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Proactive Legislative Agenda Helps WI Rank High for Physicians, But More to be Done

By Eric Borgerding, WHA President and CEO, and Mark Kaufman, MD, WHA Chief Medical Officer

A [recent study from WalletHub](#) ranks Wisconsin as the second-best state in the nation for physicians to practice medicine. This study used 18 metrics grouped into two categories: Opportunity & Competition and Medical Environment. Wisconsin ranked #1 in two metrics related to our favorable and balanced malpractice environment.



Eric Borgerding



Mark Kaufman, MD

Like many other studies that rank Wisconsin favorably for health care, the WalletHub results illustrate the importance of a targeted and proactive public policy agenda that positively impacts Wisconsin’s health care environment. The Wisconsin Hospital Association has a very concerted, multi-pronged public policy strategy aimed at creating an environment that attracts more physicians to Wisconsin and keeps more physicians practicing in Wisconsin.

We have enacted and [sustained a rational, balanced and fair medical malpractice environment](#) that, frankly, probably attracts more doctors to Wisconsin than trial

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Contact WHA CMO Kaufman to Participate in the WHA Physician Leaders Council

Provide input on important health care policy issues impacting physicians

For the past five years, WHA’s Physician Leaders Council has tapped into the significant expertise and perspectives that WHA member physician leaders bring to Wisconsin’s health and hospital systems to help guide and define WHA’s proactive health care agenda. WHA’s Physician Leaders Council consists of chief medical officers, vice presidents for medical affairs, and other physician leaders at WHA’s member organizations.

“The Council provides key input and guidance on WHA strategies and tactics to help address a wide range of policy and other needs facing physicians and physician leaders in WHA’s member organizations,” said Mark Kaufman, MD, WHA Chief Medical Officer. “Getting input from a diverse range of our member physician leaders helps WHA target and tailor physician-focused advocacy and initiatives to maximize WHA’s value to our members and their physicians.”

“We thank our member physician leaders that have made the WHA Physician Leaders Council a continuing success, and we encourage other member physician leaders to join the Council in 2019,” added Kaufman. “Coming together, the Council provides an opportunity to learn from fellow physician leaders and to collectively help develop and advance WHA’s physician-focused advocacy.”

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EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

April 17, 2019
 Advocacy Day
 Madison, WI

Throughout 2019
 Health Care Workforce Resilience
 Free Member Webinar Series

Chaired by Steve Kulick, MD, Chief Experience Officer for Marshfield Clinic Health System, the Physician Leaders Council has provided guidance and input on issues such as:

- EHR-related physician workload advocacy and education;
- WHA's Physician Regulatory Burden Work Plan;
- Physician engagement and retention strategies;
- Graduate Medical Education (GME) to expand Wisconsin's supply of physicians;
- WHA Physician Leadership Development Conference;
- Interstate Medical Licensure Compact to speed physician licensure;
- Maintenance of certification legislative proposals;
- Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP);
- WHA's telemedicine agenda;
- Scope of practice and team-based care policy;
- Wisconsin's physician health program; and,
- MACRA/QPP input and education.

In addition, the Council also receives updates from WHA's public policy team on key Wisconsin and federal legislative issues, such as the state biennial budget, that impact WHA member organizations and their physicians.

Physician leaders interested in learning more about the WHA Physician Leaders Council should contact [Mark Kaufman, MD](#) at 608-843-6046.

The next WHA Physician Leaders Council meeting is June 10.

Gov. Evers Confirmed for Advocacy Day

WHA is pleased to announce Governor Evers is CONFIRMED, along with former Governor Tommy G. Thompson, for Advocacy Day on April 17. This means, for the first time, we will have TWO GOVERNORS, a Democrat and a Republican, at WHA's Advocacy Day.

Health care policy is bipartisan, and we are proud to have always resembled that tone in our advocacy. In a year with divided government, our bipartisan approach will be crucial, and it's more important than ever to get involved. **We need everyone's participation at Advocacy Day this year, especially at the Capitol for the legislative visits** where we can show legislators from both parties how important hospitals, and the high-quality care you deliver, are to the communities they represent.

If you have not already registered, please join us and bring a group from your hospital. There is no cost to attend. [More information and registration](#) can be found online.

If you have questions, contact Kari Hofer at 608-268-1816.



lawyers. We have enacted policies here that encourage and, equally important, protect in the courtroom care improvement work of hospitals and physicians. These types of policies are important when recruiting physicians to come to Wisconsin, especially from states where ads for trial lawyers touting mega malpractice payouts are seemingly ubiquitous.

In Wisconsin, we're leveraging public policy to help foster better health care, and it's working. Wisconsin [consistently ranks](#) as having one of the best and safest health care systems in the country. This performance, and now reputation, is attractive to physicians. We also have very high levels of people covered by health insurance; in fact, we have one of the [lowest uninsured rates](#) in the country, which leads to greater access to care. This is largely due to public policies we've enacted to make health insurance coverage available and [more affordable](#) to every person in the state.

Wisconsin is also investing in medical education, including expanding our medical school capacity and greatly increasing our [post-graduate residency opportunities](#). Once out of school and in full practice, we are streamlining and expediting [licensure for physicians](#) so they can take care of patients in multiple settings using the latest in telehealth technology. These and many other attributes are why Wisconsin ranks highly in so many national health care surveys.

But, there is more to be done. WHA is working hard to make Wisconsin an even better place for physicians to practice medicine and provide high quality and affordable care to patients. WHA's 2019 physician-specific advocacy priorities include advancing telemedicine, improving physician well-being, reducing the regulatory burden on physicians, expanding graduate medical education residency slots, and increasing Medicaid physician reimbursement.

We are also ramping up our educational offerings, including adding this year a new, and very well received, senior physician leader track to our Physician Leadership Development Conference in Kohler (now in its 14th year). This year, we are also addressing caregiver resiliency, partnering with Duke Health and the Wisconsin Medical Society to offer a [monthly webinar series](#) aimed at providing common sense, actionable education and strategies for all members of the health care team. Some 800 people and groups are participating in this great program every month.

These are all elements of WHA's intentional and ongoing strategy to make Wisconsin an attractive place for talented and dedicated professionals to pursue a fulfilling career...*caring for patients*. More to be done, more to come.