



Na Leo Ola

Newsletter of the Hawaii Medical Association

Volume 4, Issue 9

September 2024

A Call to Action

Hawaii's Physicians Need to Stand Together

Since 1856, the Hawaii Medical Association has represented Hawaii's physicians as the singular voice of the medical profession. Recognizing the ever-changing landscape of medicine and the business of healthcare, HMA understands the unique challenges facing healthcare providers and furthers members' interests and priorities through representation, advocacy and service. Our members – physicians, residents and medical students from all specialties and practices – use their collective voice to influence public policy and help shape the present and future of healthcare in Hawaii.

While the actions of HMA benefit all of Hawaii's physicians, it's only with a large and growing membership that HMA truly will have the clout to affect positive change on a consistent basis at the highest levels.

Here's an open letter from Dr. Laeton Pang. In it, he describes his own membership journey, and his belief in the importance of standing together.



Laeton Pang, MD

Dear Esteemed Colleagues:

Having practiced now for 30 years, I've become increasingly concerned with the state of medical care in Hawai'i, and am writing to ask for your urgent consideration in joining the Hawai'i Medical Association. The stakes are high - even if you are planning to or are ready to retire - and we need as many physicians who will join together to say that we need serious reform to keep Hawai'i and ourselves healthy.

I used to think that advocacy was most important at the national level through specialty societies, but have come to appreciate the importance of being both an active member in the AMA and the Hawaii Medical Association. The reasons are simple: advocacy is a team sport; and second, we need a seat at the table or we will be on the menu. Nearly three quarters of the doctors in Washington are members of the Washington State Medical Association, which has one of most powerful medical lobbies in the country. Contrast that to about 1 in 10 for Hawai'i and you can see why it's difficult to get attention for our most pressing issues.

If you've not already done so, please join us at the Hawai'i Medical Association today.

Laeton J. Pang, MD, MPH, FACR, FACRO, FACCC, FASTRO

Let's Grow Our Membership!

If you're not currently a member of HMA, we encourage you to join our 'ohana. If you are a member, we thank you for your support, and ask that you help by recruiting at least one colleague to join this year.

Executive Director's Message *by Marc Alexander*



In less than a month we will be celebrating Ola Pono Ike on Saturday, October 19, 2024, at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. It's the 25th Anniversary of this wonderful celebration of physicians and those who contribute to the health of our community. This year we are honoring **Dr. Whitney Limm** as Physician of the Year, **Dr. Tom Kosasa** for Lifetime Achievement, and **John Henry Felix** for Community Service – three outstanding leaders who have touched our community for decades.

Joining us for Ola Pono Ike this year will be **Dr. Sandra Adamson Fryhofer**, former chair of the board for the American Medical Association. She has been active in the AMA for more than two decades. In addition, she has served as president of the American College of Physicians (ACP), the world's largest medical specialty society. AMA has been sending a representative to our gala for many years and we are truly grateful for their support and for Dr. Fryhofer's presence. During her visit, she will also be speaking with the medical school students at the John A. Burns School of Medicine.

One of the issues that our membership has highlighted for action is prior authorization. To this end we have established a new webpage, **Fix Prior Authorization Hawaii**, available via the HMA website. We encourage physicians and patients to listen to the introductory podcast, *Understanding Why Prior Authorization Matters: Interview with Emily Carroll, Senior Attorney with the AMA Advocacy Department*. This interview by HMA provides an excellent overview of the issue by the AMA's top expert on prior authorization.

The Motion for Leave with Proposed Amicus Brief for the Nitta vs. HMSA case was filed with the court on September 20, 2024. The brief was filed jointly by the Hawaii Medical Association and the American Medical Association. The document is available on the HMA website, with additional commentary for HMA members on "member tidbits."

Mahalo from the Hawaii Medical Foundation

Thank you to all who contributed funds for the Hawaii Medical Foundation fundraising effort to purchase all the white coats and stethoscopes for the JABSOM class of 2028. Your generosity fully covered the costs this year with a small excess of funds which will remain in the HMF restricted "White Coat Ceremony" account to be used toward next year's event.

At Ola Pono Ike in October we will welcome many medical students. Please introduce yourself and join HMA leadership in welcoming them.

Again, thank you for your generosity in supporting the HMF annual fundraising for the White Coat Ceremony.

With aloha,

Jerry Van Meter, MD

President, Hawaii Medical Foundation

HMA Members in the Community



Jerris Hedges, MD and **Samuel Birir, MD** volunteered their time for a panel at the Hawaii Book and Music Festival. Dr. Hedges also served as moderator for the day's health-related talks.



Join HMA immediate past president **Angela Pratt, MD** at the Susan G. Komen More Than Pink Walk on October 13, 2024. Dr. Pratt is the Presenting Sponsor of the walk. See her Walk video here: vimeo.com/1012538097/cb8ee82242?share=copy



Join past HMA president and Honorary Walk Chair, **Michael Champion, MD** for the NAMI Hawaii Walk on October 12, 2024. Sign up for his team and register for the walk at namihawaii.org.