

[View this email in your browser](#)



Idaho Medical Association

Table of Contents:

In this Issue...

- [Medicaid Expansion Initiative Qualifies for Idaho Ballot](#)
- [IMA Annual Meeting](#)
- [New IMA Members](#)
- [2019 Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule Released](#)
- [Licensure Required for Sign Language Interpreters](#)
- [Anthem Sued by Doctors in Dispute Over Emergency-Room Coverage](#)
- [Pre-Order Your 2019 Coding Books](#)
- [Medical Practice Opportunities](#)

IMAgEs

July 15, 2018

Medicaid Expansion Initiative Qualifies for Idaho Ballot An initiative to expand Medicaid in Idaho has officially qualified for the November ballot, Idaho Secretary of State Lawrence Denney announced July 17.

Backers of the initiative turned in a total of 75,134 verified signatures of registered Idaho voters, far exceeding the required mark of 56,192. They also exceeded the requirement for getting signatures from at least 6 percent of voters in at least 18 of Idaho's 35 legislative districts; they met that mark in 21 legislative districts, according to Chief Deputy Secretary of State Tim Hurst.

It is the second initiative to qualify for the November ballot; last week, a measure to legalize "historical horse racing" or "instant racing" betting machines at Idaho racetracks also qualified.

Ballot initiatives in Idaho have the same force of law as bills passed by the Legislature. If a majority of voters approve the measures in the November election, they'll become law. [Russell, *Idaho Press-Tribune*, 7/17]

Editor's Note: Watch for information on how you can support the initiative coming next week.

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

IMA Annual Meeting
August 3 - 5, 2018 ~ Sun Valley

It's not too late to register as a delegate! Online registration and a printable registration form are available on the IMA home page at <https://www.idmed.org/idaho/>.

House of Delegates materials have been posted to the [IMA website](#).

The IMA Office will be closed Thursday, August 2 through Monday,

RESOURCE

"For more than 40 years, MIEC has been a valued partner of the IMA and an invaluable resource for our members."

Susie Pouliot
CEO, IMA

For more information or to apply:
 ■ www.miec.com
 ■ or call: 1800-227-4627

MIEC

August 6.

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

The Idaho Medical Association Welcomes New Members A warm welcome to these physicians who have recently joined the IMA:

- R. Lee Biggs, DO, Administrative Physician, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Idaho Falls
- Edward Duckworth, MD, Neurological Surgery, Boise
- Alicia E. Ogram, MD, Dermatology, Coeur d'Alene
- Mary F. Quandt, MD, Internal Medicine, Boise
- John B. Rudolph, DO, Family Medicine, Lewiston
- William R. Sullivan, II, MD, Psychiatry, Twin Falls
- Karmen L. Wielunski, DO, Internal Medicine, Boise

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

2019 Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule Released On July 12, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published the proposed Physician Fee Schedule Rule for 2019. It includes provisions for the Quality Payment Program (QPP) for 2019 as well as the physician fee schedule. Comments are due to CMS on September 10, 2018.

This is a brief summary from the American Medical Association (AMA) of the key Medicare Fee Schedule proposals:

- With the budget neutrality adjustment to account for relative value changes, as required by law, the proposed 2019 PFS conversion factor is \$36.05, a slight increase above the 2018 PFS conversion factor of \$35.99.
- CMS has proposed to collapse payment for office and outpatient visits. New patient office visit (99202-99205) payments would be blended to be \$135. Established office visits (99212-99215) would be blended to be paid at \$93. New codes would be created to provide add-on payments to office visits for specific specialties (\$9) and primary care physicians (\$5).
- To replace existing documentation guidelines, CMS proposes to allow use of (1) 1995 or 1997 documentation guidelines; (2) medical decision-making or (3) time. Documentation for history and

exam will focus on interval history since last visit. Physicians will be allowed to review and verify certain information in the medical record entered by ancillary staff or the beneficiary, rather than re-entering the information.

