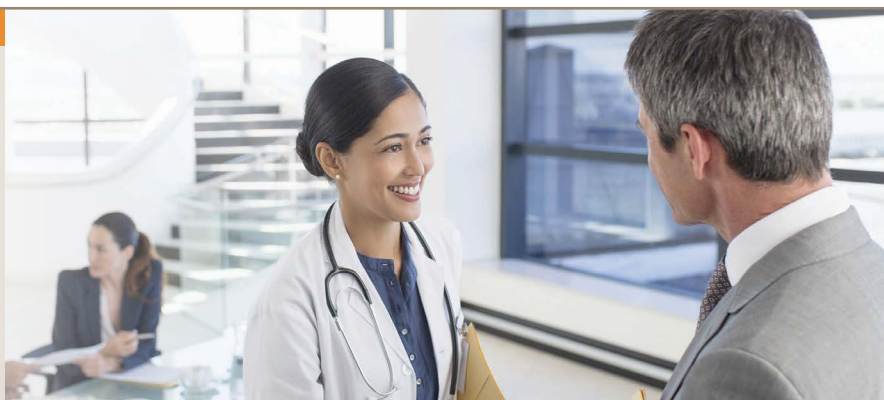




6 Ways to Reduce Your COPIC Premium



COPIC works with insureds to determine ways to lower their costs. Consider these six options.

1. PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Our COPIC Points Program allows insureds to earn points and qualify for an annual discount by participating in various educational activities that include on-demand courses, annual conferences, virtual seminars, and more. This discount is available for eligible insured physicians, advanced practice providers, and medical facilities/hospitals. Some activities are also eligible for CME/CNE credit.

2. BELONG TO YOUR STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION/SOCIETY

Physicians who are members of the following organizations may receive a 10% premium discount: Colorado Hospital Association, Colorado Medical Society, Iowa Medical Society, Minnesota Medical Association, Nebraska Medical Association, North Dakota Medical Association, South Dakota State Medical Association, and the Utah Medical Association. *Some limitations may apply.*

3. CHOOSE YOUR DEDUCTIBLE

Receive a premium discount by selecting a deductible based on your personal risk tolerance. This option is available to all insureds, even those insured under a group policy. Deductibles are available in increments of \$5,000, beginning with \$5,000 and continuing up to \$50,000, with higher options for facilities. Discount percentages vary depending on the deductible amount chosen and the policy limits of liability.

4. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BEING A NEW PHYSICIAN

Entering into practice for the first time? This discount may be available for physicians who, at the time of their application for insurance, are within three years of completing a residency or fellowship program; or academic, military, or other qualified setting (depending upon specific circumstances).

5. REDUCE YOUR PREMIUM IF YOU PRACTICE PART-TIME

This discount is available to insureds who limit their practice hours. The current hour ranges and corresponding discount percentages are as follows:

- 25 percent discount for those practicing 21 to 25 hours per week.
- 50 percent discount for those practicing 16 to 20 hours per week.
- 75 percent discount for those practicing no more than 15 hours per week.

6. CONSOLIDATE ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATION

Groups of five or more with centralized administration on a single policy billed with a single statement are eligible for a premium discount.

Other special programs may be available. Contact your underwriter about discounts that may be available in your market.

INSIDE



2

WAYS COPIC CAN
SUPPORT YOUR
PRACTICE IN 2024



3

A DANGEROUS
INTERACTION: SOCIAL
MEDIA AND PATIENTS



4

COPIC MEDICAL
FOUNDATION NEWS

WAYS COPIC CAN SUPPORT YOUR PRACTICE IN 2024

When the unexpected occurs, count on COPIC for support. Be sure to receive the full benefits of being a COPIC insured by taking advantage of these programs.



24/7 Risk Management Hotline

Are you dealing with an urgent situation where you could use some immediate advice? Maybe you were served with a lawsuit or you want to terminate a disruptive patient or you have questions about documenting an adverse outcome. COPIC's 24/7 Risk Management Hotline connects you with an on-call physician who helps you deal with situations that may be rare in your practice, but are familiar to us. We draw upon decades of experience and can offer guidance on how to appropriately address the issue. Call **(720) 858-6396** to access the hotline.

