

MMA & MAAP: The Role of Physician Professional Organizations in Advocacy, Communications, & Support of Maine Physicians

**MAAP Spring Conference
March 24, 2024**

Disclosure

- I have no financial interest in the topic of this presentation & no actual or potential conflict of interest to disclose
- I am an employee of the Maine Medical Association, a professional organization representing more than 4000 physicians, residents, & medical students in Maine whose mission is to support Maine physicians, advance the quality of medicine in Maine, and promote the health of all Maine people

Presentation Objectives

- Update on MMA's strategic priorities and annual work plans since I became CEO in February 2019
- Overview of MMA/MOA/MAAP public policy advocacy in the Second Regular Session (2024) of the 131st Maine Legislature & at the federal level with Maine's Congressional Delegation
- Summary of legal services & compliance assistance available to Maine physicians through MMA
- Q&A opportunity on any of the topics above

The Environment in which We (organized medicine) Operate Today

- Polarized political environment; anti-“establishment” sentiment, including a skepticism of education (science in particular), academic/intellectual standards, & formerly accepted norms of behavior
- Dramatically different demographics of the physician community: gender & other aspects of diversity; employment model; independent practice tension between “direct primary care” & private equity
- Consolidation of health care markets in hospital/health systems; PhRMA companies; and national health insurance carriers
- Result: physicians (& other clinicians) have lost, yielded, abdicated, conceded their voice to these other forces in the public policy debate about the future of our health care system
- Frustration & burnout are rampant

How Can/Should Physicians Respond

- Unfortunately, the physician (& other clinician) voice has been marginalized; we must reverse this trend
- Physicians may exercise their First Amendment rights to associate & to petition government for a redress of grievances
- Whether the physician community can cooperate in this way – the the AAP, the Maine Chapter of the AAP, the MMA/MOA, and other professional organizations – to reclaim your rightful place of leadership in our health care system is up to you

MMA: 1853-2019 & 2019-?

- Medicine, of course, changed a lot 1853-1999
- I began working in Maine's health care sector in 1992 & joined MMA in 1999; I've observed the changes in delivery of health care services & regulation of our industry for more than 30 years
- I succeeded Gordon Smith in senior staff leadership position in 2019
- MMA Board developed current strategic plan in the Fall of 2019
- MMA strategic plan & all other aspects of life as we know it changed with the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020

MMA Strategic Planning 2019 -

- MMA & MAAP must adjust to meet needs of next generation of physicians which is much more diverse & will have different expectations of organized medicine
- MMA & MAAP core strength: knowledge of Maine health care landscape & political environment
- Core functions:
 - Connect
 - Educate/Communicate
 - Advocate
 - Sustain

MMA 2019-2024 “Action Priorities”

- Supporting physicians & teams in COVID-19 response
- Formation & growth of MMA Center for Quality Improvement
- Merger of Maine Medical Education Foundation (MMEF) & Daniel Hanley Center for Health Leadership with the Maine Medical Education Trust (MMET); soon will be renamed the Hanley Center for Health Leadership & Education
- Improve communications platforms – web site; e-newsletter platform; “value proposition”
- Review & revise membership dues structure
- Review & revise health care reform policy statement:
https://www.mainemed.com/sites/default/files/content/statement_hcr_mma_board_adopted_6_7_23_FINAL.pdf
- Clinician wellness & resiliency: Medical Professionals Health Program (MPHP) & *Caring for the Caregivers: Building a Resilient Workforce & Organization* 3/13/24
- 1000 Lives Campaign for Maine
- “Good Governance” initiatives

Public Policy Advocacy - State

- Joint MMA/MOA Legislative Committee
- New Director of Advocacy Anne Sedlack, Esq., MSW
- MAAP Government Affairs Consultant Laura Harper
- Key issues in Second Regular Session of 131st Maine Legislature
 - Gun safety/response to Lewiston tragedy
 - Ban sale of flavored tobacco products
 - Transgender care
 - Prior authorization
 - Cannabis
 - CDS funding/CPS improvements

Public Policy Advocacy - Federal

- AMA National Advocacy Conference, February 12-14, 2024
- Issues raised in visits with Maine's Congressional offices
 - Medicare physician payment issues
 - Health workforce challenges
 - Gun safety & response to the Lewiston tragedy
 - Response to the OUD crisis – 1000 Lives Campaign
 - Prior authorization/administrative burdens on medical practice
 - Health care reform

Legal Services & Compliance Assistance

- Minors' rights to confidential health care treatment
- Employment law; individualized review of employment agreements
- Aspects of the physician-patient relationship
- Consent to treatment
- Health information privacy laws
- Physician licensing & discipline
- Employer/health plan credentialing
- Referral to private attorney when appropriate

Questions?

Andrew B. MacLean, J.D.

CEO

amaclean@mainemed.com; 207-215-7462 (Mobile)

Anne Sedlack, Esq., MSW

Director of Advocacy

asedlack@mainemed.com; 203-560-9302 (Mobile)