

VERMONT MEDICAL SOCIETY

To: House Committee on Health Care

From: Paul Harrington, Executive Vice President & Jessa Barnard, VMS Vice President for Policy

Date: January 25, 2017

RE: VMS Introduction and 2017 Priorities

Thank you for providing the Vermont Medical Society with the opportunity to introduce to your Committee our organization and 2017 priorities. The VMS is the state's largest physician membership organization, representing over 2000 physicians, physician assistants and medical students across specialties and geographic location. VMS is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit member service organization founded in 1784 and dedicated to improving the environment in which Vermont physicians practice medicine, and to protecting the health of Vermont citizens. We look forward to working with your Committee in the upcoming session.

VMS Policy Staff

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VMS Physician Leadership

President: Wendy Davis, MD (pediatrician, UVMMMC)

President-elect: Mark Levine, MD (internal medicine, UVMMMC) – recently appointed Commissioner of Health

Vice President: Trey Dobson, MD (emergency medicine, Chief Medical Officer, Southwestern Vermont Medical Center)

Immediate Past-President: James Hebert, MD (general surgeon, UVMMMC)

VMS Organization

- 2314 members (1731 MDs, 51 DOs, 72 PAs, 460 medical students)
 - o 2014 VDH healthcare workforce data: 2197 applicable licensees providing patient care in Vermont (1852 MDs, 81 DOs, 264 PAs) (Note that VMS membership may also reflect those clinicians not actively practicing in Vermont due to retirement, relocation, etc.)
- Represents primary care and specialists and all employer-types (hospital employed, FQHC, independent practice)
- Administrative home for specialty societies: Pediatrics, Family Practice, Internal Medicine, Ophthalmology, Orthopedics, Psychiatry, Anesthesiology, Surgeons, Orthopedics
- Runs Vermont Practitioner Health Program under contract with Board of Medical Practice
- VMS Education and Research Foundation: independent 501(c)(3) that supports education, improvement and evaluation in the field of health

2017 Priorities

- Health Reform – support coverage for patients and participation by physicians
 - o Monitoring implementation of the all payer model
 - o Monitoring federal funding, impact of changes to ACA
 - o Advocating for Medicaid rates to approach those of Medicare; increasing funding to practices participating in the Vermont Blueprint for Health

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- Reduce administrative burdens in the practice of medicine
 - o Streamlining and making clinically meaningful prior authorizations, quality reporting measures, EHRs – including by DVHA
 - o Gift Ban bill – aligning state and federal law
- Support evidence-based medicine and public health measures
 - o Opioid epidemic: increasing medication assisted therapy; assist in implementing VDH rules on opioid prescribing and VPMS, ensure rules reflect current evidence on appropriate prescribing
 - o Expect to participate in discussions surrounding medical and recreational marijuana; tobacco regulation; obesity initiatives; crib bumpers
- Ensure a strong work force
 - o S. 14, expanding Vermont Practitioner Health Program to serve Board of Medical Practice licensees with mental health conditions
- Help create a mental health system that provides timely access to care
 - o Advocate for appropriate capacity, type and location of clinical services
 - o S. 3, addressing *Kuligoski* and clarifying a clinician's duty to warn