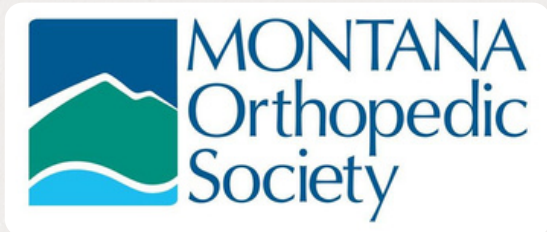

MONTANA ORTHOPEDIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Presidents Message

Greetings from the Montana Orthopedic Society!!

I invite you to consider membership in the Montana Orthopedic Society. The primary purpose of the Society is to provide its members a vehicle for the interchange of medical knowledge as it relates to orthopedic surgery in Montana and surrounding areas. The Society also strives to keep surgeons from this very large and sparsely populated state informed of issues that impact our care of patients.

Our vision is...

- to become a valued resource for orthopedic surgeons practicing in Montana
- for our members to recognize the benefits of membership and want to actively participate in our activities
- to enhance the ability of our members to communicate with each other regarding medical, social, and policy/legislative issues
- to evolve to help face the challenges of orthopedic surgeons practicing in this rural state

Montana Orthopedic Society is the voice of orthopedic surgeons in Montana and protects your interests with policymakers and the public by advocating on your behalf on issues affecting your patients, your practice, and orthopedic medicine.

In addition to advocacy efforts, the Montana Orthopedic Society serves as a necessary resource for busy practicing orthopedic surgeons and delivers a myriad of services to members on a local level. These services are focused on educational programs, communication, and collegiality.

Member benefits include:

- Annual membership dues include registration fees for the annual CME conference and membership meeting, held this year in Whitefish at Grouse Mountain Lodge, Friday February 20 – Sunday February 22nd.
- Opportunities to advocate as a representative at both the state and national levels
- Society delegates attend the National Orthopaedic Leadership Conference as well as other meetings of the AAOS Board of Councilors
- The Society has a voting seat on the board of trustees of the Montana Medical Association
- The Society serves as a communications hub and point of contact for members through newsletters, email and the Society's website:
montanaorthopedicsociety.org.

A strong state society is needed to continue representing your interests with state decision makers and in providing you with membership services. As your state society president, I strongly recommend that you become or remain a sustaining member of Montana Orthopedic Society to ensure a unified organization and voice representing orthopedic surgeons in your state.

Consider volunteering your time or at least sharing your input as you are an invaluable resource to your state society. Your involvement is vital to the continuing viability of the practice of orthopedics. Our specialty, and you, have a strong voice at the state level. Step up and join or renew your membership and volunteer for the betterment of your patients and your practice. Please plan to attend the 2026 Annual Meeting in Whitefish at Grouse Mountain Lodge, February 20-22nd.

Sincerely,
Karen Perser, M.D.
President

Membership

Stronger Together

A strong state society is needed to represent orthopedic interests with state and national decision-makers. We strongly encourage you to become or remain a sustaining member of the Montana Orthopedic Society to ensure a continued unified organization and voice representing orthopedic surgeons in our state.

Our Purpose

At Montana Orthopedic Society, we provide members a vehicle for the interchange of medical knowledge as it relates to orthopedic surgery in Montana and surrounding areas, we promote harmonious moral and ethical standards together with fellowship and good will among its members, and we keep surgeons from our large and sparsely populated state informed of issues that impact the care of patients.

Membership

Montana Orthopedic Society is the voice of orthopedic surgeons in Montana and protects your interests with policymakers and the public by advocating on your behalf on issues affecting your patients, your practice, and orthopedic medicine.

Pricing

Montana MD & DO	\$350.00
Membership and Annual Meeting Registration for Montana based physicians	
Montana PA/NP	\$150.00
Membership and Annual Meeting attendance	
Out of State Providers	\$150.00
Annual Meeting attendance	
Retired MD	\$125.00
Membership and Annual Meeting attendance	
Non Medical/RN,PT,OT/Non Exhibitor	\$125.00
Membership and Annual Meeting attendance	
Student/Resident	Free
Membership and Annual Meeting attendance	



Join Here Today: [Join Now!](#)

2026 Annual Meeting

February 20-22, 2026
Grouse Mountain Lodge
Whitefish, Montana

Date and Location:

Grouse Mountain Lodge :
2 Fairway Drive
Whitefish, Montana



Reservations can be made by calling (406) 892-2525 or
(844) 868-7474
Group Name is Montana Orthopedic Society.

