



2009 SCMS Legislative Priorities



Increase physician Medicaid reimbursement — from the current level of 56% of Medicare to 100% of Medicare rates. Consider:

- Current reimbursement rates do not cover the overhead cost of caring for Medicaid patients.
- This results in fewer high quality physicians being willing to care for Medicaid patients, reduces access to care for many Medicaid patients (particularly children and those considered high risk), and forces many Medicaid patients to seek care in emergency rooms — which increases overall Medicaid costs.
- It has been years since Medicaid physician reimbursement rates have been adjusted.
- Increasing physician reimbursement rates will result in more physicians being willing to treat Medicaid patients and reduce state health care costs.



Managed care reforms — expand the 2008 managed care legislation to further improve the relationship between physicians and insurance companies. Frustration in dealing with insurance policies is a major reason why many physicians do not participate in emergency room call coverage. To ensure patients continue to have access to high quality healthcare in emergency rooms, additional reforms should include:

- Require insurance companies to honor assignment for out-of-network physicians.
- Prohibit insurance companies from denying claims they previously authorized.
- Provide transparency and guidelines for any type of physician rating system.



Expert witness reforms — require certificates for out-of-state expert witnesses. This would:

- Hold out-of-state experts accountable for their testimony (just like in-state experts).
- Improve physician confidence that the medical-legal system will be fair.
- Reduce overall healthcare costs. Currently, a lack of confidence in the medical-legal system causes physicians to practice defensive medicine (over-order tests) to protect themselves, which increases overall healthcare costs.



Fully fund the University of Central Florida Medical School — any shortfall this year has the potential to:

- Impact the future quality of the Medical School program.
- Hurt the economic impact the Medical School will have on the community.