



Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association 2011 State Advocacy Agenda

- H** **Oppose Further AHCCCS Hospital Payment Cuts that Drive up Arizona’s Hidden Healthcare Tax** Ensure that Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) hospital payment rates adequately reflect the cost of providing healthcare services to AHCCCS patients, and protect hospitals from additional AHCCCS rate cuts.
- H** **Support Special Healthcare Assessment** Support a temporary healthcare assessment that is used to fund the maintenance of AHCCCS eligibility and is not used to fund the general operations of state government.
- H** **Protect AHCCCS Eligibility and Funding** Oppose additional efforts to reduce AHCCCS and KidsCare eligibility and services. Oppose further cuts to Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments and restore funding for both DSH and Graduate Medical Education (GME). Preserve funding for Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) and Stable, Accessible, Viable and Efficient (SAVE) rural hospitals.
- H** **Preserve Funding for Arizona’s Behavioral Health System** Oppose additional funding cuts to Arizona’s behavioral health system. Support efforts to increase capacity in Arizona’s behavioral system that reduce overcrowding in hospital emergency departments and ensure patients receive appropriate medical care.
- H** **Protect Voter-Approved Measures and Funding** Oppose referendums permitting the Legislature to appropriate or divert funds enacted through voter-approved measures. Protect Prop. 204, the *Healthy Arizona Act*, which provides healthcare coverage to low-income working Arizonans, and Prop. 202, the *Indian Gaming Act*, which dedicates a portion of gaming funds for trauma and emergency services. Support appropriate reforms to the citizen initiative process to promote transparency and public input into the development of initiatives.
- H** **Promote Flexibility in the Budgeting Process** Oppose Taxpayer Bill of Rights-style legislative referendums that amend Arizona’s constitution to set arbitrary limits on state spending. Support lawmakers’ ability to respond to state crises by promoting legislative flexibility in the budgeting process.
- H** **Engage State Policymakers on Implementation of Healthcare Reform** Collaborate with state agencies and other stakeholders on state efforts to implement provisions of the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010*, including insurance exchanges and Medicaid delivery system and payment reforms.

- H Invest in Arizona's Healthcare Workforce, Including Support for GME** Support efforts to increase the number of nursing faculty at Arizona colleges and universities. Continue to support funding for expansion of allied health professions programs at colleges and universities. Encourage inclusion of GME in legislative efforts to bolster job creation in Arizona. Support legislative and other efforts to increase Arizona's physician workforce, such as the 2006 recommendations of the governor's Emergency Medical Services Task Force, as well as continued state support for the expansion of the University of Arizona College of Medicine.
- H Oppose Mandatory Nurse Staffing Ratios** Oppose legislation establishing mandatory nurse staffing ratios. Support continuation of Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) regulations requiring acuity-based staffing to ensure hospital patients receive the safest and most appropriate care.
- H Ensure Adequate Workers' Compensation Medical Payment** Work with legislators and the business community to ensure any reforms to Arizona's workers' compensation medical payment system are appropriate. Oppose establishment of a hospital fee schedule or other system that would not pay hospitals adequately for caring for injured workers and serve only to increase the hidden healthcare tax on privately insured individuals and businesses.
- H Support Adequate HealthCare Group Payment** Support continuing coverage for the population HealthCare Group serves. Support elimination of the HealthCare Group default payment rate for non-contracted hospital emergency care to preserve hospitals' ability to negotiate payment rates that reflect the cost of caring for HealthCare Group patients.
- H Reform Arizona's Medical Liability System** Support multiple efforts to reform Arizona's medical liability system, including legislative and judicial efforts to reduce the number of lawsuits filed and the expense of resolving them.
- H Support Arizona Health-e Connection Roadmap** Work with Arizona Health-e Connection and others to support the further development and implementation of regional electronic health information exchanges.
- H Telemedicine Parity** Support efforts to improve access to telemedicine services in underserved areas of the state, especially in rural Arizona, where such services are a cost-effective means of providing specialty care.
- H Streamline Licensure Requirements for Behavioral Health Services** Support efforts by the legislature and ADHS to eliminate the dual licensure requirement for hospitals providing behavioral health services and streamline regulations governing behavioral health services.