

Our Mission

The SDMS PAC was established to preserve and promote good government, fiscal responsibility in government and the private business enterprise system, in particular with respect to Diagnostic Medical Sonography.

To achieve our mission, the SDMS PAC is organized and exclusively operated for the purpose of soliciting and accepting voluntary personal political contributions from individual SDMS members and employees, accepting unsolicited contributions from permissible sources, and making contributions and expenditures to support or oppose the candidacy, nomination and election of candidates for federal office and for such other political purposes as authorized by law.

Where Does the Sonography Profession Fit Into Health Care Reform?

At the writing of this article, the second week in November of 2009, the American public awaits the outcome of a healthcare reform debate taking place between two standing committees of the United States Senate, the Finance Committee, chaired by Max Baucus (Democrat – Montana), and the Help, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, chaired by Tom Harkin (Democrat – Iowa). Both committees have produced healthcare reform bills, the Finance Committee bill generally characterized as the more conservative of the two and a ‘middle of the road’ approach, and the more liberal version produced by the HELP committee which contains the more controversial provision for establishing a government-run insurance program that would compete with private insurance plans.

Additionally, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a sweeping healthcare reform bill (H.R. 3962) on Saturday, November 8. The vote in the House was close, 220-215. It was not until the final seconds in the voting period that the House Democrats were able to muster the 218 votes required for passage. The Republican National Committee issued a message scathing critique of the House healthcare reform bill; *“Today with help from their liberal allies, President Obama and Nancy Pelosi finally got what they have been creating behind closed-doors these past months...a government-run health care experiment that will increase families’ health care costs, increase the deficit, increase taxes on small businesses and the middle class, and cut Medicare”*. The House version of healthcare reform will ultimately have to be reconciled with the Senate language. This will require the formation of a ‘conference committee’ of House and Senate leaders to work out the differences between the two bills. Once that process is completed the revised work product will then go back to their respective legislative bodies (House/Senate) for consideration and voting.



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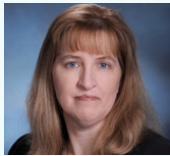
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Assuming passage of the final bill by both legislative bodies, it will then go to the President for his signature.

This debate has brought all of the vested interest groups into the fray. The American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the pharmaceutical industry, and many more; all looking for the same thing...reducing the impact of the healthcare reform bill, that ultimately passes, on their respective constituency, or enhancing the interests of those same constituencies in the final language. What about the interests of sonographers, and the patients they serve, in this national healthcare debate? The SDMS and the SDMS PAC have been and continue to be committed to a fundamental change in the provision of healthcare services in the United States, whether provided through the government or private insurance plans; the requirement that all non-physician medical imaging personnel (including sonographers) must successfully complete a national certification examination provided by a nationally recognized credentialing organization. The patients served by sonographers deserve that change. The expenses incurred by taxpayers for sub-standard sonography exams provided by non-certified personnel need to be eliminated. Making this change as part of the national healthcare reform program is good public policy and prudent fiscal management. That is the message being carried by those persons advocating for our inclusion in the healthcare reform language.

Regardless of the outcome, there is little question that the issue of healthcare reform has focused national attention on healthcare issues. Healthcare reform is not a new political issue. It has been with us at the national level since at least 1912 when Theodore Roosevelt campaigned for the Presidency on the issue of providing National Health Insurance. In a five-year study the U.S. Secretary of the Interior estimated that the average American family was spending \$5 per week or \$250 annually on healthcare. In 1932 the Wilbur Commission found that 'adequate medical attention' is beyond the reach of millions of Americans and recommended that group pre-payment systems to spread the growing financial risk of providing healthcare coverage to American families. In 1945, President Harry Truman called on Congress to overhaul the American healthcare system and proposed compulsory coverage; the American Medical Association responded with warnings of 'socialized medicine'. Truman's push for healthcare reform was later abandoned as the country became mired in the Korean War.

The most comprehensive change to the healthcare system was incurred as a result of the creation of Medicare and Medicaid during the Johnson administration. Today, approximately 45 million Americans are covered under Medicare and 59 million under Medicaid. As millions of Americans were added onto the roles of government supported Medicare and Medicaid programs the costs of providing healthcare began to spiral. By the early 1970's the rising costs of healthcare had become a major political issue. Presidents Nixon, Carter, and Clinton all undertook healthcare reform as a major topic of domestic policy during their respective terms of office. Last in this train of politicians to propose healthcare reform is President Obama, who has made the overhaul of the American healthcare system the cornerstone of his domestic policy.

The SDMS and the SDMS PAC maintain an active advocacy effort to ensure that the interests of its members, and the patients they serve, are adequately represented as the national debate on healthcare moves forward.



Topics of Interest
for Sonography
Professionals

National and State News Updates

House Democrats Unveil \$894 Billion Health Care Bill

October 29, 2009 6:25 p.m. EDT
Washington (CNN)

The battle over health care reform reached another milestone...
<http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/10/29/health.care/index.html>

Health Care Reform Bill - Affordable Health Care for America Act (AHCAA) Summary

The long awaited health care reform bill released on October 29, 2009. Click on the link below to view a summary of the bill's contents.

<http://edlabor.house.gov/documents/111/pdf/publications/AHCAA-SUMMARY-102909.pdf>

60 Minutes Feature Story: Medicare and Medicaid Fraud

Steve Kroft investigates Medicare and Medicaid fraud.

http://www.cbs.com/primetime/60_minutes/video/?pid=GQIzNJWFeZA3_UdBSl8JcB58Xdlud78c&vs=Default&play=true

Government To Decide On Payment For Doctors Who Use Medical-Imaging

Medical News Today

Article Date: 02 Nov 2009

The government is weighing whether to cut Medicare payments to physicians who use medical-imaging machines...

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/169420.php>

Accuracy and Cost Comparison of Ultrasound Versus Alternative Imaging Modalities, Including CT, MR, PET, and Angiography

S. Michelle Bierig, MPH, RDCS, FASE, FSDMS

Anne Jones, RN, BSN, RVT, RDMS, FSVU

Ultrasound has become widely used in clinical medicine for the diagnosis of a variety of disease processes....

<http://jdm.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/25/3/138.pdf>

How Can I Help?

Contribute to the SDMS PAC today. Every contribution helps, no matter how small. All contributions to SDMS PAC are completely voluntary and in no way affect your SDMS membership status.



Be a part of the SDMS PAC - The VOICE that is heard.

<http://www.sdmspac.org/contribute.htm>



Support the CARE Bill

The Alliance for Quality Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (Alliance), which includes the Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography, supports the *Consistency, Accuracy, Responsibility, and Excellence (CARE) bill*. The CARE bill would ensure that those individuals performing medical imaging services are qualified. The CARE bill is intended to:

- **Reduce Health Care Costs** – Accurate diagnosis and fewer repeat exams and delays in treatment will save American taxpayers millions of dollars each year
- **Maximize Patient Safety** – Having certified providers perform medical imaging exams safely, accurately, and effectively ensures a higher level of patient safety
- **Increase Quality** – Competent and certified providers of medical imaging services translates to higher quality exams available to patients

Representative John Barrow (Democrat – Georgia) introduced the CARE bill on September 25, 2009 in the 111th Congress. The CARE bill, HR-3652, promises to reduce healthcare costs and result in higher quality medical imaging services for the American public.

We encourage SDMS members to let your representatives know you support the CARE bill.

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

<https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

“Politics is more difficult than physics.”

– Albert Einstein - Physicist (1879 - 1955)