COPIC Legal Navigator

Support through COPIC's Legal Navigator helps you understand the legal and regulatory elements in today's health care environment and how these impact your medical practice. Insureds can access our legal team regarding questions on health care topics, including telemedicine, informed consent, subpoenas, and more. We share our knowledge to help you navigate complex situations and determine the requirements and considerations that may apply. You can access our Legal Helpline at **(720) 858-6030** or via email at LegalHL@copic.com.

3Rs Program

When a medical provider experiences an unexpected outcome, they may immediately fear that it will escalate and become a lawsuit. One of the most important principles we encourage is early reporting of these incidents to us. One of the advantages of doing this is the ability to access COPIC's nationally-recognized 3Rs (Recognize, Respond and Resolve) Program in relevant circumstances.

3Rs offers an alternative to traditional litigation and focuses on early intervention to address the physical, financial, and emotional needs of patients following an unexpected medical outcome. When appropriate, our team of experts will walk you through communicating with patients and utilizing 3Rs to provide reimbursement for their out-of-pocket medical expenses and extended recovery time related to the unanticipated portion of their care. To report an incident and have it reviewed for consideration for 3Rs, please call **(720) 858-6395**.

Care for the Caregiver

If you're dealing with the emotional effects of a lawsuit, a peer practitioner can help. Research shows that most health care professionals will face a claim or lawsuit at some point in their careers. Many describe the litigation process as one of their worst professional experiences, and lawsuits can have a significant impact on your personal well-being and family.

COPIC's Care for the Caregiver program provides added support that complements the overall efforts of the defense team. This includes facilitated confidential discussions with a peer to encourage open, honest dialogue and reimbursement of up to four mental health therapy sessions. It's our goal to focus on your emotional well-being while enhancing your ability to address the situation, build resilience, and move forward. For more information, contact COPIC's Claims Department at **(720) 858-6157**.

COPIC is dedicated to helping you navigate the challenges that can arise in the practice of medicine. For more information about these programs and more, visit callcopic.com.



A DANGEROUS INTERACTION: SOCIAL MEDIA AND PATIENTS

Even though we increasingly lead our lives on social media, you need to be careful about anything you post online that might expose any patient information. Federal and state law requires you to keep patient information confidential, and it's easy to make mistakes.

Problems arise not necessarily because people are careless, but because they care a lot. Health care work can be challenging, with long hours and difficult patients, and it can be tempting to talk about patients. Healthcare work is also rewarding, and you may develop close relationships with patients and families, especially if you work with pediatric patients.

But never forget that the information you get as part of your work at a medical facility is confidential and should not be shared on social media. Federal law requires this.

WHAT SHOULD YOU AVOID?

- Posting pictures of patients
- Complaining about patients or mentioning patients while complaining about your job
- Blowing off steam after a hard day, such as posting about a difficult experience with a very sick patient
- Commenting on news stories about patients who are being treated at the facility
- Letting people know that a celebrity, politician, or other prominent person is being treated at a facility
- Adding information to threads others have started

"INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE"

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protects healthcare information related to an identifiable individual. **Even if just one person can identify the patient you are posting about, the post is identifiable.**

The chances of this happening are high—even if all of your privacy settings are turned on. Posting in private groups is also not allowed. **On social media nothing is truly private.**

BEST PRACTICES

- Do not list your organization in your employment section
- Do not reference events that happen at work
- Keep social media conversations with co-workers limited to personal, non-work events
- Do not send pictures of patients to your friends – they may put them on social media
- Do not add or follow on social media any patients you met through work

Source: https://www.breachsolutions.com/documents/BBS%20USA/Prepare/Training/Social_media_tipsheet.pdf

Did you know that COPIC's medical liability insurance policies include embedded cyber liability coverage? The coverage is designed to offer protection and support against growing cyber risks, and it also provides access to resources that you can utilize to proactively plan for and prevent cyber breaches. Visit www.callcopic.com/coverage-options/cyber-liability for more information.

