

## Bureaucrats, Trial Lawyers, Marketers, Politicians

—they all have a say in your health care.

What does your doctor say?

**These days,** more and more, doctors feel there's a barrier between them and their patients.

Government and health plan bureaucrats force shorter doctor visits, more paperwork, and steadily declining payment for doctors' services. Trial lawyers create fee and nuisance insurance suits. Marketers promote expensive tests, while attention to toxic health issues like obesity and high blood pressure wait until after game time.

In health care matters, it used to be the first question was "What does your doctor say?" Now, too often, it seems like doctors are crowded out in their own offices.

Consequently, experienced doctors in Maryland are frustrated, and newly trained ones are concerned about the future here, in some specialties, like general surgery, a generation of experienced doctors is preparing to leave the practice, while many younger ones are staying away. That's not healthy for anybody.

The physicians of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, want to fix the health care system in our state by working to reform our liability and physician payment systems, and by promoting a movement for health leadership across all sectors of our community—business, government, education, faith, and family.

Talk to your doctor about how you can help reform our health care system and be a health leader in your community. Write to your elected officials. Tell them we all have to listen to what doctors say about health care. **Because MD needs MDs.**

**MD NEEDS MDs** **MedChi**  
The Maryland State Medical Society [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org)

## If Your Health Care is Overrun by the Legal System, Who Takes Care of You?

What does your doctor say?

**For years,** trial lawyers have aggressively pushed their doctors into court and away from their patients. You've seen their ads attacking the system. As a result, physicians practice defensive medicine; they struggle to pay for liability insurance, and, too often, they seek opportunities elsewhere.

Our legal system is costing all of us more than money. It is impeding our access to physician care when and where we need it. Maryland doctors say that Maryland's reforms to date are not enough and the system must be changed.

Our current medical liability system does a poor job of identifying the small number of patients who are injured by the advanced care and of compensating them fairly. Instead, the system is geared toward cases involving catastrophic expense, like cerebral palsy, regardless of whether the patient received substantial care. Even in legitimate cases, our legal system hogs most of the benefits on the lawyers and bureaucrats. Injured claimants receive only 40 cents of every dollar that doctors and hospitals struggle to pay into the system for liability insurance.

Maryland remains a high-cost, high-risk liability environment, and this is limiting the state's ability to recruit and retain physicians in many specialties. Emergency departments cannot get surgeons or other specialists to provide care around the clock without subsidizing them. Physicians practicing in many specialties find they cannot attract doctors to fill current and future needs of their patients. Physician training programs in Maryland that used to supply our work force increasingly see their graduates going out-of-state. That's not healthy for anybody.

Join your doctor in working with MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society to seek major reform in our state's medical liability system. We need a total system re-design, like health courts, that address all the failures of our current system. In the meantime, we need to keep pushing in Annapolis for further commonsense reforms, like requiring that large awards of future medical expense be paid over time, not all at once.

You can help. Contact your elected officials. Tell them that they need to listen to what doctors say about fixing our medical liability system. **Because MD needs MDs.**

**MD NEEDS MDs** **MedChi**  
The Maryland State Medical Society [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org)

## Too Many Hands in Your Health Care Aren't Healing

What does your doctor say?

**There's more money than ever** coming into the health care system, yet it appears to physicians that a giant share of it is going to middle men, like HMO executives who make millions per year, and their voracious bureaucracies. And, then far fewer are the lawyers, who get the lion's share of all the money doctors pay for liability insurance.

Physician practices are mostly small businesses. And in Maryland, business isn't good. A recent survey released by the American Medical Group Association, representing mostly large physician practices, showed that the average physician practice in its region typically is operating at a loss of between \$750 and \$1,200 per physician.

First, that's because Maryland physicians are not adequately being reimbursed. As a matter of fact, Maryland ranks in the bottom 20% of states regarding insurance reimbursement rates for physicians, according to the Maryland Health Care Commission. Part of the problem is that Maryland laws allow giant HMOs to tell doctors to "take it or leave it" when they negotiate reimbursement rates. And, when a physician can't afford to contract with an HMO, there's no consequence for the HMO which then has no network doctor in the specialty. But there are consequences openly for both physicians and patients.

And, second, the overall costs of doing business in physician practices are growing faster than revenues at a rate of more than 3 to 1 over the last six years. Like every small business, salaries, supplies and rent keep escalating and that doesn't even count the huge run-up in malpractice insurance costs.

The economic squeeze on physicians has resulted in a bad climate for recruiting and retaining physician talent. Physician practices in some specialties just can't find doctors to meet current needs or replace physicians as they retire. That's not healthy for anybody.

