



Nearly 2,000 physicians, healthcare workers and patients call attention to the "crisis" in healthcare liability.

Most of the crowd waved orange and green signs that proclaimed "Provide Access to Quality Care," "Protect Your Right to Quality Healthcare," and "Preserve Quality Healthcare for Georgians." However, a few handmade signs also dotted the crowd. Peter Harvey, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon from Peachtree City, carried one of those. Dr. Harvey's sign read, "Patients don't need lawyers for a second opinion. Let doctors practice medicine. Say YES to Tort Reform."

Mark G. Hanly, M.D., a MAG Mutual insured pathologist, closed his practice for the day and traveled to Atlanta from Brunswick, because he felt supporting civil justice was the right thing to do. Dr. Hanly, president of the Georgia Association of Pathologists, was representing his specialty society as well as his 14-doctor practice in Brunswick and Warner Robbins.

Civil justice advocates, including the Medical Association of Georgia and the Georgia Hospital Association, are working to raise awareness of the issue in time for the January convening of the Georgia General Assembly.

You can help—

- Join the coalition of business and medical community organizations who are advocating civil justice reform
- Discuss the issue in your community whenever possible
- Talk to your federal and state legislators



GEORGIA'S SOURCE FOR IMPORTANT PHYSICIAN INFORMATION

Uniform Healthcare Practitioner Credentialing Applications Now Available Online

During the 1999 session of the Georgia General Assembly, MAG Mutual introduced legislation in an effort to eliminate the redundancy in completing numerous applications and to "streamline" the credentialing or recredentialing process for physicians. The "Centralized Collection of Credentialing Data for Health Care Practitioners Act" legislation would allow a physician to designate a credentials verification organization to collect, store and disseminate his or her core credentials data to entities requesting such data for credentialing or recredentialing purposes. Various healthcare associations who believed that uniform credentialing or recredentialing forms would achieve the same goal without enacting new law met this legislation with substantial opposition.

During the interim session in 2001, representatives of the Georgia Hospital Association (GHA), the Georgia

Association of Health Plans (GAHP), the Georgia Association of Medical Staff Services (GAMSS) and others with input from MAG Mutual and the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) developed these uniform applications. GHA and GAHP approved these forms and urged their members to implement them at their respective facilities.

The initial credentialing and appointment and the recredentialing or reappointment forms consist of two parts. Part One of each form is a standardized form, which may be used by Georgia hospitals, health plans or other healthcare entities. Part Two of each form for health plans is standardized and may be used by all health plans. Part Two of each form for hospitals is developed by each individual hospital to include additional questions which that hospital may require for credentialing or recredentialing purposes.

Once a physician has completed the Uniform Part One form for either initial appointment to a hospital medical staff or to a health plan for participation in that plan's provider panel, the same form (as long as all information is current) may be submitted to additional hospitals or health plans which that physician is applying to for privileges or participation. The same is true in regards to Part One of the recredentialing or reappointment form. The uniform application forms are now available online on the GAMSS Web site at www.gamss.org. This Web site offers very specific instructions for obtaining these forms and other related information.

GHA, GAHP, GAMSS, MAG and others are to be commended for their efforts in developing these forms, which we believe will significantly decrease the amount of work physicians face when completing such forms. ●

NEW! Financial Services Newsletter

As part of our commitment to providing quality financial services to the medical community, MAG Mutual Financial Services, Inc. (MMFSI) is pleased to announce our new *Prescription For Financial Security Quarterly Newsletter*. You will soon be receiving your first copy of this publication that contains timely information about today's most important financial topics. For more information, contact Ron Lundy at 800-282-4882 ext. 5567.

Product News

As a MAG Mutual policyholder, you're eligible to receive a five percent discount on your business owner's coverage, when combined with your medical professional liability coverage. The MAG Mutual "Cope" policy gives you multiple coverages in a single package—saving you both time and money.

Advantages include:

- Unlimited dollar amount for business interruption, flood and earthquake coverage for your office contents
- \$25,000 coverage for the reproduction of damaged medical records

Consider the peace of mind you'll have knowing that MAG Mutual is there to coordinate claims defense for both professional and business liability coverage. To find out how we can protect your medical office, call Chip Goen for a free, no obligation quote at 800-282-4882 ext. 5584 or visit www.magmutual.com.