The claims handling and breach response services are provided by Beazley USA Services, a member of Beazley Group. Beazley USA Services does not underwrite insurance for COPIC. Policies purchased through COPIC are subject to COPIC's underwriting processes. CIC023_US_12/23

© Beazley plc [2023]. Reprinted with permission.



THE COPIC MEDICAL FOUNDATION

Improving patient care and outcomes through innovation and collaboration

REFLECTIONS: TWO YEARS ON THE CMF BOARD FROM ROMANA HASNAIN-WYNIA



As I approach almost two years on the COPIC Medical Foundation board, I have been reflecting on what excited me about joining the board in 2021, beyond the obviously amazing COPIC Medical Foundation team, and why I remain enthusiastic about our work today. In 2021, the COPIC Medical Foundation stated that “As health care delivery grows more complex, with multiple provider settings for care delivery and telehealth, care fragmentation is a top patient safety concern because it can impede communication among a patient’s providers and interfere with care coordination.” Since then, it has invested nearly \$750,000 in grants toward this end and is one reason for my enthusiasm.

I have been a senior leader in complex organizations focusing on research, health care advocacy, education, policy, and grantmaking for over 30 years. I thought that the common thread in my work had been a focus on improving health care quality and safety for patients and communities to advance equity. However, in 2021 I was just beginning to realize that my most effective work had actually advanced equity through developing multidisciplinary collaborative programs, and these were all efforts that fundamentally aimed to reduce fragmentation in health care experiences for underserved patients.

I was also excited because I knew that fragmentation disproportionately affects people who have been historically marginalized, which further drives health disparities and stymies efforts to achieve health equity. Being on the board has provided me with unique opportunities to have an impact on this and be part of the solution.

After all, as policymakers, health system leaders, and clinicians focus on the practical realities of implementing programs to reduce fragmentation, they must also recognize that overall improvements in the U.S. health care system won’t automatically benefit all segments of the population equally. The way to ensure that safety and quality work doesn’t leave disparities in place or make them worse, is to ensure that funded projects focus on underserved groups.

Here are some examples of projects we’ve funded that do just that:

2021:

- **Children’s Health Fund** (New York and National): A review, update, and dissemination of the successful Referral Management Initiative to enhance care coordination procedures for pediatric populations living in under-resourced communities.
- **Kansas Healthcare Collaborative** (Kansas): AlignAllHealth—A collaborative tool that combines technology with highly trained staff to support innovative and data-driven care management processes for high-risk patients.
- **Mile High Health Alliance** (Colorado): The “Orange Flag” Project—Using data to inform emergency department personnel of a patient’s high utilization of emergency services to aid in care coordination.

2022:

- **West Mountain Regional Health Alliance** (Colorado): Community Resource Network West Mountain, a social information exchange platform in western Colorado, will facilitate a care coordination effort to support individuals experiencing homelessness.

2023:

- **AIRnyc** (New York): Reducing fragmentation in prenatal and postpartum clinical and social care for high-risk Black and Latinx pregnant persons.
- **Healing Hands Community Doula Project** (Texas): Perinatal community health workers to fill gaps in maternal health in communities across Texas.

This portfolio of funded projects addresses key drivers of fragmentation such as care transitions, communication breakdowns, and poor follow up, with an eye toward solutions based on real world applications that can be adopted by others. I’m excited to see the CMF team systematically measure the impact of our funding decisions, and I’m thrilled to see the excitement of grantees as they share lessons with one another. It is a privilege to serve on the COPIC Medical Foundation board with mission-driven colleagues committed to improving the lives of individuals and communities.

