it is imperative that advance practice nurses and physician assistants practice within the confines of physician-led healthcare teams. It is equally important that we stick together as physicians across all specialties in the pursuit of areas of common interest.

Prior Authorization is another significant issue plaguing TMA members and our patients. Thanks to the vision and leadership of Natalie Dickson, MD, chair of the Insurance Issues committee, workgroups have been formed, meaningful conversations with the payers have begun, and work is underway to propose solutions. Last month’s All Member Virtual Meeting focused on this important topic, and we invite all members to share their experiences with Prior Authorization at tnmed.org/prior-authorization.

These issues—and each of our legislative priorities—are rallying cries for us physicians, and membership has grown because our TMA is fighting for these worthy causes.

Looking forward, Tennessee physicians and other healthcare advocates are invited to take part in our TMA’s annual Day on the Hill on March 23 as we advocate for improved state healthcare policies. Decisions made in Nashville impact us, our practices and our patients. The presence of physicians in the halls our state Capitol sends a powerful message to elected representatives. We and they know that physicians have unique insight into the healthcare system, and our goal is to share that insight with lawmakers to improve care for everyone in our state.

Finally, our membership will soon determine our organization’s future leaders. TMA leadership elections are currently underway and will continue through Feb. 28. We are fortunate to have highly-qualified physicians from across our state volunteer to serve our profession in important leadership roles. Their willingness to serve in this capacity speaks to the power and value of organized medicine in Tennessee. Cast your vote at tnmed.org/elections.

Additional opportunities for members to participate are available through TMA’s grassroots programs. Please visit tnmed.org/grassroots to get involved or read more on page 4.

Ronald Kirkland, MD | 2021-2022 President

All Member Virtual Recordings Now Available Online

TMA hosts a virtual meeting on the third Thursday of the month to discuss an issue that is relevant to our members and physicians across the state. We invite guest experts to give us their perspective on the issue. After these meetings, we often hear from members if they can watch the recordings because either they were unable to attend or would like to listen to the information again.

We have listened and created a digital library at tnmed.org/all-member-virtual with past recordings. Please note that CME credit is not available for watching these videos. Some of the recordings include:

- **Prior Authorization**: January 2022. We examined best practices, ways to decrease care delays and alleviate hassles in an effort to avoid negative clinical outcomes for patients.
- **Medical Cannabis**: November 2021. We discussed the endocannabinoid system, physiologic action of cannabinoids, and when medical cannabis may be an appropriate therapeutic option.
- **COVID-19 Update**: September 2021. This meeting addressed the effect of the Delta variant in Tennessee (including ICU stats, deaths, etc.) and the clinical treatment of long-haul COVID (or PASC).
- **Scope of Practice**: April 2021. We host authors of the book, “Patients at Risk: The Rise of the Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant in Healthcare.” They discuss their findings related to the Scope of Practice battle.
TMA Board of Trustees Q1 Meeting Recap

The TMA Board of Trustees held its quarterly meeting virtually on Jan. 22, to take final consideration of the budget for 2022, identify priorities for the upcoming legislative session and provide guidance on a variety of issues coming before the TMA this year. The following is a recap of discussions and actions:

- The Board will refine procedures to improve the function of TMA’s various committees. Areas of concentration include the number of members on committees, the length of terms and the process behind identification and cultivation of new committee members.
- The Board discussed a management fee structure for medical societies using TMA to help run operations locally, but took no action at this time.
- House of Delegates resolutions from 2015 were reviewed and designated either for reintroduction, adoption to permanent policy, or given permission to sunset.
- Work continued among a vested group of members interested in reactivating TMA’s Young Physician Section prior to May’s annual meeting.
- The Board received a request from the Tennessee Cannabis Commission to provide it with a list of recommendations. The request was assigned to the TMA Public Health committee for further consideration.
- TMA continues its support of the Coalition for Collaborative Care (CCC), a united body of Tennessee specialty society organizations that opposes Independent Practice. The Board selected of TMA’s President, President-Elect and Legislative Chair as TMA representatives.
- The Board approved a 2022 budget indicating a five-percent increase in revenues and similar increases in expenditures. The increase comes from a projection of a return to normal with organizational operations, events, travel and inflation.
- As of the meeting date, TMA has added 298 new active practicing physicians, 67 residents and 214 students as members for 2022.

