



# Na Leo Ola

Newsletter of the Hawaii Medical Association

Volume 5, Issue 4

April 2025

## Reflections on the 2025 Hawaii Legislative Session

*A Special Edition of Conversations at HMA*

Advocacy for Hawaii's physician community is one of the primary functions of the Hawaii Medical Association. To make sure our members have the latest information on our progress, this edition of Conversations at HMA will focus on providing important updates on the status of healthcare bills and resolutions at the end of the 2025 Legislative Session.

Presenting our update will be **Dr. Elizabeth Ann Ignacio**, HMA President. The work of the HMA Public Policy Committee - along with the efforts of numerous volunteer physicians - have resulted in important progress being made over the last few legislative sessions.

**Conversations at HMA**  
**Reflections on the 2025 Legislative Session**  
**Friday, May 2, 2025 • 5:30 p.m.**  
**Virtual on Zoom**  
**Register at [hawaiimedicalassociation.org](https://hawaiimedicalassociation.org)**

This edition of Conversations at HMA is being presented as a service to HMA members. If you know a colleague who would benefit from hearing this information, please invite them to register for this important presentation.

HMA's advocacy work benefits all physicians in Hawaii, but is directly supported by our membership. You can help ensure HMA's role in shaping Hawaii's healthcare environment by encouraging your colleagues to join; peer to peer engagement is our best recruiting tool.

## Recordings of Three Presentations on Prior Authorization Now Available

HMA hosted and/or collaborated on three excellent presentations on prior authorization. Recordings of these presentations - along with a copy of any slide decks used - are available at [hawaiimedicalassociation.org](https://hawaiimedicalassociation.org).

## President's Message

*by Elizabeth Ann Ignacio, MD,  
FSIR, FACR*



Aloha HMA  
friends,

The Easter holiday weekend was a sweet and pleasant one in Maui, and our family enjoyed some time together. We even welcomed the scattered clouds, a few bright drizzles and a lovely rainbow or two. While Hawaii rain may be inconvenient at times, the water is certainly lifegiving for our islands, and we all enjoy the glorious misty blessings of Hawaii showers.

Like many, I appreciate the Spring time for the shifts and flow toward growth and renewal. I am also excited to observe parallels in HMA each year; seeding our advocacy with great thought and care, refreshing ideas and energy from our diverse membership, patiently and vigorously pressing forward as a team, and cultivating creative solutions for healthcare in Hawaii.

Earlier this month, HMA was pleased to work with UH JABSOM, the Hawaii

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## President's Message

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Provider Shortage Task Force and AlohaCare and welcome speaker David Rosenbloom, PhD to Hawaii. A Professor at the Boston University School of Public Health and an expert on U.S. and international health policy, his more than 40 year career has spanned the public, private, not-for-profit and academic health sectors. Professor Rosenbloom engaged healthcare professionals and community leaders on the complex topic of Prior Authorization, framing this challenge within the bigger picture of our Hawaii healthcare ecosystem. The four events of the week included speakers Dr. Gary Okamoto, Dr. Kelly Withy, Dr. Kaohimanu Akiona Dang, Dr. Nadine Tenn Salle and Dr. Jack Lewin and yielded lively enthusiastic discussion. It is clear that multifaceted, comprehensive changes are needed to address Prior Authorization in Hawaii, and plans may only blossom and grow with coordinated purposeful efforts.

Spring in our Hawaii is quietly magnificent in its beauty, and the rain signals positivity, cleansing, growth, and renewal. Deep breaths. As we move through this season, HMA doctors can draw collective strength, refresh in the lively discourse of the group and renew our spirits as our work is not done. I am honored to serve our HMA and our patients, welcoming the rain and knowing that our hard work together is always meaningful and worthwhile.

Warmest Aloha!

## Executive Director's Message *by Marc Alexander*



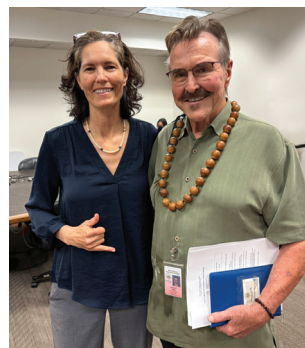
On Friday, April 25, 2025, another milestone was reached for physicians and patients: HB250 HD2 SD2 CD1, addressing prior authorization was reported from conference committee. This bill requires the submission of certain data on prior authorization of health care services to the Hawaii State Health Planning and Developing Agency (SHPDA) and establishes a Necessity Working Group to recommend actions "to improve and expedite the prior authorization process" (Conference Committee report, 4/25/25). The working group is to report its findings and recommendations annually at least 20 days prior to the opening of the legislature.

The next steps include a final vote this week by both the House and Senate, after which the measure will go to Governor Green for his signature. Much more will be said about this measure. For now, we should celebrate and thank our legislators who supported this important bill.

At the conference committee meeting, the Chair of the House Committee on Health, Rep. Gregg Takayama, once again thanked both HMSA and HMA for working together on this bill. He also thanked Rep. Lisa Marten for championing this legislation. The Chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services also thanked Dr. Jack Lewin, HMA member and Director of SHPDA for his invaluable work on this measure. As with other important legislation, this bill is a testament to what can be done when we all work together for the common good.



Top, L-R: Rep. Gregg Takayama, HMA Member Jack Lewin, Rep. Joy San Buenaventura  
Bottom, L-R: Rep. Lisa Marten, HMA Member Jack Lewin



## Ola Pono Ike 2025

The 26th annual **Ola Pono Ike Gala** is scheduled for **Saturday, October 25, 2025** at the Hilton Hawaiian Village, Coral Ballroom I - III. Reconnect with your fellow medical professionals over a sumptuous dinner while enjoying the music of the **Makaha Sons!** You can also help us celebrate: **Angela M. Pratt, MD** - Physician of the Year; **Jerry Wang Van Meter, MD**, Lifetime Achievement; **Kaohimanu Dang-Akiona, MD**, President's Award.

Save the date, and watch for registration information coming soon!