- When physicians report an E/M service and a procedure on the same date, CMS proposes to implement a 50 percent multiple procedure reduction to the lower paid of the two services.
- CMS will implement new CPT codes and payment for remote monitoring and interprofessional consultations.
- CMS updated supplies and equipment pricing. The re-pricing of antigens has a significant impact on allergy and immunology payments, with an estimated 6 percent reduction for the specialty.

Here are some of the highlights of the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) proposals:

- Retain the low-volume threshold but add a third criteria of providing fewer than 200 covered professional services to Part B patients.
- Retaining bonus points for:
 - Care of complex patients
 - End-to-end reporting
 - Small practices
- Allowing eligible clinicians to opt-in if they meet one or two, but not all, of the low volume threshold criterion.
- Consolidating the low-volume threshold determination periods with the determination period for identifying a small practice.
- Eliminate the base and performance categories and reduced the number of measures in the Promoting Interoperability category.
- Require Eligible clinicians to move to 2015 CEHRT.
- Providing the option to use facility-based scoring for facility-based clinicians.
- For 2019 performance year the weights are:
 - Quality – 45 percent
 - Cost – 15 percent
 - Promoting Interoperability – 25 percent
 - Improvement Activities – 15 percent

As a result of AMA advocacy, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 provided additional flexibility for CMS on several MIPS issues including:

- Excluding Medicare Part B drug costs from MIPS payment adjustments and from the low-volume threshold determination;
- Allowing CMS to reweight the cost performance category to not less than 10 percent and not more than 30 percent for 2019-2021 performance years; and
- Allowing CMS flexibility in setting the performance threshold for performance years 2019-2021 to provide a gradual and incremental transition for physicians.

CMS has provided Fact Sheets on the major components of the rule which are available at the following links:

[CMS Fact Sheet - Proposed Rule](#)

[CMS Fact Sheet - QPP](#)

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

Licensure Required for Sign Language Interpreters Effective July 1, 2018, sign language interpreters working in facilities, clinics or agencies serving Medicaid participants must hold a valid license issued by the Idaho Bureau of Occupational Licenses. The 2017 Idaho Legislature amended IDAPA Title 54, Chapter 29 to implement this change. Enrolled Idaho Medicaid providers have agreed to provide services in accordance with all applicable federal laws, and provisions of statutes, states rules and federal regulations; this is a reminder that the statute change has now gone into effect.

Idaho Medicaid providers who wish to bill for reimbursement for interpretive services, should review section 2.7 "Interpretive Services" of the General Provider and Participant Handbook for additional information.

Please note that section 2.7.1 of the handbook states “interpreters and translators must meet state and professional licensure requirements.”

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

Anthem Sued by Doctors in Dispute Over Emergency-Room Coverage The health insurer Anthem Inc. was sued by doctors in Georgia for declining to pay for some emergency-room care, escalating a long-running battle over how far insurance plans can go to push patients to seek lower-cost treatment.

The American College of Emergency Physicians and the Medical Association of Georgia filed suit on Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Atlanta against Anthem’s Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia unit over the denied payments. The doctors asked the court to require Anthem to halt its policy and cover the claims.

“Providers and patients alike are operating in fear of denial of payment by defendants when patients seek emergency department care,” the groups said in the filing.

It’s the latest legal challenge over a change in policy that Anthem says was designed to cut down on patients going to an emergency room in situations that don’t require it. Emergency-room care usually costs significantly more than treatment at a doctor’s office or an urgent-care clinic. Georgia’s Piedmont Hospital and five related facilities also have sued Anthem over the policy, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported in February.

Before putting the policy in place, Anthem sent letters to customers explaining the policy and urging them to use other sites for care. The insurer also held meetings with physicians, according to the suit.

Anthem didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment on the suit.

Medical Records

Anthem’s strategy went beyond what’s legally allowed, the doctors say in their lawsuit. The insurer reviewed the cases of patients who went to an emergency room, and decided whether to pay for their care based on billing information or medical records related to the incident. The suit says Anthem violated legal requirements that insurers cover care in a situation where a “prudent layperson” would believe he or she was experiencing an emergency.