Join MedChi as its right to keep Maryland health care among the world's best. Help us convince government and business decision makers that they need to return to listening to what doctors say... about patient care... about how a medical practice needs to run... about health care policy in general. **Because MD needs MDs.**

**MD NEEDS MDs** **MedChi**  
The Maryland State Medical Society [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org)

## Bureaucrats, Trial Lawyers, Politicians HAVE A SAY IN YOUR HEALTH CARE.

**MD NEEDS MDs** [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org)

## What does your doctor say?

### "What Does Your Doctor Say?" about...

**...Your health**

Achieving good health requires teamwork between you and your doctor. That means your doctor understands your problem and you understand your doctor's recommendations. You can help make sure that you understand each other completely by asking your doctor three simple questions:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

For more information about the importance of clear communication with your doctor, go to [www.askme3.org](http://www.askme3.org).

**...Our health care system**

Doctors are experts on health; they're also experts on our health care system—they live it day-in and day-out. Our health care system is sick, but doctors feel that their prescriptions for reform aren't being heard.

**What's wrong?**

Soaring medical costs are hurting employers and patients alike, yet with ever more money flowing into the system, Maryland physicians are losing ground. Maryland hospitals and medical practices are having a hard time recruiting and keeping good physicians. Family physicians, surgeons and other specialties are disappearing. That's because Maryland is a high-risk, high-cost, low-payment place to practice medicine.

CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE ►

**High risk, high cost—medical lawsuits**

Wasteful medical lawsuits are still a major problem in Maryland. Minor changes were made in 2005, but the basic problem remains: Medical lawsuits force doctors to practice defensive medicine; malpractice insurance costs have soared; and even injured patients with legitimate claims end up with only 40 cents out of every dollar in the system, with lawyers and bureaucrats taking the lion's share.

**Low reimbursement, high costs, Medicare payment cuts**

Reimbursements to physicians in our state by HMOs are among the lowest in the U.S. Maryland law helps giant HMOs push "take it or leave it" low-payment deals on doctors. Costs to run a practice have been growing three times faster than revenues over the last 6 years, and that doesn't count the huge run-up in malpractice insurance costs. Payments to physicians under the federal Medicare program for the elderly will drop by more than 25% unless Congress passes reform.

**You can help.** Talk to your elected officials in Annapolis and Washington. Go to [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org) to find who your elected officials are and how to reach them, or call MedChi at 1-800-492-1056 x 251. Tell them:

- FIX MEDICARE
- FIX WASTEFUL MEDICAL LAWSUITS
- STOP HMO "TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT" DEALS
- LISTEN TO WHAT DOCTORS ARE SAYING.

**MD NEEDS MDs** **MedChi**  
The Maryland State Medical Society [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org)

For the second part of the campaign, we develop a package of communication materials that could be used to drive patients to action. Creating communication materials – posters, counter cards, buttons, bumper stickers and pocket cards – for physician waiting rooms was extremely effective in driving patients to contact their legislators to urge them vote in favor of tort reform legislation. Taking advantage of the setting, we were able to energize patients because they understood that if action wasn't taken to change the laws, their health might end up in jeopardy.

**MedChi**  
The Maryland State Medical Society  
www.medchi.org

2006 - 2007  
MedCHI ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

2008 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

**MedChi**  
The Maryland State Medical Society  
www.medchi.org

Membership Application Inside

**MedChi WEBSITE ADVANTAGE**

The MedChi Website Advantage provides exposure to physicians, allied health professionals and patients through MedChi's website, [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org).

The MedChi website receives over 20,000 visits and over 235,000 hits per month.

- This website is a valuable resource for our members and beyond. The Maryland healthcare community turns to the MedChi website for practicing Maryland medicine. The website features grassroots legislative efforts, an events calendar for the Maryland medical community, public health resources and more. Garnering over 20,000 visits and over 235,000 hits per month, the MedChi website is a regularly updated, trusted resource for Maryland physicians.
- For vendors who chose to place a logo link on the MedChi website, we feature a star rating system that allows us to show the value of our relationships with vendors. Physicians, practice managers and patients utilize our vendors' services through the MedChi website.

**MedChi DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS ADVANTAGE**

**Direct Communications**  
The MedChi Direct Communications Advantage offers access to over 11,000 physicians and practice managers throughout the state of Maryland and of all specialties and practice types. MedChi's avenues of direct communications include listservs, fax announcements and alerts, mailings and more.

There are 11,000 physicians in the MedChi database.

