

TO: Council of Physicians
South Dakota State Medical Association

FROM: Committee on Medical Practice
South Dakota State Medical Association

SUBJECT: South Dakota State Medical Association Tenets of Health Care

The case for health care reform is undeniable as we continue to see growth in the rise of health care costs and the number of uninsured. Decreasing employee benefits and increasing numbers of self-employed further complicate the problem.

Rising health care costs have become an issue for too many families, becoming one of the biggest factors in personal bankruptcy. Further, all families increasingly worry that rising health care costs will jeopardize their ability to access affordable coverage in the future.

As advocates for patients and physicians of South Dakota, the South Dakota State Medical Association (SDSMA) believes in:

- The role of physicians in the determination of health care policy;
- A health care system that provides the greatest possible access to basic quality health care that is affordable for all South Dakota citizens;
- A health care system that makes available affordable plans for catastrophic health care coverage to avoid financial ruin of individuals and families;
- A health care delivery system that meets the highest standards of care for acute and chronic disease states while addressing disease prevention, wellness and public health;
- The ethical imperative of providing health care to individuals, responsible stewardship of community resources, and the importance of personal health responsibility;
- Cost management by all stakeholders – patients, providers, and payers – to ensure a workable, affordable and sustainable health care system;
- The development of a health care system that can provide effective, efficient, and appropriate health care without administrative barriers and unreasonable overhead costs;
- A shared public/private effort to provide access to and financing for appropriate health services and a system which will allow individuals/employers to purchase additional services or insurance;
- Sufficient government funding for public health and other essential medical services to include, disaster medicine and trauma care; and
- Comprehensive medical liability reform to ensure access to quality health care.