

END OF SESSION LEGISLATIVE REPORT—MAY 6, 2019

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Amidst the usual last-minute shenanigans and deal-making, I am happy to report that, overall, we had an extraordinary 2019 Legislative Session.

On the defensive front, we thwarted all attempts at Scope of Practice expansion, including pharmacists, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. While Scope Expansion remains a fundamental part of the House Health Care package, the steadfast support of the Senate Leadership and Governor Desantis was successful in stopping the expansion efforts in the Senate.

We also worked hard to ensure that any Telehealth Bill would require out-of-state physicians to procure a full Florida license. While the Legislature ultimately did not require full licensing, it did include in its bill a requirement that such physicians remain accountable to both the Florida courts and Board of Medicine, and the bill also included requirements to maintain the in-person standard of care and a prohibition on insurers requiring the use of telemedicine.

On the offensive front, we had the most successful session in recent memory. While we certainly did not get everything we wanted, HB 843 (which passed during the last week of Session) addressed many of our most important issues, such as:

1. A requirement that a patient's physician would be notified of any hospital admission;
2. The ability of ambulatory surgery centers to keep patients for up to 24 hours;
3. The expansion of last year's Direct Primary Care agreements to all specialties;
4. A prohibition on redundant step therapy.

Thank you to everybody who visited Tallahassee, contacted a legislator, or even emailed me with an insightful comment. Your work was instrumental in our success, and your profession and patients thank you for your advocacy.

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