

January 2019

Dear Utah ACP Members,

The Health and Public Policy Committee of the Utah Chapter of ACP is excited to announce its first update regarding health policy in Utah. There have been several recent health policy changes that will significantly affect our members and their patients including the passage of ballot initiatives Proposition 2- Medical Marijuana Initiative and Proposition 3- Utah Decides Healthcare, a reformulation of Proposition 2 into H.B. 3001, a medical cannabis comprise bill, and a U.S. District Judge in Texas striking down the Affordable Care Act as unconstitutional after legislation brought forward by 20 states including Utah State Attorney General Sean Reyes. We look forward to providing regular updates of health policy in Utah, keeping our members informed, and ultimately advocating for our members and their patients.

We are excited to announce that in November Utah voters passed the ballot initiative Proposition 3- Utah Decides Healthcare, which will expand Medicaid coverage in Utah for adults with incomes up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Limit. This initiative is expected to allow 150,000 Utahans access to affordable health coverage starting April 1st, 2019, improve access to much needed medical services including preventative care, and reduce financial strain. Patients can enroll for Medicaid any time online at <https://medicaid.utah.gov/> or can reach out to their healthcare organizations financial assistance office as these are often able to assist with Medicaid enrollment. Proposition 3 will replace previously passed legislation H.B. 472- Medicaid Waiver expansion, which was still pending federal approval, and will increase eligibility for Medicaid and remove work or community engagement requirements for Medicaid eligibility.

While Utah voters supported Proposition 2 with 53% of the vote in November, major institutions including the Utah Medical Association, had strong opposition to the text as written because it argued that the [ballot initiative legalized recreational marijuana under the auspice of medical care](#). Prior to the recent elections policy makers and the Utah Medical Association sat down to create a compromise bill in order to allow the use of medical cannabis with significant physician oversight and regulation. This over 200-page bill, H.B. 3001- Medical Cannabis Act, was signed into law on December 3rd, 2018, and replaces Proposition 2. The bill outlines a complex and completely new system for providers to prescribe medical cannabis for qualified patients by 2020, which we have summarized below. The bill also allows providers to recommend treatment for medical marijuana in medical doses for patients with qualified conditions under a transition clause prior to 2020. [The UMA has released recommendations for providers considering recommending medical marijuana at this current time](#). We understand that this will be a developing change in practice and we recommend that our members look to

the UMA and their own institutions for continued updates about prescribing medical marijuana in Utah.

Unfortunately, a recent ruling by a U.S. District Judge in Texas struck down the Affordable Care Act as unconstitutional and places the many popular provisions of the ACA in jeopardy. These popular provisions include: protecting coverage for those with pre-existing conditions, allowing young adults to stay on parents' insurance plans until age 26, eliminating out of pocket costs for many preventative services, allowing states to expand Medicaid coverage, providing subsidies for health insurance for low- and moderate- income Americans and more. This ruling will be brought to a series of appeals and may ultimately be brought to the Supreme Court. Pending further legislation, the Affordable Care Act and its provisions will remain in place. This decision is particularly pertinent to Utah, as Sean Reyes the Utah Attorney General, was one of the plaintiffs in the 20 State coalition that brought forward this legislation. [ACP released a statement](#) in December condemning this ruling and imploring continued patient protections as written in the Affordable Care Act. Please stay tuned for more information and updates as this ruling makes its way through the courts.

Please set your calendars for February 7th for Utah medical Association Doctors Day at the State Legislature. This will be an exciting opportunity to meet and engage with Utah representatives in the legislature regarding the future and current state of health policy in Utah. Unfortunately, this event is only available to UMA members.

The Utah ACP Health and Public Policy Committee is looking to expand our engagement in health policy conversations in Utah. In order to better represent our fellow ACP members, we would appreciate input from Utah ACP members regarding new health policy proposals and/or comments on existing health policies. We are also looking for ACP members who would like to be more involved within ACP on health policy. Please contact contact@utahacp.com.

Best,

Your Utah ACP Health and Public Policy Committee

Caroline Milne, Matthew Mulligan, Michael Galindo, and Kristen Ries

Attachments:

NOTE: The links below will direct your browser to the location where the documents attached to this email have been posted.

[Utah HPPC Jan 19 Release](#)