

## MSMA Council Discusses Upcoming Advocacy Season at October Meeting

During its October Council Meeting on October 15 in Jefferson City, leadership previewed the upcoming legislative session, discussed membership, and future events.

### President's Update

**Lancer Gates, DO**, MSMA President, continues hosting Fireside Chats this Autumn, which have included speakers from the Board of Healing Arts, the Missouri Prescription Drug Monitoring Database, and Show-Me Health Information Network. He attended a meeting at North Kansas City Hospital with Missouri Physicians Health Program in response to recent physician suicides. His recent article in *Missouri Medicine*, "MSMA – Your Oxygen Mask," addressed the issue of physician burnout. Other visits and meetings included attending the Physician Wellness Seminar, a networking event hosted by the Kansas City Medical Society.

Dr. Gates reminded the group that MSMA is offering MATE training to satisfy the requirements for DEA licensure, as well as CME provided through the VOC program which is being offered in collaboration with the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (MAOPS). He also reported that the Executive Committee discussed ways to involve MSMA's retired physicians more in the organization. The Organized Medical Staff Section discussed the benefits of Safe Haven, a group that ensures physicians can seek support for burnout, career fatigue, and mental health reasons without the fear of undue repercussions to their medical license.



Congratulations to the Missouri State Medical Association Class of 2023 Advocacy Training Workshop! Under an eclipsed sky, physicians leaned how to be their patients' advocate, how to give testimony before the Senate or the House, and how all politics start local.

### Advocacy

MSMA lobbyists have been traveling throughout the state to visit legislators in their home districts. The Doctor of the Day program will be reinstated at the Capitol beginning in January. Physicians can sign up at [msma.org/DoctorDay](http://msma.org/DoctorDay). This program will offer volunteers the opportunity to visit with legislators in an advocacy capacity, without the medical service aspect of the former program. Physician Advocacy Day will be held on March 5, 2024. MSMA will form a committee with members of MAOPS to discuss strategic partnerships, with an emphasis on advocacy.

Jeff Howell, MSMA EVP, thanked everyone who attended the MMPAC fundraiser dinner for Senator Karla Eslinger.

**Ravi Johar, MD**, reported that the Legislative Committee discussed upcoming strategies and issues and heard a presentation on the results of the 2024 legislative survey.

## Council Actions, continued

The Committee discussed two resolutions that were referred out of the House of Delegates. The first, Resolution 8 – Firearms Safety was adopted by the Council.

*RESOLVED, that our Missouri State Medical Association support legislation for a universal background check requirement to purchase firearms and support firearms safety education.*

The second, after much discussion, Resolution 2 - Access to Puberty-Suppressing Hormone Blockers for Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth, was not adopted.

## Annual Convention

Preliminary topics for the 2024 Annual Convention include artificial intelligence, medical/legal issues, weight loss management (medical or surgery), and mental health issues/crisis. Registration is open at [msma.org/Convention](http://msma.org/Convention). MSMA staff has secured sponsorships for several Convention programs and physicians are encouraged to reach out to [bstennis@msma.org](mailto:bstennis@msma.org) with any information on potential sponsors. The site for the 2026 and 2028 Conventions is the DoubleTree Chesterfield. A Committee on Governance, which was called for at the 2023 House of Delegates, will convene in late November to explore ways to modernize MSMA's governance structure, streamlining the sections, committees, and the House of Delegates to increase member engagement in MSMA.

## Education

MSMA's Commission on Continuing Education reported that Capital Region Medical Center was granted full accreditation for four years. Commission members reviewed the progress report for St. Francis Medical Center and approved it with an addendum of Criterion 11. Boone Hospital has relinquished its accreditation as of August 2023. MSMA now accredits 17 providers.

## Physicians Health Program

The Missouri Physicians Health Program reported that it currently is helping 69 physicians in 26 different medical specialties in recovery and mental health. MPHP runs entirely on contributions. If you would like to support the program, visit [www.themphp.org/donate](http://www.themphp.org/donate).



Thanks to speaker Joanne Loethen, MD, Kansas City, for presenting on "Physician Advocates: A Seat at the Table" at MSMA's Advocacy Training!



Medical students attended the Advocacy Workshop to take back information and methods to get students more involved at the Capitol.

## Reports of Councilors (Selected) District 1

**Chakshu Gupta, MD**, reported that the Buchanan County Medical Society has been meeting monthly with lectures on medical topics and have continued medical scholarships. BCMS has provided its Alliance with a donation to support anti-bullying activities for school children. Dr. Gupta informed the group of a text resource for physicians who are experiencing burnout and need help: Text "SCRUBS" to 741741.

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MSMA lobbyists L to R Jacob Scott, Rachel Bauer, and Trent Watson set up a role-play on "How to Testify to a Legislative Committee" during MSMA's Advocacy Workshop.



