

GET INVOLVED

2023 Advocacy Agenda

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Sen. Mike Rounds

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Sen. John Thune

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Rep. Dusty Johnson

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Washington, DC 20515
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...and in Pierre

Know your state senators and representatives.

Phone: 605.773.3251
South Dakota legislator listing available at sdlegislature.gov

Write to:

The Honorable (name)
500 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

Email:
firstname.lastname@sdlegislature.gov

Ensure Access to High-Quality Health Care – Medicaid Expansion

The SDSMA supported the 2022 ballot measure that expanded Medicaid eligibility in South Dakota. The South Dakota Medicaid program is funded by the state and federal government and is designed to provide medical coverage for low-income people. The constitutional amendment expands Medicaid eligibility to people aged 18-64 whose income is at or below 133 percent of the federal poverty level, plus 5 percent of the federal poverty level for the applicable family size, as provided by federal law. An additional 42,500 people will be covered by the program, and over a period of five years, will return more than \$1.3 billion in tax dollars to South Dakota from Washington.

Ensure Access to High-Quality Health Care – Preserve the Physician-Patient Relationship

The relationship between a patient and a physician is based on trust, and this relationship gives rise to physicians' ethical responsibility to place their patients' welfare above the physician's own self-interest or obligations to others to use sound medical judgment on their patient's behalf, and to advocate for their patient's welfare. The SDSMA supports physician and patient autonomy in the provision of evidence-based medical services, which includes reproductive health care. The SDSMA maintains that these are personal health and medical decisions to be made by a qualified physician and patient and will oppose attempts to infringe upon the physician-patient relationship.

Ensure Access to High-Quality Health Care – Enforce Scope of Practice

To protect South Dakota patients and ensure that patients receive the best medical care from the people best trained to deliver that care, the SDSMA will oppose any efforts to allow non-physicians to independently practice medicine beyond the scope of their education and training.

Ensure Access to High-Quality Health Care – Medical Education

South Dakota is facing a shortage of physicians as more than one in four South Dakota residents live in what has been classified as a "primary care shortage area." Given the fact that patients prefer a physician for their primary care, the SDSMA strongly supports increased funding for medical student and graduate medical education.

Improve Public Health – Prevention

The SDSMA believes in promoting healthy lifestyles, eliminating health disparities, and improving awareness of public health issues such as the harmful effects of tobacco use and secondhand smoke, e-cigarette use, obesity, drug and alcohol abuse, violence prevention, and suicide prevention. The SDSMA supports funding, education, and state requirements for vaccines and opposes exemptions related to vaccines and immunization requirements.

Improve Public Health – Coverage

As Congress and the Administration work on reforming health care, we believe the following are important:

- Ensure that Medicaid, CHIP, and other

safety net programs are adequately funded.

- Ensure that individuals currently covered do not become uninsured and take steps toward coverage and access for all South Dakotans.
- Maintain key insurance market reforms, such as pre-existing conditions, guaranteed issue, and parental coverage for young adults.
- Stabilize and strengthen the individual insurance market.
 - Support the advancement of delivery reforms and physician-led payment models to achieve better outcomes, higher quality, and lower spending trends.

Improve Public Health – Responsible Access to Medical Cannabis

Patient health and safety is of the utmost importance to the SDSMA, and we remain concerned that cannabis is a highly addictive drug of which evidence-based scientific research has documented many negative consequences with both short and long-term use.

The SDSMA opposes attempts to require physician approval for the home cultivation of medical cannabis beyond what is stated in SDCL 34-20G-1(1)(c) which clearly states that a practitioner recommendation is only required for anything more than three cannabis plants.

The SDSMA supports legislation to place a limit on the level of THC to 15 percent or less. Readily available research indicates there is no medical benefit from cannabis with a THC level of more than 15 percent and in fact higher THC levels can be detrimental, including the danger of psychosis.

Improve Public Health – Access to Mental Health Services

Untreated issues related to poor mental health is one of the primary causes of self-medication and addiction. The SDSMA will advocate for improved access and third-party coverage of psychosocial support and services for those with mental illness.

Lower the Cost of Health Care Delivery – Prior Authorizations

Prior authorization is a cost-control process requiring health care providers to qualify for payment by obtaining approval from health insurers before performing a service.

The SDSMA believes that prior authorization is overused and existing processes present significant administrative and clinical concerns.

Physicians want nothing more than to provide the most clinically appropriate care for their patients. Utilization management programs must therefore have a clinically accurate foundation for provider adherence to be feasible. The SDSMA shall oppose cost-containment provisions that do not have proper medical justification and do little more than create administrative burdens that cause delays in patient care.

Lower the Cost of Health Care Delivery – Reform Medical Liability

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates the cost of defensive medicine to be between \$70 and \$126 billion per year. These costs mean higher health insurance premiums and higher medical costs for all. It is important to understand that every dollar that goes toward medical liability and defensive medicine is a dollar that does not go to patient care. South Dakota has a \$500,000 cap on non-economic damages in medical liability cases. The SDSMA supports federal medical liability reforms and will defend our state's liability cap.

**Want to learn more? Contact the SDSMA
at 605.336.1965 or visit www.sdsma.org**

SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
Values. Ethics. Advocacy.