The next TMA Board of Trustees meeting will take place in May at TMA’s annual meeting. The meeting will be held at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs. Learn more and register to attend at tnmed.org/HOD. Any TMA member may contact the Board with questions at membership@tnmed.org.

Why does TMA seek corporate partnerships?

TMA has three core values that our staff focuses on regularly. They include:

1) We exist to support Tennessee physicians.
2) We advocate for patients.
3) We must be well funded and fundamentally sound to carry-out our mission.

Our staff is in constant search of ways to protect, assist and ease the day-to-day lives of practicing physicians in the state of Tennessee. One of the spokes that make this wheel of support go around is corporate partnerships. We engage corporate partners to help us provide benefits and services that should help lower your cost of doing business, support your staff and help you provide the best medical care to your patients. It also helps TMA continue to advocate, educate, and deliver programs that help our members.

We have a plethora of products and services available for you as a TMA Member to tap into for your personal and professional needs. We have all facets of insurance, a vaccine program, business and personal banking options, 401K plans and so many more that are right at your fingertips.

In addition to current products and services, we are seeking partners who can help with the ever-changing platform of technology like artificial intelligence, HIPAA compliance software, remote patient monitoring and other day-to-day office products and services to assist you, your staff and the care you provide your patients.

Our corporate partners have aligned with us to help you, our TMA members, be the best that you can be, personally and professionally.

For more information on our corporate partners, reach out to Anne Mastoris at anne.mastoris@tnmed.org or 615-460-1669. View all of our corporate partners online at tnmed.org/member-benefits. We are here for you.
The Power of Organized Medicine: Using Grassroots Advocacy to Shape Public Policy

For almost two hundred years, the cornerstone of the Tennessee Medical Association has been its advocacy work. From regulatory education, policy analysis and legislative advocacy, TMA employs a wide range of strategies to influence pro-medicine policies and ensure high standards of care. Yet, one of the most effective and often underused of these strategies is grassroots advocacy.

Grassroots advocacy is about building the capacity of stakeholder voices and harnessing that power to influence public opinion and government action. It is grounded in the premise that people and the stories they share matter. In today’s saturated special interest political environment, this type of advocacy has become increasingly important in moving the needle on major policy discussions. Legislators are lobbied all day on a wide array, and often competing sides, of an issue. When faced with a difficult decision, a thoughtful anecdote from someone close to home is far more likely to sway a wavering vote than feuding lobbyists.

It is perhaps for this reason that grassroots advocacy remains the single most effective tool for influencing health care policy in the State of Tennessee. While TMA works fervently to protect the interests of physicians on Capitol Hill, no one is more qualified to help guide legislators and offer medical expertise than those who dedicate themselves to the pursuits of wellness, research and compassion for others. TMA offers our members a platform to advocate on behalf of their profession and be a voice for their patients. Below are some ways you can get involved in Grassroots Network:

- **Attend our Annual Doctors’ Day on the Hill**: Our next event will be on March 23. [Read more about it below.](#)
- **Become a Doctor of the Day**: Represent your physician colleagues and lobby legislators on the issues that directly impact you and your patients. You’ll spend one day in Nashville meeting with state elected officials and attending House and Senate committees.
- **Attend a Legislative Dinner**: Some of our component medical societies have been hosting local, intimate dinners where guest speakers discuss legislative issues.
- **Advocacy Calls**: Assist the TMA legislative team by contacting your local representatives about issues that matter to you most.
- **Dialogues in the District**: TMA organizes small meetings with legislators and constituents, which is an opportune time for physicians to chat with elected officials.

Learn how you can get involved by contacting TMA’s Advocacy Engagement Manager Erika Thomas at [erika.thomas@tnmed.org](mailto:erika.thomas@tnmed.org) or visit [tnmed.org/grassroots](http://tnmed.org/grassroots).

Annual Doctors’ Day on the Hill is March 23

The Tennessee Medical Association will host its annual policy briefing and lobby day in Nashville on Wednesday, March 23. As TMA’s largest advocacy event of the year, Doctors’ Day on the Hill brings together physicians, students, medical office staff and healthcare administrators to rally for policies that help the medical profession and protect patient care.

Join us at the Cordell Hull Building’s legislative offices—home of the Tennessee General Assembly—to meet with state elected officials, attend committee hearings and advocate for good healthcare policies on behalf of your practice and your patients. Later, mingle during an afternoon reception with Frothy Monkey coffee and Ben & Jerry’s ice cream.

