



CSA NEWSLETTER

WWW.CSA-ONLINE.ORG

GREETINGS FROM CSA PRESIDENT

On behalf of the CSA Board of Directors, a sincere thank you to our members for your commitment and support of the society throughout 2023. We have had many successes over the past few years, the biggest one showcasing our commitment to patient safety by challenging the use of ketamine by paramedics in the field. This was in response to the death of Elijah McClain, a story all too familiar to Coloradans. The CSA effectively used its expertise to change the system and protect citizens of our state from this practice. Another accomplishment was with reimbursement. Due to our hard work, anesthesiologists saw an increase of 3% in Medicaid rates this year. These are two very different issues, showcasing how effective the CSA is across social, medical, and economic issues facing anesthesiologists and our patients.

Unfortunately, we just learned that Gov. Polis “opted out” the state of Colorado from the Medicare requirement for physician oversight of CRNAs. This was despite decades worth of CSA efforts. CSA has quickly pivoted from preventing an opt-out, to a post-opt-out strategic plan. This plan will utilize all our resources to ensure that Coloradoans are safe during anesthesia care. You can expect the CSA to be a cohesive unit as we build the team necessary for both the short-term and long-term objectives. On November 8, 2023, CSA will host a forum to discuss the opt-out with our members.

In order to be effective, the CSA needs all of Colorado’s anesthesiologists to become members. Please ask your peers who have not joined CSA to do so. We also need everyone to donate to the CSA PAC and Small Donor Committee. We have updated our website to explain the PACs and how the money is used to support Colorado’s anesthesiologists.

Hopefully, this inaugural newsletter showcases who the CSA is and how the CSA advocates for anesthesiologists and patients. In turn, we hope it encourages you to reach out to our BOD, especially the CSA representatives from your regions.

Once again, thank you for your support of the CSA.

Gurdev Rai, MD
President, Colorado Society of Anesthesiologists

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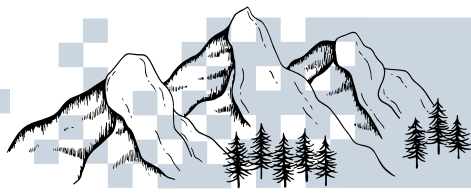
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GURDEV RAI, MD
PRESIDENT, COLORADO SOCIETY OF
ANESTHESIOLOGISTS



The Importance of Political Giving

Aponte Busam Public Affairs

Political giving can play an important role in achieving organizational policy and political goals. CSA participating in campaign giving is an important part of promoting policy issues impacting anesthesiologists and their ability to care for patients. It is essential for anesthesiologists to be present in the Colorado political community.

When done strategically and with intention, campaign giving provides an additional tool to support overall advocacy efforts. For savvy political players, campaign giving is an important form of political participation and contributions help cultivate and support champions and provide access to decision-makers at the statehouse on issues that this organization cares about. While many of you are tenacious about giving to ASA, this giving should carry through to Colorado policy issues as well.

The truth is, Colorado campaigns have become more costly and necessitate extensive fundraising. Political spending in Colorado’s pivotal 2018 midterm election topped \$239 million, far more than any prior year. On average, a single State House or Senate race costs between \$88,000-\$122,000 and went as high as \$330,000 in 2022. With Representatives running every two years, and Senators running every four years, campaign costs can add up quickly.

To help navigate the numerous requests for support, Aponte-Busam Public Affairs offers direction on the events and candidates that provide the best political bang for your buck. The goal is to be practical and broad-based, to support both sides of the aisle, and to choose events and candidates strategically. CSA has established a protocol for choosing champions to best represent our issues. These candidates meet with CSA policy team members for discussion about our issues. It is now evident that contributions in primary elections are equally as important as in general elections, as we need to be more selective about our candidates.

CSA’s ability to engage in campaigns helps shape how anesthesia care is provided anesthesia in Colorado. Please consider a contribution to both our Small Donor Committee and our political action committee, “Physicians for Anesthesia Care”. Just do it now with these links.