Long time MSMA members Betty Drees, MD, Kansas City, and Jo-Ellyn Ryall, MD, St. Louis, shared their knowledge and experience with the Workshop participants.

## Council Actions, continued

### District 2

**Hossein Behniaye, MD**, reported that District 2 continues with its scholarship program. He announced that Hannibal will be offering internal medicine residencies. Long time MSMA Michael Bukstein, MD, has retired and was honored recently.

### District 3

**Inderjit Singh, MD**, thanked Dr. Gates, Rachel Bauer, and Jacob Scott for joining the St. Louis Metropolitan Medical Society's annual Legislative Update in September. SLMMS hosted a virtual Public Health Forum the Director of the St. Louis County Health Department and the Director of Health for the City of St. Louis.

### District 5

**Amy Zguta, MD**, reported that Audrain County will be re-opening its hospital in December. Boone Hospital has a new CEO, who will start in November. MU has formed a new strategic relationship with Northeast Medical Center in Kirksville and Moberly. Boone County Medical Society held a roundtable legislative presentation in October. **Lisa Thomas, MD**, added her appreciation for being included in the BCMS roundtable.

### District 7

**Betty Drees, MD**, reported that the Wellness Committee continues to work on the opioid crisis, partnering with an

organized student group associated with the Northland on educational materials on fentanyl and Narcan use. There has been state funding to break ground on a new psychiatric facility in Kansas City to address mental health needs.

### District 8

**David Kuhlmann, MD**, reported that District 8 had joined an accountable care organization and has received its first shared savings this year from Medicare. Dr. Biggers reported that Greene County Medical Society has been very active with CME activity and discussions on medical school expansion. Cox Hospital has increased physician leadership.

## Women Physicians Section

**Adriana Canas-Polesel, MD**, reported the Section has met and is working on a newsletter. A survey will identify topics that members would like to see the WPS address, and everyone is encouraged to join in the virtual meeting later this month.

## Resident and Fellow Section

**Rachana Raghupathy, MD**, reported that the RFS has been working on recruitment of members, as well as retention and engagement. Leadership members have been designated to spearhead various endeavors, including newsletters. They are also coordinating with the Medical Student Section to have an in-person mixer for networking.

## Medical Student Section

**Jay Devineni**, University of Missouri-Columbia, reported the section is planning a combination resolution-writing/advocacy direct testimony workshop next year to

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MSMA held an MMPAC fundraiser dinner for Senator Karla Eslinger (center) during the Council weekend.

Sen. Eslinger-R is the Majority Caucus Whip and serves District 33, which encompasses the counties of Douglas, Howell, Ozark, Shannon, Stone, Taney, and Texas.

With Sen. Eslinger L to R is MSMA President Lancer Gates, DO, George Hruza, MD, Lisa Thomas, MD, and David Barbe, MD.



Medical students and physicians discuss strategy and politics with physicians George Hruza, MD, and Ellie Azrak, MD, on the right of the photo.

**Edmond Cabbabe, MD**, outlined the representation and positions held by members of Missouri's Delegation to the AMA. He reported that he has presented a resolution twice to have the AMA Board study the Assistant Physician issue and guide us toward a solution, but the proposition was not adopted. He shared his concerns about the effects of legislation being considered in other states that would allow international medical graduates to work with a licensed physician for two years as an alternative to residency. Missouri law currently limits the number of years an assistant physician can collaborate with a licensed physician, and this could result in assistant physicians moving to other states where they can obtain full licensure without residency.

## Council Actions, continued

encourage strong, robust resolutions. They are also pairing students with physicians for the vetting of resolutions.

### AMA Report

**Elie Azrak, MD**, reported that the AMA Delegation is preparing to attend the Interim Meeting in Maryland this month. Charles Van Way, MD, will compile and edit the report of the AMA's proceedings for our members.

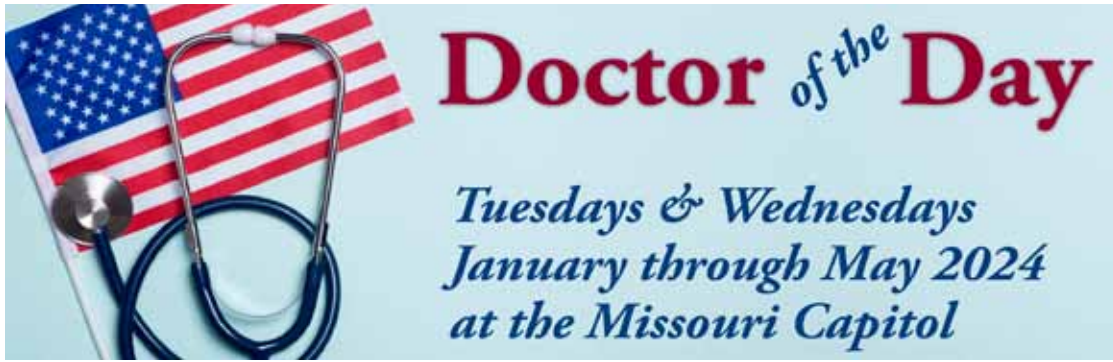
Dr. Azrak, who also serves on the AMA Political Action Committee, commended the quality of MSMA's Advocacy Workshop and emphasized the importance of financial support for political action. He encouraged everyone to contribute to the Missouri Medical PAC. The AMA PAC supports federal congressional campaigns of physician-friendly members of Congress. He called on current AMA members to support the PAC and encouraged non-members to join.