COPIC'S PODCAST FEATURES CMF GRANT RECIPIENTS

COPIC's Director of Education and podcast host Eric Zacharias, MD, recently spearheaded a special series of episodes that will be released soon and focus on organizations that received grant funding for initiatives that address the issue of reducing fragmentation across care settings. Listen to *Within Normal Limits* on your favorite podcast platform! Or, for a list of episodes visit www.callcopic.com/wnlpodcast.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR COPIC MEDICAL FOUNDATION 2024 GRANTS

In anticipation of our 2024 grant funding cycle, we will continue to focus on the issue of reducing fragmentation across care settings. A top concern in the field of patient safety, breakdowns in care from a fragmented health care system can lead to readmissions, missed diagnoses, medication errors, delayed treatment, duplicative testing and procedures, and reduction in quality of care leading to general patient and provider dissatisfaction.

For CMF, contributing to a solution to this safety concern means supporting scalable or replicable solutions, focusing on the testing of new ideas or growing existing solutions, and then seeing avenues for larger application. What you need to know to apply:

- 1 Funding Cycle**
CMF is accepting applications November 1, 2023 through January 12, 2024 for its 2024 cycle of grant funding.
- 2 Criteria**
To be considered for funding, organizations must meet the following minimum criteria:
 - ➔ Approach or program has demonstrated potential for uptake or replication by the health care community
 - ➔ Organization is designated as a 501(c)(3) organization or has an identified fiduciary
- 3 Deadlines and Applications**
Grant applications are due January 12, 2024 by 5pm (Mountain Time). Applications can be emailed to mhintze@copic.com. Applicants can expect to hear from CMF regarding potential support by March 31, 2024.

Download the grant requirements and application on the COPIC website at www.copicfoundation.org.

CMF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sophia Meharena, DO, FAAP (Board Chair)
General Pediatrics—Aurora, CO
Harris Frankel, MD
Neurology—Omaha, NE

Romana Hasnain-Wynia, PhD
Academic Affairs & Public Health—Denver, CO
Alan Synn, MD, FACS
Vascular Surgery—Denver, CO

Rebecca Vogel, MD
General Surgery—Denver, CO
Meredith Hintze
Executive Director



Better Medicine • Better Lives

7351 E. Lowry Blvd., Ste. 400, Denver, Colorado 80230

PRSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
Permit #1668
DENVER, CO

COPICNEWS

ISSUE 197 • 4TH QUARTER 2023

INSIDE

- 1 6 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR COPIC PREMIUM
- 2 WAYS COPIC CAN SUPPORT YOUR PRACTICE IN 2024
- 3 A DANGEROUS INTERACTION: SOCIAL MEDIA AND PATIENTS
- 4 COPIC MEDICAL FOUNDATION NEWS

Did you miss a previous edition of COPIC newsletters?
Don't worry. A full archive of past newsletters
can be accessed on **callcopic.com**.

Board of Directors

Gerald Zarlengo, MD
Chairman and CEO

Matthew J. Fleishman, MD, FACR

Harris A. Frankel, MD

Davis K. Hurley, MD

Michelle Lucero, JD

Sophia Meharena, DO

Steve Neumann

Harold R. Roth, MBA, JD, LLM

Alan Synn, MD

Rebecca Vogel, MD, FACS

CONTACT US:

COPIC Insurance Company

Switchboard
720/858-6000 or 800/421-1834

Fax
877/263-6665

24/7 Risk Mgmt. Hotline
(for urgent, after hours inquiries)
866/274-7511

To Make an Incident Report
720/858-6395

Legal Helpline
720/858-6030

Claims Department
720/858-6157

**Patient Safety & Risk
Management Department**
720/858-6396

Sales Department
720/858-6199

Customer Support
720/858-6160

Underwriting
720/858-6176

Credentialing
720/858-6160

COPIC Financial Service Group, Ltd.

720/858-6280

Fax
720/858-6281

Website
www.copicfsg.com

COPIC Medical Foundation

720/858-6060

Fax
720/858-6005

Website
www.copicfoundation.org

www.callcopic.com

Connect with COPIC  



THE LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE

Happy holidays! COPIC has long believed that taking an active role in advocating on legislative issues is an important way to allow the health care community to devote its resources to quality improvement and patient care. COPIC monitors regulations and legislation in Colorado to ensure that access to safe, quality health care delivery is maintained, and new, unreasonable burdens are not placed on health care providers.

