



# AMA Alliance Advocacy Connection

April 2007

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## 2008 NAC and Alliance Winter Session

Based on the successful integration of the AMA Alliance Winter Session with the AMA National Advocacy Conference in 2007, the decision has been made to once again join with the AMA in 2008 to plan a combined Alliance Conference-Winter Session and AMA National Advocacy

Greetings!

Welcome to the AMA Alliance Advocacy Connection, quarterly electronic newsletter for Alliance members, designed to keep you informed of reported state legislative actions that may have an impact or future impact on the medical practice in your area.

For details on specific legislative activity or help in your state or county, send an e-mail to [amaa@ama-assn.org](mailto:amaa@ama-assn.org). A member of the Legislation Committee will contact you to hear your concern or follow-up your interest. To suggest a story for this newsletter, please e-mail [nancy.battaglia@ama-assn.org](mailto:nancy.battaglia@ama-assn.org).

Please share this e-newsletter with other Alliance members and non-members. For more information on Alliance activities, visit the [AMA Alliance](http://www.amaalliance.org) website.

## TMA Calls on Blue Cross to Verify Data

The Texas Medical Association (TMA) Board of Trustees has asked the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas to delay any further use of its controversial BlueCompare physician rating program until it can verify the methodology and validity of its rankings. The program was introduced in January to rate the quality of care provided by physicians, using blue ribbons to denote high ranking physicians and gray ribbons for low ranking physicians.

The association adopted recommendations and met with Blue Cross Blue Shield in early February to offer suggestions for development of the program. In response Blue Cross officials delayed the programs implementation.

In 2005 and 2006, the AMA worked with the Missouri Medical Association, the Shreveport Medical Society, and more recently with the Washington State Medical Society to convince health plans to halt other ill-conceived rating programs. Through an advertising and public relations campaign United Healthcare and Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield halted their plan to move forward with the physician rating program in these states.

## Kansas High Court: Doctor Can Be Sued Under Consumer Act

*AMNews, March 12, 2007*

Kansas Supreme Court recently ruled in February that patients -- which the court categorized as "consumers" -- can sue Kansas doctors for deceptive practices under the Kansas Consumer Protection Act. The consumer protection act "is broad enough to encompass the providing of medical care and treatment services within a physician-patient relationship," the court said in its majority opinion. "A physician is, in the ordinary course of business, a seller or supplier of

Conference (NAC). This means that the date for the Alliance Winter Session will be March 29-April 2, 2008 in Washington, D.C.

Mark your planning calendar, please, and watch for details.

services." In addition, the court noted, nothing in the statute excludes physicians or other professionals.

## Quick Links

[AMA Alliance Website](#)

[Alliance Products](#)

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## "Shaking Infants" Video May Be Required Viewing

*The South Carolina Statehouse Report, March 2, 2007*

The South Carolina General Assembly is reviewing a bill that would require hospitals to "make available to the parents of a newborn baby, a video presentation on the danger of shaking infants." The South Carolina Alliance is involved in moving this legislation. The video would be approved by the Department of Health and Environmental Control in the state. The Department would also establish a protocol for health care providers to educate parents or primary caregivers about the dangers of shaking infants and young children.

## American Medicine in Crisis

*Mary Shuman, member*

*AMA Alliance Legislation Committee*

American medicine is in a crisis state. Physicians' families are being challenged by trial lawyers, malpractice insurance companies, managed care companies, non-physician care providers and government regulatory agencies. The well being of physicians' families depends on our mutual support, problem-solving and diplomatic assertiveness. What can we do?

Legislative co-chairwomen Mary Ann Stoffel and Pam Taylor of the Illinois Medical Society Alliance, are effective advocates for bringing legislation to the members. Emphasis is placed on joining IMPAC in partnership with their state medical society. PAC is a line item on the annual membership dues mailing and 100% of the ISMSA Board pays PAC dues. The co-chairwomen post IMPAC dues paying Alliance members at all state meetings. Bravo to ISMSA for making an IMPAC-T!

For information on joining your state PAC or AMPAC, contact Brian McCabe [brian.mccabe@ama-assn.org](mailto:brian.mccabe@ama-assn.org) of the AMA's Division of PAC Membership.

## AMA Member Connect Roundtable on Medicare Physician Payment Reform

Saturday, May 19, 2007  
12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Keiser University  
6151 Lake Osprey Drive  
Room: Auditorium  
Sarasota, FL 34240

Lunch will be served. R.S.V.P. to SCMS at [info@sarasotacountymedical.com](mailto:info@sarasotacountymedical.com) or by fax at **(941) 966-1889**.

This event is limited to the first 60 respondents.

