

MARCH 19, 2009

The South Dakota State Medical Association's E-News is your direct link to the most important health care issues and activities affecting organized medicine.

General News:

- ▶ [Governor Rounds Signs Smoke-Free Legislation](#)
- ▶ [Incorrect Report on HPV Vaccine Funding Airs on KELO](#)
- ▶ [SDSMA Delegations Attend AMA, NCMC Conferences](#)
- ▶ [Health Reform Briefings, Stimulus Details Available on AMA Homepage](#)
- ▶ [The Issue Is ... Balance Billing](#)
- ▶ ["Run For Your Life" Scheduled for April 4](#)

Upcoming Events/Meetings:

- ▶ Executive Committee Meeting
 - Thursday, March 19
 - Sheraton Hotel, Sioux Falls
- ▶ Council of Physicians Meeting
 - Friday, March 20
 - Sheraton Hotel, Sioux Falls
- ▶ Huron District Presidential Visit
 - Tuesday, April 28
- ▶ Yankton District Presidential Visit
 - Wednesday, April 29
- ▶ Mitchell District Presidential Visit
 - Tuesday, May 5
- ▶ [Click here](#) to view full calendar

Governor Rounds Signs Smoke-Free Legislation

The South Dakota State Medical Association (SDSMA) applauds South Dakota Governor Mike Rounds for signing HB 1240, the smoke-free legislation.

The law will protect the health of South Dakotans by adding to the existing ban on smoking in other businesses and public buildings. Tobacco shops, currently existing cigar bars and lodging rooms will be exempt from the ban.

"It's a great day for South Dakota," said SDSMA President Cynthia A. Weaver, MD. "We are thrilled Governor Rounds has chosen to protect South Dakotans from the hazards of secondhand smoke."

The smoke-free law will take effect July 1. The SDSMA is encouraging business owners across the state to make their establishments smoke-free before the deadline.

"The smoke-free law will finally protect a group of South Dakota workers at high risk. Restaurant, bar and casino workers involuntarily inhale enough secondhand smoke to suffer some of the same health effects seen in people who smoke one pack of cigarettes a day," Weaver said.

"We encourage business owners to start protecting those employees now, rather than waiting until July."

SDSMA members can take pride in the work to educate lawmakers and the public of the dangers of secondhand smoke and the importance of smoke-free legislation.

The SDSMA is sending a letter signed by Dr. Weaver to Governor Rounds to thank him for signing the bill into law.

Please take the time to [click here](#) to send a Voter Voice! message to the Governor to send your thanks as well.

– Source: SDSMA Staff



Photo: Andrew Johnson

Robert Allison, MD (top), and Rick Holm, MD (right), talk with Republican state Rep. Manny Steele of Sioux Falls (left) about smoke-free legislation during the Smoke-Free Day at the Capitol on Monday, February 9.

Incorrect Report on HPV Funding Airs on KELO

You may have viewed a report on KELO-TV on Wednesday, March 18, that incorrectly stated that the state funding for the HPV vaccine program was cut in the final 2010 state budget signed by Governor Mike Rounds.

During the 2009 legislative session, the SDSMA strongly supported reinstating the nearly \$300,000 cut proposed by Governor Rounds that would have eliminated the vaccine program for 12-year-old girls in South Dakota.

The money for the vaccine program was, in fact, reinstated as part of the state's share of federal stimulus dollars.

When alerted, KELO clarified their report on the HPV vaccine program. It is now available on their Web site. [Click here](#) to read the corrected report.

– Sources: SDSMA Staff

SDSMA Delegations Attend AMA, North Central Medical Conferences

SDSMA delegations recently attended the 2009 North Central Medical Conference (NCMC) in Minneapolis and the 2009 AMA National Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC.

Members of the SDSMA leadership Cynthia Weaver, MD; Tom Huber, MD; Karla Murphy, MD; Mary Carpenter, MD; Herb Saloum, MD; Charles Hart, MD; and Dan Heinemann, MD, attended the conferences.

The primary topic on the AMA Advocacy agenda was health system reform. Delegation members met with South Dakota's Congressional delegation - Senators John Thune and Tim Johnson and Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin - to discuss issues of importance to physicians in South Dakota.

[Click here](#) for presentations from the NCMC.

Look for more information on the conferences and Congressional visits in April's *South Dakota Medicine*.

– Source: SDSMA Staff

Health Reform Briefings, Stimulus Details Available on AMA Homepage

In an effort to keep physicians informed and to help prepare them for active participation in current and future discussions about health system reform, the AMA has developed an action kit outlining its perspective on many of the key issues involved. The AMA also has compiled a summary of the new economic stimulus law, known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

[Click here](#) to access the action kit on health system reform.

[Click here](#) to view a summary about the economic stimulus package.

– Source: SDSMA Staff

The Issue Is ... Balance Billing

The SDSMA is signing on to a letter of support for federal legislation that would allow physicians to balance billing for the full value of their services under Medicare and for certain non-Medicare patients.

H.R. 1384, introduced by Republican Georgia Representative Tom Price, MD, would allow physicians who elect "non-participating" status in Medicare to balance bill patients. The legislation would work by removing the current 115 percent limiting charge on the non-participating Medicare fee schedule amount for physicians who provide advance notice to patients of their non-participation and non-acceptance of assignment.

The bill would also preempt state laws that prohibit balance billing. South Dakota currently has no laws prohibiting balance billing.

Repeal of balance billing limits would be an important step forward in protecting physicians against the steep payment cuts they face under Medicare as well as from other payers, especially those payers with fee schedule that are tied to cuts in Medicare physician payment rates. Currently, physicians face a 21 percent cut scheduled for January 1, 2010, along with 40 percent in payment cuts over the coming decade.

The AMA urged attendees at the recent National Advocacy Conference to ask their Representatives to cosponsor H.R. 1384 during their visits to Capitol Hill on March 10 and 11. That included the SDSMA's delegation, which asked Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin to cosponsor the bill.

"The Issue Is ..." is the SDSMA's monthly update on key federal and policy issues of importance to physicians.

"Run For Your Life" Scheduled for April 4

The Medical Student section of the South Dakota State Medical Association and the American Medical Association will host the 3rd Annual Run for Your Life 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, April 4 in Vermillion.

Registration starts at 9 a.m. in the parking lot of the Lee building at the Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota. Runners will start at 10 a.m., with walkers shortly after. Leashed dogs are welcome.

Same-day registration is \$20. A free t-shirt, snacks and water will be provided after the race. Proceeds will go to benefit the Domestic Violence Safe Options Services in Vermillion.

[Click here](#) for more information and to download a pre-registration form.

– Source: SDSMA Staff

Thank you for your membership in the SDSMA. If you have comments regarding eNews, please send feedback through the "Contact Us" link on the SDSMA's Web site, www.sdsma.org, or contact Megan Myers at mmyers@sdsma.org.