INTERIM IN REVIEW

Since the adjournment of the 2023 legislative session, COPIC's Public Affairs team has focused on educating and raising awareness around Colorado's set of long-held tort reforms that have created a balanced, stable tort environment for over 35 years, and the importance of defending those reforms in order to protect access to care and reduce costs. These efforts will continue throughout 2024 as we are anticipating a challenge to these vital reforms during the upcoming legislative session. Be on the lookout for opportunities to engage alongside us as we work to defend and maintain the balance and stability created by Colorado's reforms, including those within the Health Care Availability Act

that have allowed Colorado to be a destination state when it comes to accessing high-quality care.

In addition to these on-going efforts, our team has continued to track the implementation of laws passed last session, monitor interim legislative committee work, and keep a pulse on what bills might be on the horizon in 2024. Much of the focus during the summer and fall months was on interim stakeholder engagement and rulemaking hearings for the implementation of laws passed in 2023. Some of these included the continual implementation and expansion of Colorado's Public Option Health Plan, the Prescription Drug Affordability Board, and the new Behavioral Health Administration.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

Now our focus shifts to preparing for the upcoming legislative session. The second regular session of the 74th Colorado General Assembly will convene for 120 days beginning on January 10, 2024 and is expected to adjourn on May 8, 2024. With 2024 being an election year, we expect the gamut of policy topics as Democrats currently hold control of both the Senate and the House in addition to the governor's office. Health care policy has been a major focus of the general assembly and the governor in recent years, and we expect efforts to continue in the behavioral and mental health, scope of practice, and payment reform and transparency space.

Through conversations and meetings with our health care colleagues in Colorado, our Public Affairs team has identified a handful of potential public policy topics that we expect to be at the forefront of the 2024 legislative session.

- Efforts to defend Colorado's tort reforms
- Maternal health and wellness
- Payment reform (prior authorization and reimbursement rates)
- Scope of practice expansion efforts
- Efforts addressing workplace violence against health care professionals.

COPIC's Public Affairs team will continue to work alongside our colleagues at the Colorado Medical Society and the Colorado Hospital Association to monitor health care legislation that will impact your ability to deliver safe, quality care.

Visit COPIC's Legislative Action Center at www.callcopic.com/lac to find information on legislation we are monitoring, find your elected officials, or sign up for our newsletters. If you have any questions, please contact COPIC's Manager of Public Affairs, Logan Dunning, at ldunning@copic.com.

Scan for COPIC's
Legislative Action Center



COPIC HUMANITARIAN AWARD: DR. APRIL RANDLE

COPIC and the Colorado Medical Society (CMS) are proud to announce that Dr. April Randle, an internal medicine physician in Cortez, was chosen as the most recent recipient of COPIC's Humanitarian Award. She is recognized for her commitment to making a difference in health care and was presented with the award at the CMS annual meeting in September.

Dr. Randle has spent the last 15 years providing health care in the rural communities of Dove Creek, Cortez, and Naturita. Her dedication and tireless efforts have made a lasting impact on the lives of patients.

After a successful career, Dr. Randle came out of retirement in July 2021 to become the Medical Director at the Basin Clinic in Naturita. She has graciously given her time to travel from her home in Cortez, over an hour and a half one-way, to the

clinic to meet with patients, perform administrative duties, and work with agency representatives.

The COPIC Humanitarian Award was established in 2001 in honor of Harold "Hal" E. Williamson. The annual award recognizes a physician going above the call of duty in the Colorado health care community and provides a \$10,000 donation to be given to the health-related nonprofit of the recipient's choice. Dr. Randle chose to donate the \$10,000 to Basin Clinic.



CMS CEO Dean Holzkamp with Dr. April Randle and Beverly Razon, COPIC's Sr. VP of Public Affairs, shown here at the September award presentation.

