



Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association

THERE TO CARE: STRONGER HOSPITALS FOR A HEALTHIER ARIZONA

2009 Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association State Advocacy Agenda

- H** **Lift AHCCCS Hospital Rate Freeze** Ensure Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) hospital payment rates are adjusted in FY 2010 as required by law.
- H** **Protect AHCCCS Funding** Oppose efforts to cut funding for AHCCCS, KidsCare and KidsCare Parents eligibility and services. Oppose efforts to cut Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments, Graduate Medical Education (GME) funds, and funds for Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) and Stable, Accessible, Viable and Efficient (SAVE) rural hospitals. Continue to work with the AHCCCS Administration to minimize disruption of eligibility resulting from federal citizenship verification requirements.
- H** **Protect Voter-Approved Measures and Funding** Oppose referendums permitting the Legislature to appropriate or divert funds enacted through voter-approved measures. Support Prop. 204, the *Healthy Arizona Act*, which provides healthcare coverage to more than 130,000 Arizonans, and Prop. 202, the *Indian Gaming Act*, which dedicated 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** **Oppose Taxpayer Bill of Rights Measures** Oppose legislative referendums to amend Arizona's constitution to limit growth in state spending to changes in population and inflation and/or lower Arizona's existing constitutional appropriation limit.
- H** **Support Timely and Adequate AHCCCS Payment** Support legislation to reform the AHCCCS payment system to ensure AHCCCS payments for inpatient and outpatient services are timely and cover a greater percentage of hospitals' costs. Support an AHCCCS payment system that protects Arizona's healthcare safety net and minimizes the hidden healthcare tax on employers and patients resulting from inadequate AHCCCS payment.
- H** **Invest in Arizona's Healthcare Workforce** 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 community colleges and universities.

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 regulations requiring acuity-based staffing to ensure hospital patients receive the safest and most appropriate care.
- H** **Improve Access to Healthcare Coverage for Uninsured Arizonans** Support legislation to extend healthcare coverage to Arizona's uninsured population, including reinstatement of the Social Security Disability Income-Temporary Medical Coverage program. Efforts to expand AHCCCS coverage, including KidsCare, must be coupled with reforms to the AHCCCS payment system in order to preserve Arizona's healthcare safety net.
- 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.
- 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 legislation to raise the burden of proof in medical liability cases related to care provided in hospital emergency departments. Support additional 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** **Improve Safe Haven Signage Requirements** Work with the Arizona Safe Haven Coalition and the Arizona Department of Health Services to amend recently enacted signage requirements and resolve implementation problems.