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State Budget Update

You may recall that for several years, WACEP has attempted to work cooperatively with the WI Department of Health Services (DHS) to educate staff about Wisconsin's worst-in-the-nation rates for reimbursement of Emergency Physician Services in Wisconsin's Medicaid programs, and seek "fair" reimbursement at least on par with surrounding states. Having once again experienced empathy without action from DHS, WACEP undertook a more aggressive legislative solution this year.

As a part of the State Legislature's Joint Finance Committee's (JFC) review of the 2017-19 State Budget, Representative John Nygren led an effort to require DHS to create a study group made up of Medicaid program staff and outside Emergency Physicians to examine care provided to Medicaid patients, search for ways to save money, and make recommendations back to JFC. The goal was to find savings in the system that could then be turned back into increasing reimbursements for Emergency Physician Services – ultimately costing the Medicaid program nothing more.

This study group, if successful, would have served as a model for other private-public efforts. The JFC ultimately incorporated a requirement for an Emergency Physician Study Group, and it was approved by the full Legislature in September.

Unfortunately, Governor Walker vetoed the provision (along with 99 other items, many of them similar studies or reports from agencies) this week, stating in his veto message that the study duplicated existing "managed care and care coordination efforts in the DHS."

With healthcare reform, the ACA, discussions about future Medicaid program funding and block grants all still in flux in Washington, these discussions are far from completed, and we will plan to regroup and continue these efforts in the coming months.

Many thanks to Lisa Maurer, MD, WACEP Board member who spearheaded the effort, as well as to all of you who responded to WACEP's recent Legislative Alerts asking you to contact the Governor's office.

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Medical Liability Award Caps

In July a State Court of Appeals decision in the Mayo v. WIPFCF case ruled unconstitutional Wisconsin's \$750,000 cap on non-economic damages for medical malpractice cases (passed by the Legislature in the late 1990's). The case has been appealed to the Wisconsin Supreme Court and awaits the Court's decision (which is anticipated to occur in the next couple of weeks) on whether they will take the case; most court watchers believe they will do so.

The case has great significance for Wisconsin's medical liability climate. Facing many other medico-economic challenges, and building from Doctor Day partnerships, WACEP has taken the lead organizing a coalition of eight specialty medical societies to petition the Court to be named Amici ("friends of the court") -- non-parties to the original case who may be affected by, or who can offer unique insight into the impact of the Court's ultimate decision.

If granted Amici status, the coalition will work together to submit a brief explaining to the Court the potential impact on specialty physicians and their patients. No doubt many similar briefs will be offered in a case of this significance, and it is anticipated the Court will set a briefing schedule later this fall.

Meet-Up in DC!

We hope to see many of you at ACEP17 in Washington DC. Plan to stop by the Wisconsin Meet-Up on Monday evening, October 30. For planning purposes, please let us know your coming. Learn more and [sign-up here](#).

Next Week: Listening Tour Stops in Janesville

Please join WACEP leaders for coffee & discussion at the upcoming Listening Tour stop in Janesville! Please let us know if you will be there. [Register here](#).

**Monday, October 2, 2017 at 4:00 pm
The Bodacious Brew, 119 N. Main Street, Janesville**

Your WACEP leadership is committed to representing the interests and needs of emergency physicians throughout Wisconsin. Meet us on our listening tour and let us know what's important to you, your patients and the specialty. Listening sessions are offered complimentary, but please register so we know who is attending!

As we continue our tour across the state, additional stops will be scheduled to allow WACEP members and all emergency physicians a chance to meet up for some important dialogue that will help as the organization sets its strategic agenda for the future. Stay tuned for notices of future stops on the tour and plan to join us!

Save the Date! WACEP 2018 Spring Symposium - March 14-15, 2018

Wisconsin ACEP's 2018 Spring Symposium will take place March 14 & 15 at The Edgewater in Madison. The conference theme is "Building Connections" and will include a newly formed partnership with MCW and UW to incorporate the annual Wisconsin Emergency Medicine Research Forum into the WACEP Symposium. Stay tuned for conference and registration details.

Doctor Day is January 30

Learn more about Doctor Day 2018, and register today. Visit www.WIDoctorDay.org.

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