FREE PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM AVAILABLE FOR COLORADO PROVIDERS

DOC2DOC WELLBEING CONSULTING OFFERS CONFIDENTIAL, 24/7 SUPPORT

If you're feeling the effects of stress and burnout or experiencing situational problems, receive support and resources from peers who understand. This free service, offered without lengthy documentation or extensive evaluation, is available for Colorado physicians, physician assistants, anesthesiology assistants, and trainees.

To receive three free consultations, call **(720) 810-9131**. You'll be connected to a masters-level, licensed clinician who will assess your clinical needs and initiate peer support services.

If Doc2Doc Wellbeing Consulting is the best fit, a physician will return your call for the first of three peer consultations. If the traditional services offered by Colorado Physician Health Program (CPHP) is a better fit based on your circumstances, you'll be invited to participate in CPHP services for appropriate treatment and support.

Doc2Doc Wellbeing Consulting is offered
by the Colorado Medical Society and
Colorado Physician Health Program.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY



COLORADO
MEDICAL SOCIETY

Colorado
Physician Health Program



THE LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE

Happy holidays! COPIC has long believed that taking an active role in advocating on legislative issues is an important way to allow the health care community to devote its resources to quality improvement and patient care. COPIC monitors regulations and legislation in Iowa to ensure that access to safe, quality health care delivery is maintained, and new, unreasonable burdens are not placed on health care providers.

INTERIM IN REVIEW

Since the adjournment of the 2023 legislative session, COPIC has focused on monitoring progress and educating stakeholders on the new laws capping non-economic damages in medical liability cases. As a refresher, the final bill signed into law, House File 161, created a two-tiered cap on non-economic damages by retaining the \$250,000 soft cap and adding a hard cap at \$1 million for providers and \$2 million for hospitals. The legislation includes an inflationary adjuster of 2.1% beginning in 2028. The bill went into effect immediately upon Governor Reynolds' signature on February 16, 2023. COPIC will continue to track all new, available claims data to identify trends and measure the impacts and benefits this change may have on health care providers in Iowa. These efforts will also help conceptualize the impacts the bill will have on the frequency and severity of claims once it is effective for all outcomes.

In addition to these on-going efforts, the COPIC Public Affairs team has continued to track the implementation of laws passed last session, monitor interim legislative committee work, and keep a pulse on what bills might be on the horizon in 2024.

Much of the focus during the summer and fall months was around the special session to pass legislation limiting access to abortion care in Iowa—which is currently suspended in the courts due to a pending lawsuit—and the roll-out of the major state government reorganization effort championed by Governor Reynolds in 2023.

Of note, the bill increasing caps on non-economic damages also created a Medical Errors Task Force. This task force met over the interim months (September–December) with the stated purpose of reviewing medical error rates of Iowa physicians. Having satisfied its meeting requirements, the task force will now draft a report and make recommendations to the General Assembly and the director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to address options for reducing medical error rates, improvements in education and training to minimize errors, and whether applicable penalties for medical errors and physician licensure review measures are sufficient. The task force's report is due to the General Assembly and the director of DHHS by January 8, 2024. Stay tuned!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

Now our focus shifts to preparing for the upcoming legislative session. The Iowa General Assembly will convene for the 2024 legislative session on Monday, January 8, 2024. Heading into 2024, Republicans control both the House and the Senate in addition to the governor's office.

Through conversations and meetings with our health care colleagues in Iowa, COPIC's Public Affairs team has

identified a handful of potential public policy topics that we expect to be at the forefront of the 2024 legislative session.

- Payment reform (Medicaid reimbursement rates and prior authorization)
- Scope of practice expansion efforts
- Maternal health and wellness
- Expanding the physician workforce
- Expanding access to behavioral health services

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE (FROM PAGE 1)

Further, we will continue to monitor a number of bills that carried over from 2023 and are still active for consideration:

- ▶ House Study Bill 160: An act relating to compensation discussions regarding adverse health care incidents.
- ▶ Senate File 430: A bill for an act relating to the duties of insurers under medical malpractice insurance policies.

COPIC's Public Affairs team will continue to work alongside our colleagues at the Iowa Medical Society to monitor health care legislation that will impact your ability to deliver safe, quality care.