Speaker:

We are working on putting together a group of educational speakers and information will be coming soon!

If you are interested in speaking at this event email us at
mtorthosociety@mmaoffice.org.

Highlighted Speaker: *Lukasz Matuszewski*

Coming all the way from Poland, Professor Łukasz Matuszewski is an experienced specialist in orthopedics and traumatology of the musculoskeletal system, with a particular focus on the diagnosis and treatment of injuries and disorders in children and adolescents. He is also a certified specialist in pediatric surgery.

Agenda:

Registration opens **Friday February 20th** at 2:00pm

Conference ends **Sunday February 22nd** at 9:30am



Click the Link Below to
Register: [Register Here](#)

Survey

Survey Overview- Administrative Burden and Burnout

The Hidden Cost of Clicks: Thresholds of Administrative Burden and Surgeon Burnout

Study Summary:

This national survey aims to evaluate how time spent on non-clinical administrative responsibilities — such as electronic health record (EHR) documentation, prior authorizations, surgical scheduling, and other clerical duties — contributes to burnout among practicing orthopaedic surgeons.

The primary objective is to identify threshold levels (e.g., hours per week) of administrative workload that are associated with increased risk of burnout. By quantifying these thresholds, this study seeks to provide actionable insights into how administrative burden affects surgeon well-being, job satisfaction, and long-term career sustainability.

As a secondary aim, the study will also explore whether resilience serves as a protective factor that mitigates burnout in the face of high administrative demands.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Inclusion: Board-certified or board-eligible orthopaedic surgeons currently practicing in the United States.
- Exclusion: Retired surgeons, orthopaedic surgery residents, and non-orthopaedic physicians.

Survey Details:

- Estimated time to complete: 5–7 minutes
- Anonymity: All responses are anonymous and will be reported in aggregate
- IRB Status: Approved by the institutional review board at Nova Southeastern University Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Principal Investigator/Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Vani Sabesan
- Research Collaborator: Stephen Lancia, Florida Atlantic University Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine; Chase Burzynski, Nova Southeastern University Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine

Purpose of Distribution:

We are asking for assistance distributing the survey through relevant orthopaedic association newsletters, websites, or internal communications. The goal is to reach a broad and representative sample of practicing orthopaedic surgeons across subspecialties and practice settings in the U.S.

Thank you for your support in advancing research to protect and sustain the orthopaedic surgical workforce.

Survey Link:

https://fau.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e3co6DFZcksuudo

Montana Medical Association Legislative Committee

Legislative Updates

The Committee on Legislation, Legal and Legislative Affairs shared information with the MMA Board of Trustees at its annual meeting in September, including highlights of MMA's outstanding success during the 2025 Legislative Session and ongoing advocacy matters. The Board also took action on recommended actions from the Executive Committee on current items impacting the practice of medicine.

The Montana's 69th Legislative Session ended on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, after residential property tax relief was established and a state budget for the next two years of the state's operations was finalized. Sine Dei marked many healthcare victories, including the passage of MMA's four bills and the continuation of the current Medicaid program.

The MMA's wins extended to other bills where the Association weighed in to support, oppose or modify. MMA stood in opposition to 36 bills of which 32 (89%) were defeated or amended to address concerns. MMA saw 57% of the 74 bills supported pass, including 100% of the MMA bills. The total number of bills requested during the 2025 Legislative Session hit a high of 4,495 bills and 1,759 of those were introduced. 54% (950) of all introduced bills were passed.

Hundreds of physician members participated in sixteen online campaigns issued through the MMA's advocacy tool, sending nearly 2,000 messages to state legislators. Adding impactful influence were the attendees of the MMA White Coat Day and Legislator Appreciation Dinner where over 125 participated, including 52 legislators, and the joint effort of our coalition partners.

The MMA has also been engaged over the past months on the One Big Beautiful Bill (OB BB) Act of 2025 (H.R. 1), the massive budget reconciliation bill. Actions included communications sent to congressional members, working with a state-based coalition and through our voter advocacy tool. 126 messages were sent through this tool. Additionally, a public facing tool was utilized to inform the general public and encourage action through a state medical society collaboration.

