

# GET INVOLVED

## HEALTH CARE GOALS

### ***Make Your Voice Heard in Washington ...***

Know South Dakota's members of Congress. Let them know where the SDSMA stands on important issues.

#### **Senator Tim Johnson**

P: 202.224.5842

F: 202.228.5765

136 Hart Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

<http://johnson.senate.gov>

#### **Senator John Thune**

P: 202.224.2321

F: 202.228.5429

493 Russell Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

<http://thune.senate.gov>

#### **Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin**

P: 202.225.2801

F: 202.225.5823

331 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

<http://hersethsandlin.house.gov/>

### ***... and in Pierre***

Know your state senators and representatives. Let them know where the SDSMA stands on important issues.

#### **Call your state senator:**

- 605.773.3821

#### **Call your state representative:**

- 605.773.3851

Write to :

The Honorable (name)

State "Senator" or "Representative"

500 E Capitol Ave

Pierre, SD 57501-5070

#### **Expand Access to Health Care**

SDSMA believes South Dakota can expand access to quality, affordable health care in all areas of the state. Special emphasis should be given to rural and economically challenged areas. Real health care reform means improving quality, choice and accessibility for all South Dakotans — particularly those who lack health insurance coverage.

#### **Increase Medicaid Reimbursement**

Health care costs continue to outpace economic growth, personal income increases and inflation. SDSMA favors Medicaid reimbursements that keep pace with inflation and utilization increases.

#### **Reform Medical Liability**

South Dakota has a cap on non-economic damages in medical liability cases of \$500,000. SDSMA supports legislation that would cap non-economic damages and . This, along with other reform provisions, would have the positive effect of stabilizing medical liability insurance premiums.

#### **Reform Medicare Physician Payment**

Medicare's sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula is deeply flawed and continues to result in decreases in Medicare physician payments that especially hurt physicians in rural states such as South Dakota. There must be reform, and SDSMA supports legislation aimed at bringing reality and common sense back to the system.

#### **Improve Clinical Quality and Patient Safety**

SDSMA advocates a balanced framework for implementing quality-improvement initiatives and clinical performance measures for treating major diseases. We also promote the use of technology such as electronic prescribing and electronic health records to improve efficiency, safety and quality. These actions will enhance patient care while avoiding increased medical errors that can lead to even higher health costs.

#### **Improve Public Health**

Several statewide groups, including SDSMA, are developing and implementing programs to promote healthy lifestyles, eliminate health disparities, and improve awareness of public health issues such as obesity, drug and alcohol abuse, and violence prevention. SDSMA also strives to be recognized as an important resource for enhancing disaster preparedness and response capabilities. We continue to stress the need to train physicians and other health professionals through the AMA's National Disaster Life Support (NDLS) Program.

#### **Enforce Scope of Practice**

We believe that only physicians should practice medicine and non-physician responsibilities should be consistent with appropriate training and physician oversight. SDSMA will continue to fight for the enforcement of those basic tenets of scope of practice.

#### **Continue to Fight Tobacco Use**

Tobacco use places a heavy burden on South Dakota's health care system. It is one of the leading causes of preventable death and disease and a major public health concern. SDSMA will continue to fight tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke through advocacy and public-awareness campaigns.

#### **Support Increased Funding for Medical Education**

The Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota is facing tighter budgets, which means medical students will have to shoulder a larger percentage of their education. Given the need for more physicians in many areas of the state, SDSMA strongly supports increased funding for medical education in South Dakota.

#### **Want to know more?**

Contact the **SDSMA** at **605.336.1965** or visit our Web site, **[www.sdsma.org](http://www.sdsma.org)**.