



## 2015 Legislative Wrap Up

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**The Georgia General Assembly adjourned sine die on the first of a two year legislative session on April 2, 2015. The Georgia Academy had an unprecedented successful session with the legislature including over \$24 million dollars to increase certain codes for primary care physicians and OB/Gyns. The 2016 legislature will convene on Monday, January 11, 2016. The GAFP's Day at the Capitol will be Thursday, February 11, 2016.**

### Georgia Academy's Legislative Priorities

- **Support state initiatives and/or funding to expand family medicine residency programs**  
Success. State Legislature increased family medicine capitation rate by \$500 in state funds (\$1,500 per resident with additional federal drawdown).
- **Advocate for the state to pay for Medicaid Parity with Medicare Rates for primary care physicians and obstetricians/gynecologists**  
Success. ). The Legislature created primary care rates for select codes; total funds of \$52.7 million (presumed to be 6 commonly used codes, at 90% of the 2104 Medicare rate). The Legislature also increased payment for selected OB/GYN codes to the 2014 Medicare fee schedule rate; total fund increase of \$18.1 million. (6 most commonly used codes)
- **Support Medical Malpractice Reform which could include reform and/or replacement**  
Ongoing. The GAFP supports Senate Bill 86 (Patients for Fair Compensation). This bill is pending in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.
- **Support continued funding of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program**  
Success. GAFP successfully advocated for state funding of the PDMP. Current funds appropriated by the legislature will keep the program sustained through September 2016. Ongoing efforts to maintain (and expand) this program planned for 2016.
- **Support expansion of insurance coverage through waivers or other approaches to provide access to health insurance for low income Georgia**  
Ongoing. No legislative activity during the 2015 Session. Study committees are underway over the 2015 summer to investigate waiver options to cover more low-income Georgians. Initiative being led by Grady Health System. GAFP is a coalition member of the Georgians for a Healthy Future.

### Additional Health Related Bills

#### *Pharmacist Vaccines for Adult Patients – Passed!*

House Bill 504 – Requires vaccination against meningococcal disease of college students living on campus of a Georgia college or university and allow pharmacists (under a physician protocol) to administer pneumovax, meningococcal and zoster vaccines to adults. **(GAFP Supported).**

#### *Therapeutic Substitution of Biosimilar Therapies – Passed!*

Senate Bill 51 - provide for substitutions of interchangeable biological products including a mandatory 48 hour rule for the pharmacist to contact the physician for a change. Does not allow any change if the physician writes "Dispense as Written." **(GAFP Supported.)**

*PA RXing for Schedule II Drugs - Pending*

Senate Bill 115 stalled in the Senate failing to cross over by the required 30<sup>th</sup> day (as required by Senate rules). This bill would allow Pas to prescribe a 30-day supply of Schedule II drugs under a physician protocol. **(The GAFP opposes this bill in its current form.)**

*Improving Physician Order for Life Sustaining Treatment Form (POLST) – Passed!*

Senate Bill 109 will help hospitals to join physicians and nursing homes to utilize a POLST form to assist with patients' end-of-life care management. SB 109 has passed the Senate and the House Health and Human Services Committee and now is pending in the House Rules Committee. **(GAFP Supported).**

*Expanded Sales of Fireworks in Georgia – Passed (GAFP Opposed)*

House Bill 110 will expand the state's fireworks laws to permit dangerous fireworks, like those sold in Alabama, and Tennessee. The GAFP was part of a coalition to oppose this bill.

**HB 1:** Medical Cannabis: House Bill 1, which took effect immediately, makes it legal for people who suffer from cancer, sickle cell disease and other illnesses to possess up to 20 ounces of cannabis oil if a physician signs off. Passed.

**HB 416:** Would require all medical providers to wear name badges identifying their professional identify, e.g. MD, RN, PA, etc. Passed.

**HB 436:** Would require physicians to offer HIV/AIDS testing and syphilis to pregnant women in their third trimester. Passed.

**HB 362:** Would permit schools to maintain a stock of albuterol sulfate and epinephrine and permit school personnel to administer it to students when urgently needed. Passed.

**HB 429:** Insurance; no health benefit plan shall restrict health coverage for prescribed treatment based upon insured's diagnosis with a terminal condition. Passed

**HB 558:** Teen driving bill, would increase age of provisional license to 16.5 years, from current 16, and other changes. Pending. Did not crossover.

**HR 612:** House Study Committee on Fibroids Education and Awareness. Passed.

**HR 640:** Creates House Study Committee on Education, Health and School-based clinics. Passed

**HR 641:** Creates House Study Committee on Children's Mental Health. Passed.

**SB 1:** Mandated Insurance benefits for Autism: SB 1. Would require services for autism to be covered in all policies, for children 6 and under, with a \$30,000 cap on annual benefits for ABA. Passed.

**SB 8/SR 7:** Safe Harbor bill, Raises statute of limitations on child sex trafficking cases, provides additional services, and proposes new taxes on adult industry clubs to fund these efforts. Passed.

**SB 87:** would require Composite State Medical Board to accept only board certifications from ABMS approved boards. Pending. Did not crossover.

**SR 560:** Creates Senate Study Committee on Women's Adequate Healthcare