Visit COPIC's Legislative Action Center at www.callcopic.com/lac to find information on legislation we are monitoring, find your elected officials, or sign up for our newsletters. If you have any questions, please contact COPIC's Manager of Public Affairs, Logan Dunning, at ldunning@copic.com.

Scan for COPIC's
Legislative Action Center



HAVE YOU LISTENED TO THE PODCAST?

Within Normal Limits is our podcast that offers valuable insight through conversations with COPIC's team of experts and recognized physician leaders. Each episode tackles a timely topic with a focus on case study reviews, in-depth discussions, and practical guidance about avoiding common risks and best practices to improve patient care. Recent episodes include:

- AI's Impact on Medicine
- Addressing the Issue of Maternity Care Deserts
- Increasing Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Medical Education

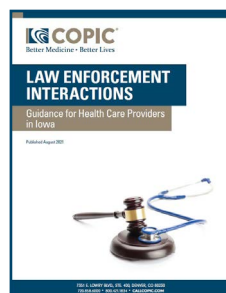
Within Normal Limits is available on popular platforms such as Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Spotify. You can also go to www.callcopic.com/wnlpodcast for more information. New episodes are posted throughout the year, so be sure to subscribe and enjoy the podcast.

IOWA RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON COPIC'S WEBSITE

>>Law Enforcement Interactions

Health care providers may experience interactions with law enforcement personnel that create uncertainty around their responsibilities to patients, including protecting patients' privacy. When these duties intersect with law enforcement as they relate to patients in the health care system, providers should understand how to meet their obligations while respecting the requests of law enforcement personnel. This guide addresses situations such as:

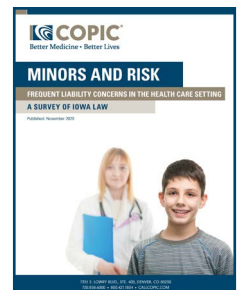
- Key considerations for any law enforcement interaction
- Reporting adult victims of abuse, neglect, or violence
- Disclosures for law enforcement purposes under HIPAA
- Drug and alcohol testing
- Serious threats to health or public safety



>>Minors and Risk: Frequent Liability Concerns in the Health Care Setting

This booklet helps medical providers understand and navigate legal issues they may encounter with patients who are minors. The situations addressed include the following:

- Parental rights around making medical decisions with children; and issues with divorced parents
- Minors and HIPAA
- Situations when a minor can consent to medical care without parental consent
- Dealing with sexually transmitted infections
- Child abuse and reporting



Both of these booklets are available for download at www.callcopic.com/resource-center/guidelines-tools/practice-management-resources



THE LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE

Happy holidays! COPIC has long believed that taking an active role in advocating on legislative issues is an important way to allow the health care community to devote its resources to quality improvement and patient care. COPIC monitors regulations and legislation in Nebraska to ensure that access to safe, quality health care delivery is maintained, and new, unreasonable burdens are not placed on health care providers.

INTERIM IN REVIEW

Since the adjournment of the 2023 legislative session, COPIC has focused on assessing and educating stakeholders about the changes that were made to Nebraska's Excess Liability Fund (Fund). As a refresher, effective January 1, 2025, underlying limits for physicians and CRNAs will increase from \$500,000 to \$800,000 per occurrence and increase the annual aggregate limit from \$1 million to \$3 million to mirror that of the hospital. This limit is being increased to relieve pressure on the Fund and shift more risk to the underlying layer of coverage with the intended result being lower surcharge payments and long-term financial stability of the Fund.

COPIC will continue to collect data, track trends, and adjust policies accordingly ahead of this change going into effect. Be on the lookout for additional resources from COPIC on how this policy change impacts you and your practice. Please do not hesitate to contact your COPIC underwriter should you have any questions.

