



KMA is working with members to develop a comprehensive list of its 2019 Advocacy Priorities. Specific details and full drafts of legislation will be forthcoming, however, the following issues will be of central importance to the Association:

## PRIOR AUTHORIZATION:

Over the past year, KMA has engaged members through its **AIM for Better Care Initiative** to identify and work toward solutions, either through legislation, regulation, or public awareness, to lessen administrative burdens. Through this effort, prior authorization has consistently been pinpointed as a nonclinical activity for which physicians and practice staff spend an enormous amount of time, energy, and resources. The current prior authorization process being utilized by payers creates roadblocks for patients trying to access medications and treatment, increases health care costs, and restricts health care providers from doing their jobs effectively. Therefore, **KMA supports legislation that will remove these roadblocks** by enhancing access to prior authorization information, establishing one-year approvals for chronic disease medications, preventing retroactive denial, improving the review process, standardizing review times, increasing access to electronic prior authorizations, and eliminating prior authorization for medication-assisted therapy services.

## OUT-OF-NETWORK BILLING:

Insurance companies are increasingly narrowing their physician networks by offering physicians reimbursement contracts that are not financially sustainable. As a result, more physicians are being forced out of network and issues regarding patients' access to care are growing. Patients also have been increasingly feeling the impact of narrower networks through increased cost-sharing, often paying the difference between what it costs the physician to provide the service and what the insurer will pay for it, creating a "surprise insurance gap." **KMA supports legislation that prevents patients from receiving these unanticipated out-of-network bills but also ensures that any out-of-network payment standards for out-of-network providers are based on data independent of the insurers and separate from Medicare.**

## TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS:

Kentucky can enhance economic opportunity for all residents by creating a healthier future workforce. Comprehensive tobacco-free policies on school campuses are powerful tools for reducing tobacco use among teens and adolescents in Kentucky. These policies can help reduce peer pressure to use tobacco during school hours and at after-school events – creating an environment where tobacco use is not the norm. **KMA supports legislation that enacts a statewide, comprehensive tobacco-free school law** that prohibits use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, vapor products and alternative nicotine products, by staff, students, and visitors 24 hours a day, seven days a week, inside Board-owned buildings or vehicles, on board-owned property, and during school-sponsored field trips, sports events and other activities. According to the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, 87 percent of Kentucky adults support tobacco-free school policies. This strong support is both bipartisan and found in all regions of the Commonwealth.

## TORT REFORM:

KMA has had recent success on one of the most prominent issues for Kentucky physicians. During the last two sessions, KMA has played a central role in the passage of Senate Bill 4, legislation that established medical review panels in the Commonwealth, and House Bill 4, a bill that protects the peer review process by allowing physicians and hospitals to assess their work without the possibility of their opinions being used in a medical malpractice claim. Unfortunately, in November, the Kentucky Supreme Court overturned the medical review panel law, returning Kentucky to one of the few states in the country with no meaningful tort reform. Despite the court's ruling, **KMA remains resolute in restoring fairness and predictability in the legal liability system.** KMA looks forward to continuing its work with the Kentucky General Assembly and other key stakeholders on tort reform initiatives that are designed to aid physician recruitment, facilitate access to quality health care, and stabilize patient costs.

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