- MedChi News, the weekly MedChi listserv, allows MedChi to communicate timely information to approximately 4,000 physicians, office managers and other healthcare professionals each week. Our email list grows every week. Topics include legislative and regulatory updates, practice management support, statewide event announcements, educational opportunities and other information vital to the Maryland medical community. This popular member benefit garners instant responses and allows MedChi to communicate vital, timely information in an easy-to-read format. We offer you the opportunity to contribute articles to this listserv. We offer you the opportunity to contribute on a week by week basis.
- If you prefer from MedChi as specialty or own announcements.
- Fax announcements and sponsor exposure.
- MedChi content building profiles.

**MedChi EVENTS ADVANTAGE**

**Events**  
The MedChi Events Advantage gives you face to face contact with the Maryland medical community. Events of all sizes are held across the state throughout the year.

- The business of MedChi is conducted by various groups in regularly scheduled meetings, such as the MedChi House of Delegates meetings and Board of Trustees meetings.
- The popular Mardi Gras Celebration & Trade Show is back in 2007 and we invite you to join us as a sponsor or exhibitor.
- The presidential inaugural banquet is the highlight of the calendar. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

**MedChi THE MEDCHI ADVANTAGE**

Welcome to the MedChi Advantage, a program designed to help you increase your visibility and expand your exposure throughout the Maryland medical community. MedChi is unique among organizations in Maryland in that our membership includes physicians from all specialties and all geographic regions in the state. We have direct communications with over 11,000 physicians and practice managers, from residents and students, to practicing physicians, to retirees. MedChi works to advocate for physicians and their patients and to be a resource for the Maryland healthcare community at the local, state and even national levels. As the premiere professional society for Maryland physicians, MedChi works closely with doctors to learn their needs and concerns. What does this mean for you? It means that MedChi is your best resource for maximizing your reach and relevance through a quality, trusted organization. Above all, MedChi knows doctors. This is the MedChi Advantage.

We invite you to join the MedChi Advantage by creating a custom communications package that best suits your needs for reaching the Maryland health care community. Keep in mind that the opportunities presented here are only the beginning; these opportunities can be expanded upon to create a program that fulfills your needs for communicating with physicians.

In keeping with MedChi's mission to act as a resource to the Maryland medical community, we avoid exclusive relationships with vendors and official endorsements of any company.

Join with us and support the physicians of Maryland as they deliver the best quality healthcare throughout the state and beyond.

**"We have been quite pleased with the level of vendor involvement and access provided by MedChi. Our association with MedChi has been a wonderful experience."**

—Naden/Lean, CPA



**My hands are tied.**  
I have to say goodbye to my patients.

*"I've had to tell my patients that I won't be able to deliver their babies. The cost of medical liability insurance has forced me to stop."*

- Carol E. Ritter, MD  
Baltimore, Maryland



Without medical lawsuit reform, we will be facing a real shortage of qualified physicians. *Soon, there may not be a doctor available when you need one.*



Soaring insurance costs are forcing out doctors and threatening the quality of care at hospitals, nursing homes, and medical practices, leaving the people of Maryland in a costly and dangerous situation.

*Before this crisis gets much worse, call this TOLL FREE number and urge your State Senator to pass The Maryland State Medical Society's medical lawsuit reform.*

**1-866-972-8336**



For more information about medical lawsuit reform visit [www.KeepMyDoc.org](http://www.KeepMyDoc.org)

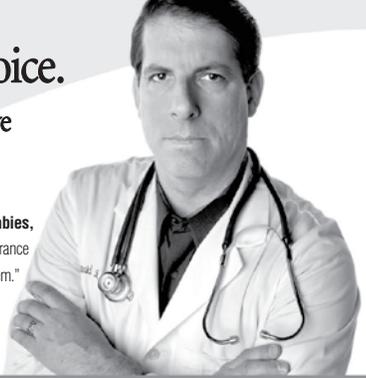
Paid for by MedChi

 **MD**  
**NEEDS MDs**

**I have no choice.**  
I have to say goodbye to my patients.

*"I've delivered thousands of babies, but the cost of medical liability insurance has forced me to stop delivering them."*

- David L. Zisow, MD  
Bel Air, Maryland



Without medical lawsuit reform, we will be facing a real shortage of qualified physicians. *Soon, there may not be a doctor available when you need one.*



Soaring insurance costs are forcing out doctors and threatening the quality of care at hospitals, nursing homes, and medical practices, leaving the people of Maryland in a costly and dangerous situation.