In addition to these on-going efforts, our team has continued to track the implementation of laws passed last session, monitor interim legislative committee work, and keep a pulse on what bills might be on the horizon in 2024.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

Now our focus shifts to preparing for the upcoming legislative session. The second regular session of the 108th Nebraska Unicameral will convene for 60 days beginning on January 3, 2024. Heading into 2024, Republicans control the Unicameral in addition to the governor's office. In 2023, the Unicameral found itself at a standstill for a majority of the 90-day session as politics took a front seat to policymaking, particularly around health care policy dealing with abortion and access to transgender care. We will have to wait and see what the Unicameral's political temperature is once the session begins in January. Stay tuned!

Through conversations and meetings with our health care colleagues in Nebraska, the COPIC Public Affairs team has identified a handful of potential public policy topics that we expect to be at the forefront of the 2024 legislative session.

- Payment reform (Medicaid reimbursement rates and prior authorization)
- Provider assessment reform to draw down additional federal funding
- Bolstering regulations around pharmacy benefit managers
- Reforms to Nebraska's 407 credentialing review criteria
- The creation of a patient prescription return program
- Scope of practice expansion efforts

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE (FROM PAGE 1)

Further, we will continue to monitor a number of bills that carried over from 2023 and are still active for consideration:

- ▶ Legislative Bill 25: Authorize punitive damages as prescribed and provide for distribution.
- ▶ Legislative Bill 87: Allow persons eighteen years of age to make health care decisions and persons under nineteen years of age in correctional facilities to consent to medical and mental health care.
- ▶ Legislative Bill 351: Increase and eliminate limits on medical malpractice liability and change provisions relating to proof of financial responsibility and the Excess Liability Fund.

COPIC's Public Affairs team will continue to work alongside our colleagues at the Nebraska Medical Association to monitor health care legislation that will impact your ability to deliver safe, quality care.

Visit COPIC's Legislative Action Center at www.callcopic.com/lac to find information on legislation we are monitoring, find your elected officials, or sign up for our newsletters. If you have any questions, please contact COPIC's Manager of Public Affairs, Logan Dunning, at ldunning@copic.com.

Scan for COPIC's
Legislative
Action Center



2023 COPIC HUMANITARIAN AWARD: DR. BRITT THEDINGER

COPIC and the Nebraska Medical Association (NMA) are proud to announce that Dr. Britt Thedinger, an otolaryngologist in Omaha, was chosen as the 2023 recipient of COPIC's Humanitarian Award. He is recognized for his commitment to making a difference in health care and was presented with the award at NMA's annual meeting in August.



From left: Dale Mahlman (COPIC), Beverly Razon (COPIC), and Dr. Britt Thedinger.

Dr. Thedinger earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Molecular Biology from Vanderbilt University and his medical degree from the University of Kansas. He completed a residency in otolaryngology at Harvard University—The Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary.

Dr. Thedinger's dedication to improving health care has been demonstrated in numerous ways throughout his 30+ years in practice. He was the first Nebraska physician to surgically insert a cochlear implant in a child, was instrumental in implementing a universal newborn hearing screening program, and authored numerous scientific articles.

Another constant for Dr. Thedinger has been his involvement in leadership roles. These include serving as the president of the Metro Omaha Medical Society (2023) and NMA (2017), being the chairman of Surgical Services at Children's Hospital in Omaha (1997-1999), and he currently is part of the board of directors for the College of St. Mary and the Nebraska Coalition for Patient Safety.

While Dr. Thedinger served as the NMA president, he became aware of Susan LaFlesche Picotte, M.D., who was the country's first Native American physician. Dr. Picotte was a part of the Omaha Tribe and her life's work culminated in establishing a hospital in Walthill, Nebraska in 1913. By 2017, the building had fallen into disrepair, and Dr. Thedinger championed a campaign to raise funds to restore the hospital and turn it into a wellness center for the Omaha Tribe. He currently sits on the board of directors for the Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte Center and is still leading the campaign to renovate the building.

The COPIC Humanitarian Award was established in 2001 in honor of Harold "Hal" E. Williamson. The annual award recognizes a physician going above the call of duty in the Nebraska health care community and provides a \$10,000 donation to be given to the health-related nonprofit of the recipient's choice. Dr. Thedinger chose to donate the \$10,000 to the Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte Center.