



Message from the President:

Actions on Mcare Critical for Stabilizing Medical Liability Costs

Your state professional Society was successful this summer in the first of two steps needed to ensure stable medical liability insurance premiums for orthopaedic surgeons, and in fact, all surgeons in Pennsylvania.

We've succeeded in preventing a 20% premium increase, which would have been the result of a scheduled change in the amount of medical liability insurance coverage doctors are required to purchase in the private market. Our next task is to advocate for another year of 100% Mcare Abatement for high-risk specialty surgeons such as orthopaedic surgeons. Together these two measures will have prevented a 48% increase in your medical liability insurance premium for 2008.

The Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society (POS) leadership worked closely with Pennsylvania Physicians for the Protection of Specialty Care (3PSC) and the Pennsylvania Neurosurgical Society (PNS) to advocate for a delay in the scheduled raising of the required private insurance coverage level from \$500,000 to \$750,000. In letters and meetings with Insurance officials and Governor Rendell himself, POS made it clear that shifting more of the amount of coverage to the private market away from the Mcare fund at this time would significantly increase the cost of medical liability coverage and put many high-risk specialty surgeons' practices in jeopardy.

July 20, Deputy Insurance Commissioner Randy Rohrbaugh agreed with POS and the high-risk surgeons and issued a determination noting "there are concerns that the composition of the current marketplace would not be in a position to absorb greater risk, so it would be irresponsible to allow an increase in limits to \$750,000 at the primary insurance layer." This determination is critical for many of our surgeons. But does not negate the need for continued Mcare Abatement in 2008.

That's why we'll be working hard this fall to enact further Mcare Abatement before the program expires on December 31, 2007. We'll be calling on you and your colleagues for help in this effort, so start now by telling your colleagues how important it is to have the Mcare levels remain the same and how critical it will be to have Mcare Abatement for 2008.

Thank You

Charles "Chip" Hummer, MD

October 1, 2007