Doctors’ Day on the Hill is your chance to participate in the legislative process and make your voice heard. TMA will hold a preliminary policy briefing to educate our members on the issues and provide guidance on effective lobbying techniques.

“There’s nothing more inspiring than watching a swarm of white coats descend on the state Capitol under a united cause,” said TMA Advocacy Engagement Manager Erika Thomas. “You see doctors from all different specialties and settings take time away from treating patients to actively participate in the legislative process and fight for better healthcare policies in Tennessee.”

Now more than ever, your legislators need to hear from you. Don’t miss your chance to fight for the issues that matter. Join your colleagues on Capitol Hill. Register and learn more at [tnmed.org/day-on-the-hill](http://tnmed.org/day-on-the-hill).
John Ingram Institute Begins 2022 Sessions

The John Ingram Institute Leadership Lab kicked off the 2022 sessions with a webinar on Jan. 12, followed up with a live meeting at the TMA office on Jan. 28 and 29.

This year welcomes an outstanding group of physicians with the goal of strengthening skills in leading teams in process improvement and culture change. The 2022 Leadership Lab class includes:

- Diana Alsbrook, MD, Neurology
- Cortney Cabell, MD, Obstetrics & Gynecology
- English Flack, MD, Pediatric Cardiology
- Ghino Francois, MD, Occupational Medicine
- Jeff Friedman, MD, Radiation Oncology
- Ralf Habermann, MD, Internal Medicine & Geriatrics
- Joan Henning, MD, Emergency Medicine
- Gregg Shepard, MD, Medical Oncology
- Di’Net Sintim-Amoah, MD, Pediatrics
- Ashley Walker, MD, Pediatrics

During their time in the program, physicians will lead their small groups through a leadership change project, which is scored with measurable results. The groups will meet both live and virtually via webinars. Physicians will also receive individual coaching sessions from now through July.

Final projects will be presented at the group’s last meeting on July 21, 2022. All graduates will earn a certificate in Healthcare Change Management and up to 37 hours of AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)*.

Enrollment is now open for the 2023 Leadership Lab and Immersion courses. If interested, visit tnmed.org/leadership.

IN MEMORIAM

We offer our prayers and deep gratitude for all passing members. Their positive impact on their patients and profession will last forever.

Josefina Q. Marcelo, MD, age 88, of the Lakeway Medical Society on November 20, 2021.

Avelino G. Reyes, MD, age 95, of the Memphis Medical Society on November 23, 2021.

Robert Morris Hollister, MD, age 94, of the Williamson County Medical Society on December 19, 2021.

Charles Eugene Mayes, MD, FACP, age 82, of the Nashville Academy of Medicine on December 23, 2021.

Louis L. Carter, Jr., MD, age 82, of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Medical Society on December 25, 2021.

*Larry Holliday Johnson, MD, age 84, of the Memphis Medical Society on December 31, 2021.

David G. Petty, MD, age 101, of the Upper Cumberland Medical Society on January 24, 2022.

Henry Sperry Nelson, MD, age 99, of the Blount County Medical Society on January 31, 2022.

Arthur Winfrey Walker, MD, age 94, of Benton-Humphreys County Medical Society on January 31, 2022.

*TMA could not confirm exact date of passing at the time of publication.

*The Tennessee Medical Association is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians. Tennessee Medical Association designates this live activity for a maximum of 37 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.
The polls are currently open for TMA’s Leadership Elections, and will close on Monday, Feb. 28 at 5:00 pm CT. Your TMA Membership ID will be required to cast your ballot. This election will secure your next President-Elect, four for the Board of Trustees and four seats for the Judicial Council.

To vote, visit tnmed.org/elections. Your 2022-2023 candidates are:

**President-Elect**

Charles Leonard, MD, Talbot
Andrew Watson, MD, Memphis

The President-elect serves as president of the Association during the following year, and as the official spokesperson on important medical issues with the media. This member also meets with state and federal governmental officials regarding medical policy and the position of the TMA. The President-elect serves on the Board of Trustees for three years: one each as President-elect, President and then Immediate Past-President. This position also serves as chairman of the Board’s Executive Committee.

