



Na Leo Ola

Newsletter of the Hawaii Medical Association

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Conversations AT HMA

Ensuring healthcare access, equity, and sustainability In Hawaii: Understanding the Potential HPH-HMSA Affiliation

This special edition of Conversations at HMA brings together representatives from Hawai'i's three largest healthcare providers: Hawaii Pacific Health (HPH), The Queen's Health Systems (QHS), and Kaiser Permanente Hawaii (KPH). These three thought leaders will share their assessment on Hawai'i's healthcare environment, how all providers affect its landscape, and their visions towards making healthcare accessible, equitable, and sustainable for Hawai'i's people.

They will also discuss the potential affiliation between HPH and HMSA, and how this may impact our healthcare environment.

Conversations at HMA

Thursday, December 18, 2025

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Virtual via Zoom

Panelists: Raymond Vara, Jr., HPH; Jason Chang, QHS, Ed Chan, KPH

Register at hawaiimedicalassociation.org

Virtual attendees will be able to pose questions to the panel using the Q&A function on Zoom. We will get to as many questions as time allows.

This is a conversation that will garner great interest among the entire medical community. Please share this information with your colleagues.

Sponsored by the Hawaii Medical Association and the Hawaii Medical Foundation.

To register, visit hawaiimedicalassociation.org.

President's Message

by Nadine Tenn Salle, MD



Aloha kākou,

It was an honor to speak with so many of you at our recent Ola Pono ike

Gala and Officer Installation.

That evening marked more than a transition in leadership - it marked a reaffirmation of our shared purpose.

We are living in a time of undeniable strain across our healthcare system. From rising costs and provider shortages to the very real burnout affecting our colleagues, especially on the neighbor islands, we know that patchwork fixes won't carry us forward. What we need now is collective action - led by physicians, rooted in community, and sustained through collaboration.

That's the foundation we're building this year at HMA.

Our priorities begin with strengthening public policy and

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Executive Director's Message *by Marc Alexander*



Grateful for Our Shared Success – Happy Thanksgiving from HMA

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, HMA extends heartfelt gratitude to you - our valued members. Over the past few years, your support has helped us achieve significant legislative milestones, including prior authorization reform and the General Excise Tax (GET) exemption, strengthening healthcare access and affordability for our community.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to moving important discussions forward - such as creating licensing pathways for international medical graduates, advancing quality care through telehealth, ensuring patient safety by limiting prescriptive authority, and making the practice of medicine easier and more affordable. These efforts reflect our shared vision for a stronger, more equitable healthcare system.

Thank you for standing TOGETHER in our shared mission to advocate for physicians and their patients. Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful Thanksgiving filled with peace, gratitude, and hope for the future.

With aloha,

Marc Alexander
Executive Director
Hawaii Medical Association

Prepare for the New General Excise Tax Exemption

A major victory for HMA was the passage of SB1035. This measure exempts hospitals, infirmaries, medical clinics, health care facilities, pharmacies, and medical and dental providers from General Excise Tax (GET) on goods and services that are reimbursed through Medicare, Medicaid or TRICARE. It was unanimously passed by both the Hawaii House and Senate, and signed into law on June 3, 2024 by HMA member Governor Josh Green.

Now called Act 47, the tax exemption is set to go into effect on January 1, 2026. We want our members - and all healthcare professionals - to take full advantage of this new tax law, and to help you prepare, we're collecting questions to ask the Department of Taxation.

Submit any questions about Act 47 you have, and we'll send them to the Department of Taxation. We're also planning an episode of **Conversations at HMA** - working in conjunction with the **Hawaii / Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and JABSOM** - that will pose these and other questions to a Department of Taxation representative during a live interview. Look for an email announcing this Conversation in December; members will be invited to participate via Zoom.

Let's make sure we're all ready for the new GET exemption before it arrives. To submit your questions, visit hawaiimedicalassociation.org. Submit your questions by December 1, 2025.

More Photos from Ola Pono Ike 2025



to see more photos, visit hawaiimedicalassociation.org

Take the Survey!

Your Public Policy Committee Needs to Hear From You!

Advocacy for Hawai'i's physicians is one of the main functions performed by HMA, and each year, we ask our members for the topics that concern them most.

There are numerous areas of concern that affect our healthcare environment, but to be effective, it's important that we identify the top three or four issues and make those our legislative priorities for 2026.

All current members were sent a survey via email, where they could share their thoughts. Please submit your survey answers by **December 12, 2025**, and we'll use your answers to create a legislative priority list for 2026. Watch for our Legislative Priorities Report in January 2026.

Ornament Decorating Day at HMA!

Next month, stop by the HMA office on **Thursday, December 11, between 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**, and get in the holiday spirit by decorating



an ornament! Enjoy some fellowship, light pupu and eggnog, and channel your inner Picasso! We'll hang all member ornaments on our office tree for the entire season.

Share your hidden talents with HMA and help us decorate our office Christmas tree! Hope to see you there!

President's Message

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advocacy. But we won't do this in isolation. True advocacy requires a shared voice - one that includes clinicians across all islands, leaders of our hospitals and health plans, and voices from the Department of Health and our medical schools.

We are also working to create more collaborative spaces for physicians - forums where we can gather to ask, "What do we need to practice medicine here in Hawai'i with integrity, equity, and joy?" This isn't theoretical. It's about shaping how policy is written, how systems are built, and how our profession is respected.

To do this, HMA must grow - not just in membership numbers, but in engagement. In the months ahead, you'll see new opportunities for involvement across committees, events, and advocacy efforts. We invite not only practicing physicians, but also medical students and residents, to be part of this future. They are not just the next generation - they are part of the now.

And to our colleagues on the neighbor islands: your experience must help guide HMA. We hear the urgency in your voices and see the growing inequities in access. We are committed to ensuring you are at the center - not the periphery - of every statewide healthcare conversation.

We're asking every member of our physician community to take a moment to show your support. Help us achieve these goals through an active membership. If you're already a member, consider gifting a younger colleague a membership to encourage participation and mentorship. Join a committee. Lend your voice.

If there has ever been a time to step forward - it is now.

We want to hear from you.

Together, we can strengthen the future of medicine in Hawai'i.

Thank you for all that you do. I look forward to serving with you this year.

Warmly,

Nadine Tenn Salle, MD

President

Hawai'i Medical Association

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