### Alliance

MSMA Alliance President Sana Saleh offered highlights from summer and fall events and announced that the Alliance would be celebrating its 100th anniversary in April 2024. The MSMA Alliance continues to support Cape Girardeau in its efforts to re-establish its area Alliance. The Executive Board voted unanimously to rename an annual award from the "Jean E. Duensing Literary Award" to the "Lizabeth Starnes Flenor Literary Award" to honor Mrs. Lizabeth Flenor who has been the MSMA Director of Communications for 30 years and also the MSMA Alliance Liaison for 24 years.

### Next Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be held January 27, 2024, virtually via Zoom.



Scan code to view dates and sign up!

MSMA is excited to launch the revamped Doctor of the Day program. In the past, MSMA members who participated as Doctor of the Day were there to practice medicine—seeing legislators and their staff for the sniffles or other minor ailments.

Due to the gift ban requirements established in 2018, physicians can no longer offer such services. The 2024 refurbished Doctor of the Day program will invigorate the Capitol with physicians once again, but this time the role will be more focused on advocacy.

MSMA invites you to volunteer as the **Doctor of the Day** for the upcoming 2024 legislative session!

As the **Doctor of the Day**, you will join MSMA at the Capitol to educate legislators and their staff on issues pertinent to medicine in Missouri.

This opportunity to advocate on behalf of the medical community will be available on **Tuesdays and Wednesdays** during the legislative session which runs from **January to mid-May**.

MSMA members can have **scheduled one-on-one time** with their elected officials and will likely be **introduced in the House and Senate** chambers.

It's a **great experience** and a great service to your peers, your profession, and your patients. **All specialties are welcome** and encouraged to serve!

## Volunteer today!

Days will start filling up quickly.

Please don't miss your opportunity to be the **medical voice in YOUR state Capitol** this upcoming legislative session.

Scan code above or visit

[www.msma.org/DoctorDay](http://www.msma.org/DoctorDay)  
Questions?

Email Rachel Bauer at [rbauer@msma.org](mailto:rbauer@msma.org)



We make recovery possible for physicians, residents, and medical students. Our program depends on your generosity. Please consider a donation—

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Mail checks to, The MPHP 1023 Executive Parkway, Suite 16 St. Louis, MO 63141



Renew Your Membership

[www.msma.org/membership](http://www.msma.org/membership)

Thank you for your continued support. Together in MSMA, doctors stand as the most powerful force ensuring quality healthcare and the best for your profession.

## MSMA's Legislative Team On the Road

During the legislative interim, your MSMA legislative team has been visiting with key legislators in their home districts. In doing so, MSMA has bolstered its visibility and reputation as a trusted source of information on healthcare legislation. The opportunity to have one-on-one time with legislators outside Jefferson City fosters relationships and cultivates a coalition of leaders who believe in a physician-led approach to healthcare.

Rep. Bennie Cook, Houston

Sen. Karla Eslinger, Wasola

Rep. Jeff Coleman, Grain Valley

Sen. Greg Razer, Kansas City

Sen. Lauren Arthur, Kansas City

Sen. Rick Brattin, Pleasant Hill

Rep. Jon Patterson, Lee's Summit

Sen. Tony Luetkemeyer, Parkville

Sen. John Rizzo, Independence

Sen. Jason Bean, Gideon

Sen. Holly Thompson Rehder, Cape Girardeau

Rep. Mike Henderson, Bonne Terre

Rep. Chris Dinkins, Bonne Terre

Rep. Cameron Parker, Malden

Sen. Rusty Black, Chillicothe

Rep. Kent Haden, Mexico

Sen. Curtis Trent, Springfield

Rep. Melanie Stinnett, Springfield

Rep. Betsy Fogle, Springfield

Rep. Dirk Deaton, Noel

Rep. Lane Roberts, Joplin

Sen. Jill Carter, Joplin

Candidate Cathy Jo Loy, Joplin

Rep. John Black, Strafford

Rep. Crystal Quade, Springfield

Rep. Cody Smith, Carthage

Rep. Stephanie Hein, Springfield

Sen. Doug Beck, St. Louis

Sen. Tracy McCreery, Olivette

Sen. Mary Elizabeth Coleman, Arnold

Candidate George Hruza, MD, Town & Country

Sen. Ben Brown, Washington

Rep. Phil Christofanelli, St. Peters

Rep. Ben Keathley, Chesterfield

If you are interested in getting more involved in MSMA advocacy efforts, please email [advocacy@msma.org](mailto:advocacy@msma.org).

