

MINUTES

MMA POLICY COUNCIL

THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2019

6:00-8:00PM

MINNESOTA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, JOHN MURPHY CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present

Lisa Mattson, MD, Chair	Ashokakumar Manhendra Patel, MD (via phone)
Peter Amadio, MD (via phone)	Noel Peterson, MD, MS (via phone)
Amy Boles, MD (via phone)	Spencer Pruitt, MD
Nicole Chaisson, MD	Christopher Reif, MD
Britt Westgard Ehlert, MD	Frank Rhame, MD
Suliman Salahuddin El-Amin, MD (via phone)	Caleb Schultz, MD, MPH
Randy Hemann, MD (via phone)	Rebecca Thoman, MD (via phone)
Osama Ibrahim, MD	Verna Thornton, MD (via phone)
Sheila Jowsey-Gregoire, MD (via phone)	Craig Walvatne, MD (via phone)
Robert Koshnick, MD (via phone)	

Members Absent

Christy Boraas Alsleben, MD	Anne Gamble Pereira, MD
Joshua Crabtree, MD	Neel Shah, MBChB
Timothy Dempsey, MD, MPH	Annabelle Soares
Bruce Gregoire	Lynne Steiner, MD
Jennifer Dens Higano	Keith Stelter, MD
Andrea Joplin, MD	Niloufar Tabatabaei, MD
Adrine Kocharian	Jennifer Tessmer-Tuck, MD
Thomas Mulrooney, MD	Kimberly Tjaden, MD
Ahmed Khurshid Pasha, MBBS	

Staff Present

Juliana Milhofer
Andrea Stoesz

Guests Present

None

Welcome & Introductions

Lisa Mattson, MD, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. All attendees introduced themselves.

Approve January 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes

The following motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the January 26, 2019 MMA Policy Council meeting.

Survey Results

Prior to the meeting, members were surveyed on the top issues they would like the Policy Council to address in 2019. Lisa Mattson, MD, Chair discussed the top results and solicited feedback from Council members on specific actions they would like the Council to take to address these issues. The issues discussed were:

1. Drug costs
2. Reproductive health
3. Vaccine hesitancy
4. Scope issues
5. Misinformation given to patients

Additional issues that were raised by members who took the survey included improved access to affordable health care, direct primary care, expanded access to mental health, paid parental leave, improved representation of women in medicine and health care leadership, and MinnesotaCare buy-in. The issues that garnered the most discussion are outlined below.

Drug Costs

Council members discussed whether it would be beneficial if the MMA updated our policies related to drug costs. Andrea Stoesz will follow up with a list of all of MMA's relevant policies. The Council also agreed that it would be helpful to understand what has been tried on the state level before in Minnesota and in other states. Andrea Stoesz will provide the Council with a summary. The Council thought that an updated MMA policy may also be helpful to the Minnesota Attorney General's office if it were to bring a lawsuit against a drug manufacturer or pharmacy benefit manager.

Juliana Milhofer reminded the Council that there was previously an MMA Committee that was convened to address drug costs. Andrea Stoesz will follow up with the Council regarding work the MMA has already done on this issue. Finally, the Council expressed interest in developing state-level policy options to address drug costs. Andrea Stoesz agreed to provide the Council with possible options at a future meeting.

Vaccine Hesitancy

The Council expressed interest in increased efforts to educate patients on the importance of vaccines, including partnering with the Minnesota Department of Health (and possibly other state-based sub-specialty groups) to conduct a social media campaign to address vaccine hesitancy and refusal. The social media campaigns could target adolescents and/or young parents.

There was some discussion of removing a law which allows for parents to exempt their children from vaccination based their personal or religious beliefs. However, there was debate on whether this would make a meaningful difference. Several Council members highlighted the importance of working with the community (particularly those that are under-vaccinated) and ensuring community work is culturally competent.

The Council considered whether lowering the age of consent for adolescents for vaccination would increase vaccination rates. Andrea Stoesz agreed to research current Minnesota law and provide the Council with information and any possible policy recommendations.

Reproductive Health

The Council agreed that it would be beneficial for the MMA to be more vocal as it relates to reproductive health. The MMA should not simply address policies the MMA opposes, but the MMA should also be actively promoting policies that support reproductive health.

Scope Issues

Council members generally agreed that there needs to be more transparency for patients as it relates to the competencies of MDs, NPs, PAs, chiropractors, and podiatrists. Several members indicated that when patients schedule an appointment with a provider, they are sometimes seen by an NP or PA. In addition, Council members indicated that they have referred patients to another MD, but then that patient was seen by an NP or PA. More regulation of NPs and PAs was suggested, but ultimately the Council agreed that this route would not serve the interests of patients or the MMA. Creating an MMA-branded "seal of approval" for MDs was also suggested as a potential solution.

Misinformation Given to Patients

The Council agreed that while patients do receive misinformation – especially from social media as it relates to vaccines – this is not an issue that should be of focus this year.

Next Steps

The Council concluded that the issues that will be worked on in 2019 are maternal morbidity and mortality (decided during Council discussions of open issues submissions in 2018), drug costs, and vaccine hesitancy.

Adjourn

The following motion was made, seconded, and adopted:

MOTION: That the meeting be adjourned at 7:45 pm.