According to the suit, Anthem began reviewing emergency-room visits in Georgia, Kentucky and Missouri, and has also brought the policy to Ohio, New Hampshire and Indiana. Based in Indianapolis, Anthem operates under the Blue Cross and Blue Shield brand in 14 states. The company has almost 40 million health-insurance members.

Lawmakers including U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill of Missouri have criticized Anthem’s policy. McCaskill and a fellow Democrat, Senator Ben Cardin of Maryland, sent a letter in March to the Health and Human Services Department and Labor Department, asking them to investigate the payment denials.

“By denying patient claims based on the patient’s final diagnosis and ignoring the patient’s symptoms present at the time of the emergency, we believe that Anthem likely violated federal law,” the senators wrote. [Tracer, *Bloomberg*, 7/17]

Currently Idaho insurance law, in Idaho Code 41-3903(7), defines "emergency services" as those health care services that are provided in a hospital or other emergency facility after the sudden onset of a medical condition that manifests itself by symptoms of sufficient severity including, but not limited to, severe pain, that the absence of immediate medical attention could reasonably be expected by a prudent person who possesses an average knowledge of health and medicine, to result in:

- (a) Placing the patient’s health in serious jeopardy; or
- (b) Serious impairment to bodily functions; or
- (c) Serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part.

The IMA House of Delegates in 2017 adopted a resolution setting IMA policy supporting Idaho’s prudent person standard currently in Idaho Code and directed IMA to actively and vigorously work to defeat any

challenges to the prudent person standard.

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

Pre-Order Your 2019 Coding Books The Idaho Medical Association is once again offering a discount on AMA and Optum360° books and products. Pre-order your CPT®, HCPCS, ICD-10 and other resource books at a low discounted rate. The Coder's Bundle includes the AMA CPT Professional Edition 2019 and AMA ICD-10-CM Complete Official Code Set at a special discounted rate.

An order form with the most popular choices is available on the [IMA website](#) for your convenience. If there is a specific coding book that you are looking for, please contact Rebecca Adams at rebecca@idmed.org with the title for the best discounted price the IMA can offer.

You can visit these websites for additional book titles:

<https://commerce.ama-assn.org/store/>

<https://www.optum360coding.com/>

Please note the shipping and handling charges. You pay \$8.00 per book for shipping, if you are ordering multiples of five or more of the same book, please contact Rebecca for the shipping fee. Sales tax is calculated on merchandise only.

Make sure you have the most up-to-date and accurate information you need. Preorder your books today and they will be shipped to you when they are available from the publisher.

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

Medical Practice Opportunities

Orthopedic, Internal Medicine, Neurology and Cardiology/Physicians and PAs

Idaho Disability Determinations Services (DDS) performs medical adjudication for Social Security Administration (SSA) disability claims for the citizens of Idaho. DDS is looking for physicians/PAs throughout Idaho to conduct consultative examinations to assist determining disability. If interested or further information needed, contact Steve Beard or Laura Croft at 208-327-7333.

Family Practice – Boise, Idaho

Boise ID has a thriving, well-established 19 year family practice for sale. Specialty focus is on bio-identical hormone replacement. Physician is willing to train new owner. The sale is a turn-key business with an all cash practice and 100 percent fee-for-service.

For information, email: windyriverranch1@gmail.com.

Large, Independent Multi-Specialty Group Looking to Grow
Nampa, Meridian, Boise and Caldwell, Idaho
Full-Time

Saltzer Medical Group (SMG) is seeking growth opportunities with other like-minded physicians interested in joining an independent, multi-specialty practice in Idaho's Treasure Valley. Current specialties include Family Practice, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Neurology, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Pulmonology, Rheumatology, Sleep Medicine and Urgent Care. Opportunities exist for Primary Care and Specialty Physicians, as well as Advanced Practice Providers, to join a well-established group of 50 plus providers.

SMG is an independent physician-led, professionally managed, large multi-specialty practice with six locations in Nampa, Meridian, Boise and Caldwell, Idaho. SMG was established in 1961 by Dr. Joseph

Saltzer and the friendly, patient-oriented approach that characterized his practice is still faithfully adhered to, even in these technologically advanced times.