*Before this crisis gets much worse, call this TOLL FREE number and urge your State Senator to pass The Maryland State Medical Society's medical lawsuit reform.*

**1-866-972-8336**



For more information about medical lawsuit reform visit [www.KeepMyDoc.org](http://www.KeepMyDoc.org)

Paid for by MedChi

In 2005, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, decided to undertake a multi-pronged campaign to pass legislation that would stop the predatory practices of malpractice attorneys. We were engaged to develop an integrated communication program that included media relations, print and broadcast advertising, in-doctor communication materials and direct mail pieces to be sent to legislators in Annapolis. The TV, print and media relations campaign that was directed to all Marylanders highlighted an impending physician shortage if malpractice insurance rates continued to rise.

**SUCCESSFUL**

**COMPLIANT**

**PROFITABLE**

## Practice Management Consulting Services

Keeping up with ever-changing policies, procedures and office technology is no easy task. Mistakes cost you both time and money. MedChi is pleased to offer Practice Management Consulting Services exclusively for our members. MedChi's Practice Management Consultants can help with assessment, education and implementation so you can run a compliant, successful and profitable practice.

**MEDCHI'S PRACTICE CONSULTANTS**  
We are available to work with you and your staff on individual issues. Your resource for information.

**CALL 800.492.1056 ext. 310**  
or e-mail: [pmc@medchi.org](mailto:pmc@medchi.org)  
for rates and to schedule an on-site appointment.

The Maryland State Medical Society  
1211 Cathedral Street | Baltimore, MD 21201

## MARYLAND PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE STUDY IMPACT ON SOUTHERN MARYLAND

There is shortage of physicians currently through out the state, but the shortage is more acute in Southern Maryland

- Maryland has 16% fewer physicians per 1,000 than the rest of the U.S.
- Currently, Southern Maryland has a shortage in the following 27 out of 30 specialties:
  - Primary Care, Cardiology, Dermatology, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Hematology/Oncology, Infectious Disease, Nephrology, Psychiatry, Pulmonary Medicine, Rheumatology, Anesthesiology, Diagnostic Radiology, Emergency Medicine, Pathology, Physical Medicine, Radiation Oncology, General Surgery, Neurosurgery, OB/GYN, Orthopedic Surgery, Otolaryngology, Plastic Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Thoracic Surgery, Ophthalmology and Urology.
- By 2015, only Neurology is projected to have an adequate number of physicians.
- Maryland's physician population is aging, and the supply of young physicians is not sufficient to replenish the losses due to retirement.

The shortage is exacerbated by the projected increase in demand for health care services

- The number of elderly is expected to double - 104% growth in population of 65 years old and older by 2030.
- The population of Southern Maryland is projected to grow by 45% by 2030.
- The primary reason for the shortage is that Maryland is perceived as a hostile environment for physicians to practice.
  - The two major insurance carriers act as monopolies and suppress physician reimbursement rates so that Maryland physician payment falls to the bottom 25% of the U.S.
  - Despite greater awareness of the ultimate cost to all Marylanders of frivolous lawsuits, fundamental changes to malpractice reform has not occurred.

## Our "Call to Action"

As a community, we must tell our elected officials that change is critical in Maryland to protect the health of our citizens.

**THE STATE NEEDS TO:**

- Assure that every Maryland resident has access to healthcare.
- Allow physicians to negotiate practice patterns and reimbursement rates fairly with insurance companies.
  - Remove the handcuffs and create the necessary safe harbors to avoid violation of anti-trust laws.
- Tell insurance companies to pay physicians for the care they provide during the credentialing process.
- Do not permit insurance carriers to change contracts unilaterally.
- Create a loan forgiveness program for those medical residents who choose to stay and practice in Southern Maryland.
- Support hospital expenses for Emergency Departments and necessary specialty back up in Southern Maryland.
- Create meaningful reform in our state medical liability system.

**YOU ADVOCATE FOR YOUR PATIENTS EVERY DAY.**

**WHO IS ADVOCATING FOR YOU?**

The Maryland State Medical Society  
[www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org)

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society is the professional society for physicians in Maryland. MedChi's mission is to serve as Maryland's most **advocate and resource for patients and the public health** in 1799 and counting more than 7,000 members of all specialties, MedChi is the state's largest organization of physicians.

- ▣ Your Advocate
- ▣ Your Resource
- ▣ Your Profession

Empowering physicians to take leadership in the Maryland health care system.

**JOIN TODAY**  
Become part of the changing Maryland health care system for the future.

## EMPOWERING Maryland Physicians

The Maryland State Medical Society