**Board of Trustees**

Region 2: Pamela Murray, MD, Jackson
Region 4: Adrian Rodriguez, MD, Nashville
Region 5: Leslie Mooney Treece, MD, Cookeville
Region 7: Daniel Bustamante, MD, Knoxville

The Board of Trustees determines the policy and details of management of the Association between meetings of the House of Delegates. The Board makes decisions over the expenditure of the funds and carries out the responsibilities and directives given to it by the House of Delegates.

**Judicial Council**

Region 1: Autry Parker, Jr., MD, Memphis
Region 3: Keith Lovelady, MD, Manchester
Region 5: James Batson, MD, Cookeville
Region 7: Timothy Wilson, MD, Knoxville

Councilors investigate matters of alleged improper conduct and sit on the Judicial Council, which has the power to censure, expel, suspend or take other action against officers or component medical societies via formal disciplinary action. Regional Councilors also help component medical societies maintain their viability in the region.

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If you or your Practice have ANY purchase or growth plans in 2022, we are your bank. From your home mortgages and student loans to your Practice’s new locations, equipment, staff, and joint ventures, we are a bank built to serve you.

**For Your Practice:**
- Lines of Credit
- Equipment Purchase
- Real Estate, incl. Construction & Tenant Improvements
- Joint Venture Investments - ASCs, Dialysis, MSOs, etc.*
- Practice Acquisitions

**For You:**
- Doctor’s Home Mortgage - up to 100% of purchase price
- Student Loan Refinance - check your rate online in 2 mins! *
- Unsecured Loans - Up to $100k; online app coming soon! *
- Buying into your Practice or other healthcare investment

*To see full details and to apply online in minutes, visit Medquity.com!
Legal Briefs

Covid-19 Public Health Emergency
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services renewed the Covid-19 public health emergency that was set to expire on Jan. 16, 2022 for 90 days. It will now expire on April 16, 2022.

Covid-19 Mandates
TMA has a new Law Guide topic, COVID-19 Mandates for Medical Practices, to demystify local, state and federal mandates for physicians by providing information as to where they stand in Tennessee in terms of enforcement. Go to tnmed.org/lawguide to access this topic. Member login required.

CME Requirement Update
The Governor’s executive order suspending the in-person CME requirement in 2021 has expired. Tennessee physicians must obtain their 2022 hours of CME credit in accordance with the licensing boards’ requirements. For more details on CME requirements see our Law Guide topic, Continuing Medical Education, at tnmed.org/lawguide.

CSMD Query Requirements
Current Tennessee law requires a prescriber to check the Controlled Substance Database before issuing a prescription for certain drugs. The Department of Health has amended the database rules, and beginning Jan. 26, 2022 a prescriber will have to check the database before issuing a Schedule II amphetamine in addition to prescriptions for opioids or benzodiazepines. If you are unsure which circumstances require the database check, or if believe you might be exempt from this requirement, review our Law Guide topic, Controlled Substance Database (section VII D. – F.) at tnmed.org/lawguide.

Scope Chart for Clinical Staff in a Medical Practice
Developed by the Legal Department, the Scope Chart for Clinical Staff in a medical practice will assist a physician in determining what procedures (i.e., injection, microdermabrasion) may be delegated to the clinical staff (i.e., LPN, medical assistant) in his/her office. Go to tnmed.org/legal to review this chart on our website. Please note member login is required to access. Direct any questions to legal@tnmed.org or 615-460-1645.

Background Checks on Employees and Contractors
Specific registries must be searched with the name of certain employees and contractors prior to employment by a physician’s practice. TMA’s Law Guide topic, Background Checks on Employees and Contractors contains links to the required registries and when an employee/contractor must be checked. Go to tnmed.org/lawguide to access. Member login required.

New Employee Reporting
All employers doing business in Tennessee are required by state and federal law to report all newly hired and re-hired employees to the Tennessee Department of Human Services. This requirement is applicable regardless of the number of employees in a company. Information is placed into a database and used to help enforce child support orders and establish paternity. Read the Law Guide topic titled New Employee Reporting to learn when to report, how to report and the penalties for noncompliance. Go to tnmed.org/lawguide to access. Member login required.
Together, we go further.

The practice of medicine is full of unforseen challenges, and an experienced, proactive partner will help navigate them. As a premier provider of medical malpractice insurance, our in-house attorneys and unique array of tailored services are always at the ready to help you be prepared for what lies ahead.

Get a quote at www.svmic.com