H.R. 1 also included funding of the Rural Transformation Program which includes an annual distribution of \$100 million to each state for five years. MMA has collaborated with other health care facilities, professionals and medical schools to submit concepts in response to the Department of Public Health and Human Services' Request for Information on the Rural Transformation Program. This MMA conducted a survey of members which identified two priorities: 1) improve access, and 2) increase clinical workforce for a Montana Rural Transformation Program.

Hundreds of physician members participated in sixteen online campaigns issued through the MMA's advocacy tool, sending nearly 2,000 messages to state legislators. Adding impactful influence were the attendees of the MMA White Coat Day and Legislator Appreciation Dinner where over 125 participated, including 52 legislators, and the joint effort of our coalition partners.

The MMA has also issued a letter to CIGNA Healthcare asking the organization to rescind its automatic downcoding policy for evaluation and management services scheduled to be effective on October 1, 2025.

At a state level, the MMA submitted concerns on administrative rules proposed to implement a new law allowing optometrists to perform laser surgery and are monitoring administrative rule proposals related to legislation passed. In August, the MMA weighed in on the HELP 1115 Waiver that implements Montana law requiring community engagement and premiums for the adult population covered by the Medicaid Expansion Program.

CEO Jean Branscum also monitors multiple Legislative Interim Committees who are establishing workplans that include legislative studies passed during the legislative session. The MMA is assisting the Children, Families, Health and Human Services Interim Legislative Committee on public health and system impacts from legalization of marijuana. Dr. Bob Sise will be a panel member on this topic at the November meeting. The Economic Affairs Interim Committee will also tackle the prescription drug supply and distribution topic with multiple panels at their October meeting. Dr. Nicole Clark will serve on a panel to share the physician's perspective.

Medical Malpractice Noneconomic Damages Limitation

The Montana Legislature has passed House Bill 195 (LC 0417), updating the state's noneconomic damage cap in medical malpractice cases for the first time in decades. Effective immediately, the cap for noneconomic damages — such as pain and suffering or emotional distress — increases from \$250,000 to \$300,000, with scheduled annual increases over the next several years:

Under the New Law

The noneconomic damage limit increases as follows:

- \$350,000 effective January 1, 2026
- \$400,000 effective January 1, 2027
- \$450,000 effective January 1, 2028
- \$500,000 effective January 1, 2029
- Beginning January 1, 2030 and each January 1 thereafter, the cap will increase by 2 % of the prior year's limit.

Additional Information

The new law can be found here:

<https://bills.legmt.gov/#/lc/bill/2/LC0417>

More information:

https://bills.legmt.gov/#/laws/bill/2/LC0417?open_tab=sum

Montana Medical Association

Montana Medical Legal Panel

The Unified Voice for Montana Physicians

Since 1879, the Montana Medical Association has served as the unified voice for Montana physicians dedicated to improving patient care. The MMA's mission is to serve our members as an advocate for the medical profession, quality patient care, and the health of all Montana citizens.

Mission

The Montana Medical Association is a membership organization comprised of Montana physicians dedicated to improving patient care. Our mission is to serve our members as an advocate for the medical profession, quality patient care and the health of all Montana citizens.

The Montana Medical Association is a vehicle to represent Montana Physicians on important issues that concern them. You can make a difference by becoming a member of the MMA and voicing your opinion.

Priorities

- 1) Preservation of the physician/patient relationship and patient choice of provider.
- 2) Promotion of ethical and professional behavior among physicians.
- 3) Promotion of the health and well-being of the populace of Montana.
- 4) Promotion of evidence-based health care practice and delivery.
- 5) Promotion of a legislative and regulatory environment that will enhance and not limit or impede priorities 1-4 above.
- 6) Collaborative effort with other health care entities and organizations to promote programs that support the priorities of the MMA.

History

The Montana Medical Legal Panel (MMLP) was enacted into law effective April 19, 1977 by the Montana Medical Legal Panel Act. After enacting the MMLP rules of Procedure, approved by the Montana Supreme Court, the Panel administrative office began processing claims in 1978. Jurisdiction of the Panel was extended to Long Term Care Facilities in 1980; Dentists were added to the Panel in 1987 and Podiatrists in 1997.

The Process

A panel of six will hear cases relating to claims. Panels consist of three attorneys and three physicians with experience in specialties related to the case. The decision of the panel is confidential. The panel is tasked with answering two questions "was standard of care followed" and "was the patient harmed".