Contact: Vicki Tyler at 208-463-3158 or vdt Tyler@saltzerved.com for additional information.

Board-Certified Family Physician

Initial Point Family Medicine is recruiting a board-certified family physician to join our dynamic and rapidly growing practice. We focus on providing innovative, high value and low volume care in a private practice setting. We have a business model that is better for our providers and patients by offering care through FFS or a direct care membership. Email us at markgraj@gmail.com.

BC/BE Clinical Gastroenterologist
Nampa, Idaho
Full-Time

Saltzer Medical Group (SMG) is an independent physician-led, professionally managed, large multi-specialty practice with six locations in Nampa, Meridian, Boise, and Caldwell, Idaho. SMG was established in 1961 by Dr. Joseph Saltzer and the friendly patient-oriented approach that characterized his practice is still faithfully adhered to, even in these technologically advanced times.

SMG is seeking a BE/BC Gastroenterologist to work in our on-site Endoscopy Suite. Candidate would be assuming a mature practice and join a well-established, multi-specialty independent practice in Idaho's Treasure Valley. The practice offers a competitive salary with incentive and comprehensive benefits, along with a strong referral base within the practice.

Contact: Vicki Tyler at 208-463-3158 or vdt Tyler@saltzerved.com for additional information.

Primary Health Medical Group, Boise

Primary Health Medical Group (PHMG) is hiring full-time board certified/eligible FAMILY PHYSICIANS for OUTPATIENT FAMILY MEDICINE positions in Boise, Nampa, and Meridian, Idaho. Our clinics are based on a patient centered medical home model that gives the family doctor the support and time that encourages trusting relationships with their patients. Family physicians work 4-4.5 days per week and hospital call is 1 out of every 20 nights consisting of nurse triaged phone calls with no visits to the hospital.

URGENT CARE positions are also available for FAMILY PHYSICIANS, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS or NURSE PRACTITIONERS – Our ideal candidate would be board certified/eligible. Urgent care positions require the provider to work approximately 14 twelve-hour shifts per month and be comfortable with the fast paced environment of an urgent care clinic. Our clinics are based on a combination clinic that has urgent care and appointment family medicine practice at the same site. Urgent care and appointment providers work together to address the patients' episodic and chronic care problems. Must be willing to work some weekends and twelve hour shifts.

Primary Health is an independent, predominantly primary care medical group with 15 clinics (soon to be 17) and more than 300,000 patient visits per year. A leader in implementing quality programs, PHMG has been using electronic health records since 2007. Physicians follow evidence-based guidelines and engage with patients in innovative ways to promote wellness. PHMG has received local and national recognition for providing efficient, quality care. Primary Health has been voted among the top 10 Best Places to Work in Idaho, and employee turnover is low. The group provides a supportive environment where family doctors develop lasting relationships with patients and enjoy a schedule that allows time to experience the many activities Idaho has to offer. Providers also have the opportunity to invest in the medical group and become an owner.

PHMG offers the following benefits to all full time physicians: – Medical and dental insurance with PHMG covering roughly 95% of the premium. – Group life insurance with options to voluntarily buy-up – A generous own occupation/own specialty long term disability policy – \$500 worth of free services in our own clinics for the physician and his/her family (per year) – A 401(k) plan with a guaranteed match – Payment for malpractice insurance, licensing fees, professional memberships and CME. PHMG offers a strong benefits package and very competitive salaries. A detailed summary of our benefits may be found on our

website www.primaryhealth.com.

To place a Medical Practice Opportunities Classified Advertisement, please contact:
Margy Leach, Director of Communications at 208-344-7888 or by email margy@idmed.org.

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

Idaho Medical Association
P.O. Box 2668, 305 West Jefferson, Boise, ID 83701
Phone: (208) 344-7888 - Fax: (208) 344-7903 - Email: mail@idmed.org

[Click here](#) to choose the types of mailings that we send to you.

[Click here](#) to Unsubscribe.