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)

ASA Legislative Conference

Marisa Sharkey, DO

The ASA Legislative Conference, held in May, witnessed the active participation of over 500 ASA members in Washington, D.C. This event was dedicated to addressing policy challenges impacting physician anesthesiologists, offering strategies for engaging with legislators and regulators, and underscoring the significance of fostering strong relationships with lawmakers to advance advocacy initiatives. Key advocacy priorities included the preservation of physician-led anesthesia care for veterans, equitable implementation of the No Surprises Act, the development of the anesthesiology workforce, Medicare payment reform, and enhancing access to naloxone.

Many physician anesthesiologists and anesthesiology assistants across the country actively participated in the conference, emphasizing the essential role of physicians in our care team model. Breakout sessions were conducted to explore best practices in advocacy, state-focused initiatives, and strategies for ongoing advocacy efforts beyond the conference. Furthermore, recognition was given to individuals who made notable contributions to the field of anesthesiology and advocacy. Dr. James B. Kelly received the Bertram W. Coffey, MD, Excellence in Government Award, while Rep. Raul Ruiz, MD, was honored with the Excellence in Government Award for his outstanding advocacy work.

Notably, the Colorado Society of Anesthesiologists was pleased to attend and actively contribute to this year’s conference by advocating on Capitol Hill for initiatives that resonate with all ASA members and are close to their hearts. We extend our warm invitation to more members of the Colorado Society of Anesthesiologists to join us next year at the meeting on the Hill. Please mark your calendars for May 12-15, 2024, as we come together to make a difference.



CSA with Representative Caraveo



CSA –No Rest for the Weary in the Policy World–CO Legislative Update

Aponte Busam Public Affairs

The CSA is busy with many policy issues. For the upcoming legislative session, the Governor presents the budget to the Joint Budget Committee on November 1, 2023, the Colorado General Assembly convenes for the 2024 Session on January 11, 2024, and campaign season is in full swing.

This year presents more challenges than ever before, but our first priority and focus will be on patient safety and transparency in the delivery of anesthesia care. The ongoing expansion of non-physician providers and Governor Polis choosing the Medicare opt-out path for Colorado has created an overwhelming response from anesthesiologists and many other specialty physicians. It will be important to harness that energy to change the course of this disappointing policy direction.

Other issues being reviewed that we are currently developing and engaging in some way include:

- Liability protections – Working with all healthcare provider communities to monitor med mal proposals including any potential ballot initiative discussions. The group Coloradoans Protecting Patient Access is working to best negotiate a path forward to mitigate any potential of passing an unfavorable legislation that raises rates for physicians.
- Out-of-Network – Addressing Bundling of surprise billing claim concerns in arbitration. Following legislation out of Texas, expediting prior authorizations is important for our patients. This issue will need legislation to suggest implementing a program in Colorado.
- All-payer database – Transparency is vital for policy development and there is much needed policy work to address the accuracy of claims in the data base. First steps could possibly be an audit to see if physician payment matches actual code payments from health plans.
- Protections for violence against health care workers – This is a significant problem in Colorado and we support legislation to be introduced this coming session to make sure that healthcare personnel are able to have recourse to violence.
- Medicaid Reimbursement Issues – Our efforts saw an increase of 3% in Medicaid rates this year and we continue to advocate for Colorado anesthesiologists on this front!

Please let us know if you have any additional questions or are interested in serving on the public policy committee, testifying on an issue or will be willing to help with a direct call to a legislator.

Resident Meet & Greet

Mario Villasenor, MD

Oct 30, 2023: The Colorado Society of Anesthesiologists proudly hosted a meet-and-greet evening at the Irish Rover Pub in downtown Denver with residents and fellows from Colorado Anesthesiology training programs. This event included members of the CSA from practices all around Colorado, promoting community within our field and engaging with the next generation of practicing anesthesiologists. It was an evening of shared dialogue, promotion of ideas for future development, and advocacy for our specialty. We hope that you can join us in the Spring of 2024, for the next meet-and-greet event!



