South Dakota State Medical Association
Doctor of the Day Program

Responsibilities
The primary responsibility of the Doctor of the Day (DOD) program is to provide a service to state legislators and legislative staff, and attend to any emergency situation that may occur. Most of the legislators are from out of town and are without the services of their family physician while in Pierre. DOD providers should be knowledgeable in administering CPR, should this be needed.

Of note, legislative rules prohibit you from going onto either chamber floor to visit with legislators during their deliberations. You should only enter a legislative chamber if summoned by the Sergeant-at-Arms to respond to a medical emergency.

Licensure
All physicians participating in the DOD program must hold a current, valid license to practice in the state of South Dakota.

Insurance
Neither SDSMA nor the State of South Dakota provides malpractice or other liability insurance for the DOD, nor do they have any responsibility to indemnify or defend participating physicians. South Dakota’s volunteer immunity statutes will provide immunity from civil liability in most circumstances (although not in cases of gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct), but a person is not immune from suit. Without liability insurance, defense costs could be the financial responsibility of the volunteer. Accordingly, and in the interest of maintaining a good relationship between the Legislature and SDSMA, physicians participating in the DOD program must maintain medical malpractice coverage with limits of liability of not less than $1 million per occurrence or acknowledge the possibility of incurring the costs of defense. Physicians are encouraged to contact their legal counsel or medical liability insurer to determine whether their existing malpractice policy will provide coverage for the duties as DOD.

Hours
The State Legislature generally conducts its business from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Legislators are in committee meetings during the morning and the floor session usually convenes at 2:00 pm – you are encouraged to stay near your office or be available by pager until both chambers have adjourned for the day.

Arrival
A parking spot will be available for your use and is located in the area reserved for legislators – in the back row of the first section of the lot on the northeast side of the Capitol. Look for a sign that reads "Doctor of the Day." On arrival, go to the Legislative Research Council (LRC) office on the third floor (north wing), to check in and to obtain your name badge, office door key, medicine/file cabinet keys and a pager. It is very important for you to arrive before 8 am to familiarize yourself with the office.

Doctor’s Office
The DOD office is in Room 408, which is located on the 4th floor in the Capitol building. This room contains certain medications, equipment and supplies. The drug cabinet is locked each night, so it is your responsibility to get both the key for the office and the key for the medicine cabinet; both keys are located at the LRC office. The DOD is also responsible for locking the medicine cabinet at the end of the day and returning the keys to the LRC before leaving the Capitol.
Record Keeping
A new medical record-keeping process began in 2009. A handbook outlining the new procedure is located in the DOD office. Please familiarize yourself with the new procedures. A medical chart for each legislator is also located in the office in alphabetical order. Blank medical charts are available if non-legislators seek care. Please follow the same procedure and label the medical chart according to the handbook.

Legislative Pages
Each legislative page has a signed release (releases for pages who are minors have been signed by a parent/guardian) and are located in the DOD office. If a page comes to you for services and it’s their first time using the DOD services, please locate their signed release form and start a file for them using one of the blank files that has been prepared for this session.

Medications, Supplies and AED Unit
Please bring your own prescription pad with you. Also, make sure your DEA number is on any controlled substance prescriptions you write.

The South Dakota Department of Health (SDDOH) will provide basic supplies for the DOD day program, to include some over-the-counter medications, and will periodically stock those supplies in the DOD office. Any request to add additional supplies to the basic inventory should be directed to Department of Health staff members: Chip Rombough (773-6844) or Lynette Thum (773-4474).

An AED unit is located in the DOD office. If you are not trained in the operation of an AED, there will be SDDOH staff available to train you.

Consultants
In the DOD’s office is a list of medical clinics and pharmacies within the city of Pierre you can contact if you have a particular problem you feel requires more extensive evaluation and/or hospitalization. These clinics can assist in assuming care of a patient who needs to be hospitalized and can also help refer you to the appropriate consultants.

Name Tags
You are encouraged to wear a name tag while you are in the Capitol. SDSMA staff have prepared name tags and sent them to the LRC office. The tag lists your name, credentials, and your home city.

Meals/Room Expenses
This is a voluntary program and the expense of meals and traveling to and from Pierre, if that is necessary, is the responsibility of the participating physician. SDSMA provides a room at the Ramkota Inn at no cost for those physicians who need to spend the night prior to the day they serve as DOD. When you check in, identify yourself as the DOD with the South Dakota State Medical Association. Please note that check-out time at the Ramkota is 12 p.m. (CST). Please check with the front desk if you need to make other arrangements for a later check-out time.

Lobbying
Lobbying is not permitted and is not a part of this program. You certainly have the right to discuss any issue you consider important with your legislators, but from the standpoint of the DOD program, you should arrange an appointment with the legislator if there is an issue you wish to talk about while you are there. You will not be permitted to go onto the floor of the legislative chambers while the houses are in session. If you do intrude onto the floor of either chamber, or if you engage in lobbying activities in the chambers, you may be asked by the Sergeant-at-Arms or an appropriate authority to leave. However, if you are asked a question by a legislator, you should be prepared to provide an appropriate response. SDSMA staff are available to answer any questions you may have on policy issues. Be sure to review the SDSMA Advocacy Agenda in advance of your day in Pierre.

Scheduling
All scheduling for the DOD program will be done by the South Dakota State Medical Association. If you have a question or require a schedule change, please contact Mark East at 605.336.1965 or by email at meast@sdsma.org.