It's Time to Order Your 2003 Physicians Fee & Coding Guide

MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants, Inc. is taking advance orders for their 2003 *Physicians Fee & Coding Guide*. This is the same publication that is used by thousands of physicians, hospitals and insurance companies nationwide to establish fees for physician services.

It's easy to use and **provides more features than any other fee and coding resource**, such as longer descriptions for each code (so you can **increase revenue** by choosing the appropriate code), thousands of billing tips, hints and information on proper code usage. Also included are:

- Updated fees for private payors for all CPT™ codes, including **hundreds of codes not found elsewhere**
- Medicare's National Average Allowances with geographic calculations
- RBRV values for all CPT codes

MAG Mutual policyholders can purchase the *Guide* for \$127, which is 15 percent off the retail price. **To reserve your copy from the company you own, call toll-free 888-738-7490 today.** ●

Coding Certification Workshops for Coding Specialists

A certified professional coder can help your practice comply with billing and coding regulations and increase your revenue. MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants' coding certification workshop helps ensure that your coder is well-trained on the principles of CPT and ICD-9 coding and helps your practice develop specialty-specific documentation and coding tools.

This extensive, 20-hour course is offered in five after-noon sessions. Each class meets on the same day every other week over the course of 10 weeks. Cost is \$795 per person for the five-session workshop. Space is limited. Please call Ashley Jackson toll-free at 888-738-7495 ext. 211 today to register or for more information.

Atlanta

Jan 9, 23; Feb 6, 20; Mar 6; EXAM - Mar 20
MAG Mutual Boardroom
Eight Piedmont Center, Suite 600
3525 Piedmont Road

Augusta

Jan 17, 31; Feb 14, 28; Mar 3, 14; EXAM - Mar 27
MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants, Inc.
Conference Room
1054 Claussen Road, Suite 307

Columbus

Jan 10, 24; Feb 7, 21; Mar 7; EXAM - Mar 21
WC Bradley Memorial Library
1120 Bradley Drive

Rome

Jan 8, 22; Feb 5, 19; Mar 5; EXAM - Mar 19
The Forum
2 Government Plaza

Tifton

Jan 16, 30; Feb 13, 27; Mar 13; EXAM - Mar 26
Tift Regional Medical Center
901 18th Street East

All seminars are from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. ●

Need CME Credits? Earn Them Online at www.magmutual.com.

© 2002 MAG Mutual Insurance Company

A Publication of MAG MutualSM. MAG Mutual is a Service Mark of MAG Mutual Insurance Company

MAG MUTUALSM
Because your patients come first.
the MAGnetTM

MAG Mutual Insurance Co.
P.O. Box 52979
Atlanta, GA 30355-0979

PRE SORT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Atlanta, GA
Permit No. 3329



the M

Provide! Protect! Preserve!

That was the rallying cry from the approximately 2,000 physicians, healthcare workers, and patients who attended the November 15th "Rally at the Capitol" sponsored by the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) and the Georgia Hospital Association (GHA). The rally was held to show support for needed legislative civil justice measures that would:

- Establish expert witness qualifications
- Amend the dismissal rule
- Eliminate joint and several liability
- Mandate comparative negligence
- Cap non-economic damages
- Disclose collateral sources
- Reduce pre/post judgment interest
- Limit venue



Alan L. Plummer, M.D., president of the Medical Association of Georgia, ignites the crowd.



Donald Palmisano, M.D. spoke to the crowd about the need for the healthcare community to unite and speak with one voice.

"The power of many, the voice of one," said Dr. Donald Palmisano, president-elect of the American Medical Association, referring to the need for the medical community to unite in opposition to out-of-control jury verdicts. He also declared, "The medical liability system must be designed to take care of the injured both fairly and efficiently."

The doctors, who came to the rally by the busload, blame rising medical malpractice premiums on an out-of-control legal liability system. "We can look at economic damages and figure that out. But we really can't figure out pain and suffering. Some of the jury awards rendered, the pain and suffering is out of control—millions and millions of dollars. And that's not fair," said Dr. Alan Plummer of the Medical Association of Georgia.