



Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association

THERE TO CARE: STRONGER HOSPITALS FOR A HEALTHIER ARIZONA

2010 Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association State Advocacy Agenda

- H** **Oppose AHCCCS Hospital Payment Cuts that Drive up Arizona's Hidden Healthcare Tax** Ensure that Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) hospital payment rates are adjusted in FY 2011 to account for increasing healthcare costs as required by statute, and protect hospitals from additional AHCCCS rate cuts.
- H** **Protect AHCCCS Eligibility & Funding** Oppose efforts to reduce AHCCCS and KidsCare 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 screening resulting from federal citizenship verification requirements.
- H** **Preserve Funding for Arizona's Behavioral Health System** Support the reinstatement of crisis services for all behavioral health patients presenting in hospital emergency departments and oppose additional funding cuts to Arizona's behavioral health system. Support efforts to increase capacity in Arizona's behavioral system that reduce overcrowding in hospital emergency departments and ensure patients receive appropriate medical care.
- H** **Protect Voter-Approved Measures and Funding** Oppose referendums permitting the Legislature to appropriate or divert funds enacted through voter-approved measures. Protect Prop. 204, the *Healthy Arizona Act*, which provides healthcare coverage to low-income working 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** **Promote Flexibility in the Budgeting Process** Oppose Taxpayer Bill of Rights-style legislative referendums that 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. Support lawmakers' ability to respond to state crises such as the Swine Flu pandemic, West Nile Virus or summer wildfires by promoting legislative flexibility in the budgeting process.

- 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 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, coverage for KidsCare parents, and funding for prenatal care and vaccinations for low-income populations. Efforts to expand AHCCCS coverage, including KidsCare, must be coupled with efforts to improve AHCCCS hospital payments in order to preserve Arizona's healthcare safety net and avoid increasing Arizona's hidden healthcare tax.
- 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 and serve only to increase the hidden healthcare tax on privately insured individuals and businesses.
- 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 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** **Support Infection Prevention Advisory Committee** Support the efforts of the Infection Prevention Advisory Committee—established in 2008 to address concerns regarding infections in healthcare facilities and the community—to provide recommendations to the Arizona Department of Health Services regarding the reduction, prevention and control of certain healthcare-associated infections in order to improve patient safety and health outcomes in Arizona.

- H** **Promote Reauthorization of Section 1011 Emergency Treatment Funds** Work with state lawmakers to pass a memorial urging Congress to reauthorize section 1011 of the Medicare Modernization Act so hospitals are reimbursed for a portion of the costs they incur providing emergency healthcare services to undocumented aliens as required by the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act.