# LEGISLATIVE SURVEY

## Survey Reveals Prior Authorization, Tort Reform, and Scope of Practice are Legislative Priorities

According to MSMA members, prior authorization reform, tort reform, and title protection in a clinical setting are among the highest priorities, a September legislative survey revealed.

An overwhelming number of members responded and gave the legislative team insights to better advocate for the interests of the membership as the session begins to unfold.

MSMA Director of Legislative Affairs Jacob Scott presented key findings and highlights of the survey at the October Council Meeting. It was clear from the survey that there are many issues that unite us in our common cause to improve the delivery of healthcare and protect the practice of medicine.

Contact Jacob if you would like to find out more about the survey results at [jscott@msma.org](mailto:jscott@msma.org).



## Annual Physician Advocacy Day - March 5, 2024

Join Missouri State Medical Association and the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons for Physician Advocacy Day on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 in Jefferson City at the Millbottom Event Center.

All Missouri physicians, residents, fellows, medical students, and Alliance members are invited to attend. Membership in MAOPS or MSMA is not required. We hope to see you there! Scan code or visit [msma.org/events](http://msma.org/events) to register!

## January 1 Renewal? Insurance Questions or Need a Review?



### Call the Professionals at YOUR MSMA Insurance Agency at 866-676-2467

Owned and directed by the physician members of the Association, you have the privilege and opportunity to allow the MSMA Insurance Agency review your current insurance coverage and make suggestions on ways to save money or enhance your coverage.

- Professional Liability
- Health
- Workers' Comp
- Life
- Disability
- Property

Call Ronnie Staggs at 800-676-2467  
or email [rstaggs@msma.biz](mailto:rstaggs@msma.biz).

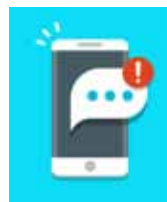
## Enjoy a Discount on the DEA Controlled Substance Course Completed at Your Own Pace

An estimated 31,000 Missouri physicians will be up for relicensure in January 2024. Many of you will also be renewing your DEA license.

As you know, you now need 8 hours of MATE certification to receive your DEA licence. MSMA, in conjunction with Clinical Care Options (CCO), offers a discount to MSMA members to help Missouri physicians meet their state requirements of 50 hours every two years.

Satisfy the one-time eight-hour training requirement where you can receive your required eight hours of credit on-demand. Visit [www.msma.org/MATE-DEA](http://www.msma.org/MATE-DEA) to log into CCO's Resource Center and receive your code for the discount.

## Sign Up for MSMA Text Alerts



MSMA members can elect to receive notifications by text. These include legislative alerts, upcoming events, and more. We hope you'll consider opting-in to this program.

- Sign up to receive text messages by logging into your account at [www.msma.org](http://www.msma.org).
- Click on the person icon in the top right corner and select "View Profile."
- Click the "Edit Profile" box.
- Under the Contact Information section, change your preferred phone number to the cell phone you would like to receive the text.
- Under the Administration section, check the box to consent to receive the text messaging.
- Scroll to the bottom and click "Save."

Questions? Contact Cassie Williams at [cwilliams@msma.org](mailto:cwilliams@msma.org) or 573-691-4510.

## Need a Physician? Looking for a New Position?

Find a career in medicine or post a medical position on MSMA's integrated job posting board called **MSMA Medical Career Postings** located under the practice tab on the MSMA website at [www.msma.org/practice](http://www.msma.org/practice).

If you are searching to fill a position, there are three types of listings: 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day. MSMA members receive a reduced rate. Posting a job is as easy as selecting the "Post a Job" button at the top of the webpage and following the directions until the posting is complete. If you are looking for employment, search for your keyword and see if anything is available.

You can also upgrade your listing to a featured listing which will highlight your listing, move it to the top of the board, and publish it to the Google Jobs network.

Questions? Contact Cassie Williams at [cwilliams@msma.org](mailto:cwilliams@msma.org) or 573-691-4510.



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## Renew Your Membership



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Join MSMA President Lancer Gates, DO, every third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. for his series of "Fireside Chats" throughout his presidential year.

**All members and non-members are invited.** Topics have included "What Missouri Physicians Need From MSMA," "Future Physicians and How MSMA Can Help," and others.

Visit [msma.org/events](https://msma.org/events) for dates, times, and registration.  
 We'll see you at the Fireside Chat!