Dr. Woody Moss and Dr. Debra Faulk at the Irish Rover



Anesthesia Residents and CSA Board members networking at the Irish Rover during the CSA Resident Meet & Greet



Colorado Medical Board Update

Jeremy Huff, MD, FASA

The Colorado Medical Board (CMB) was established and is governed by the Colorado Medical Practice Act, a set of regulations and laws that govern the practice of medicine by licensed Physicians (MD and DO), Assistants/Associates (PA), and Anesthesiologist Assistants (AA) in the state of Colorado. The CMB is comprised of 11 Physicians, 2 Physician Assistants and 4 Public Members who generally serve 3 year terms. Dr. Roland Flores, MD, an anesthesiologist, currently serves as President

The Board responds to complaints against practitioners and will make comments regarding specific medical practices when queried. Most recently, the board debated and voted unanimously against the Opt-Out of CRNA Supervision Medicare Requirement when the Board's opinion was petitioned by Governor Jared Polis. Unanimous sentiment was, "The Board does not support an Opt-Out based on concerns for patient safety and quality of care along with a lack of data showing that it would increase patient access to services." - Colorado Medical Board, February 16, 2023.

ASA/HOD Update

Anna Weyand, MD

The CSA was well-represented at the ASA national meeting in San Francisco. Each year, we send a team of delegates to represent the interests of Colorado anesthesiologists at the national level. We had representation in many committees, including many of the committees that steer national policy and advocacy. The delegates participate in the Frontier and Western Caucuses, in which we discuss the specific challenges that we face in anesthesia practice in our geographic areas.

The CSA delegates to the ASA also sit in the House of Delegates, which is the major elected decision-making body of the ASA. Following several years of very lively debate (and sometimes contention) at the House of Delegates, this year was marked by broad consensus. Scope of practice, the No Surprises Act, and Medicare Reimbursement remain top priorities for the ASA as a whole.

On a personal note, this year marked the end of Randy Clark's term as the Immediate Past President of the ASA. It will be a change for all of us to attend ASA next year and not see him at the podium. We would like to extend our deep gratitude for Randy's decades of tireless and dedicated service to the ASA and our profession.

Save the Date

CSA Opt Out Member Forum

November 8, 2023

7:00 pm

The forum will be a time for the CSA board to inform members on what initiatives have been taken since Governor Polis announced opt-out in Colorado. We welcome member insights and comments and will have opportunities for you to become involved in CSA. Click Zoom Link below to register to attend this meeting.

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN ZOOM](#)

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE](#)

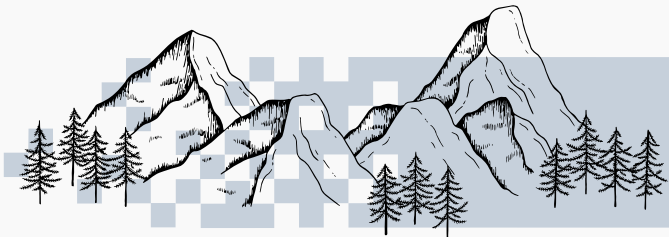
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CSA Delegates to the ASA at the ASA/HOD Meeting
October 2023

Join CSA on Social Media





CSA Executive Committee and Board of Directors



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President
2023-2025



Jeremy Huff, DO, FASA
President Elect
2023 - 2025



Melissa Brooks Peterson, MD
Secretary
2023 - 2025



William "Woody"
Moss, DO, FASA
Treasurer
2023 - 2025



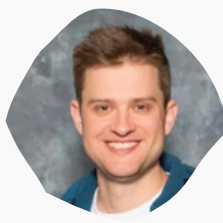
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FASA
Immediate Past
President
2023 - 2025



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Region 1 Director



Sean Malin, MD
Region 2 Director



Mike Allender, DO
Region 3 Director



William "Woody" Moss, DO
Region 4 Director



Anne Estares, DO
Region 5 Director



Anna Weyand, MD
ASA Director



Marissa Sharkey, DO
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Vesna Jevtovic-
Todorovic, MD
CU SOM Liaison



Randy M. Clark, MD, FASA
Director at Large

CSA Delegates to the ASA



American Society of
Anesthesiologists

Debra Faulk, MD
Roland Flores, MD
Joy Hawkins, MD, FASA

Jeremy Huff, DO, FASA
Gurdev Rai, MD, FASA

Scott VanEyck, MD
Steven Zeichner, MD,
FASA