

## Advocating for Family Medicine in North Dakota

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## Objectives

- ▶ 1. List the priorities of the medical association for the 2025 Session
- ▶ 2. Understand the scope of practice expansion bills being brought in 2025 session
- ▶ 3. Understand the issues being brought forward from the 2024 interim session.

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Prior Authorization	Reporting of maternal drug use	Radon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ND legislative Interim Committee Study</li> <li>• Coalition building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a waiver from reporting if actively treating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ND very high</li> <li>• Statute requires radon testing disclosure</li> <li>• Minimal public awareness, even among physicians</li> </ul>

## 2025 NDMA Legislative Priorities

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<h3>Medicaid Expansion</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain rates</li> </ul>	<h3>Medicaid</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain inflationary update</li> </ul>	<h3>UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the budget submitted</li> </ul>
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## 2025 NDMA Legislative Priorities

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## ND Legislature - primer

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    graph TD
      A["In North Dakota - every bill receives at least one hearing, is given a recommendation and heard on the floor."] --> B["Bills receive a committee hearing where the committee is presented testimony, then votes them out of committee. The next day, the full body—the Senate or House—votes on them."]
      B --> C["If a bill is defeated, it's dead, unless it is amended into another bill. If it passes, the process is repeated in the opposite chamber (house or senate)."]
  
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## Radon in North Dakota

Every county is in Zone 1!

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## Radon is the leading cause of non-smoking lung cancer

### Radon Risks

- ▶ Radon exposure significantly increases the risk of lung cancer.
- ▶ Radon is the most common cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked.
- ▶ Lung cancer can develop quickly 5 to 15 years after exposure.
- ▶ It takes 44 years for the radon-associated risks of cancer to decrease.

<https://www.jabfm.org/content/34/3/602>



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### Radon Risks

- ▶ Radon exposure has also been associated with:
  - ▶ Male factor infertility
  - ▶ Alzheimer's disease
  - ▶ Strokes
  - ▶ Pregnancy complications including preeclampsia and gestational hypertension.
- ▶ The risks of radon are higher in children, pregnant women, smokers, and people with chronic lung diseases such as asthma and emphysema.



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### Current ND law

- ▶ Sellers must disclose if they've tested for Radon.
- ▶ No requirements for testing.
- ▶ Public knowledge about the hazards of radon, even among physicians, remains notably lacking.

<https://www.jabfm.org/content/34/3/602>



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### Maternal Drug Use Reporting

- ▶ Ob/gyn physicians indicate that women are not getting the pregnancy care they need for fear of being reported
- ▶ ND law currently has a waiver for women in treatment
- ▶ Treatment is not always necessary and/or practical

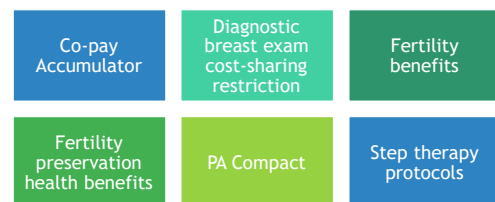
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### New waiver

- ▶ A health care professional or a social service professional who is mandated to report under this chapter is exempt from reporting if the professional is providing or collaborating with other professionals to provide the woman with prenatal care, postpartum care, or other health care services, including care of the woman's infant. If the woman does not continue to receive regular prenatal or postpartum care, after the woman's health care professional has made attempts to contact the woman, then the professional is required to report


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### Other bills




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## Other Priorities




- ▶ Support patient safety issues.
- ▶ Support independent judgment of physicians.
- ▶ Support public health initiatives.
- ▶ Support physician scope of practice and oppose inappropriate challenges to scope of practice.



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## Possible Scope Bills

- ▶ Optometrists - laser surgery
- ▶ Physical therapists ordering imaging: MRIs
- ▶ Physician assistant name change to Physician associate



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## Why Is Scope So Difficult?

-  Legislators do not like to be in the middle of disputes
-  There is a strong desire to help rural health care with lower-level providers
-  The groups wanting to expand scope are highly motivated and can come back year after year

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## Culture War Issues

- Vaccines
- Transgender
- Abortion
- Parental Rights



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## The Problem with Immunization Bills

- ▶ Immunization was never a popular topic.
- ▶ Now the politicization of COVID-19, high resistance to science-based arguments.
- ▶ The more logical the argument, the more push-back from libertarian-minded legislators.
- ▶ “We have to give them something”.

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## Know your Legislators

-  Get to know who represents you
-  Be familiar with your district; some span wide swaths of area; some are concentrated
-  Stay informed and stay involved! Many people are unaware of the impact that one email, phone call, or point of contact can have on a legislator as they decide how to vote
-  On a weekly basis, all NDMA members receive legislative updates, access to a revised “Bill Tracker”, and notices of upcoming legislation




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## Networking

- o Establish your group's network for contacts and, most importantly, for decisions
- o Establish methods for instant communications
- o They read their email. Use it, but don't abuse it. Email addresses are on the Legislative Council website
- o Many legislator's cell phone numbers are available on the contact information website page
- o When contacting legislators, always use the specific bill number (SB 2300, HB 1475) rather than say you're calling about 'more police for Dickinson' or 'funding for hospitals'

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## Networking

-  Vital to contact all concerned parties and legislators as far ahead of time as possible
-  Work out areas of support or polite disagreement. If you can't get support, at least get neutrality
-  Legislators do not like to be put in the middle of turf disputes


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## Advocacy Is More Than Legislation


- ND Supreme Court - Upholding Damages Cap
- Regulatory Issues - Pathology Testing
- NDMA is involved in nearly every North Dakota private and public health-related policy committee
- Appointment to Boards and Commissions
- Officer Leadership within District and NDMA

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- ▶ The Doctor of the Day program is a unique opportunity that gives NDMA physician members an opportunity to network with legislators, government officials and local leaders, while serving as Doctor of the Day.
- ▶ This historic and highly successful program provides primary care services to legislators at the capitol through the legislative session beginning Jan. 7.




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- ▶ The program features its very own exam room equipped with basic exam equipment and over-the-counter medication.
- ▶ *You do not need to practice family medicine to volunteer*; many specialties such as thoracic surgeons, urologists, orthopaedic surgeons, hospitalists, and more volunteer for this service.
- ▶ Coverage is needed Monday through Friday and hours are flexible
- ▶ *This program is NOT LIMITED to a one-day event.* Choose as many days as you want.

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## 2024 Policy Forum Topics




- ▶ Recreational Marijuana
- ▶ Community Health Worker
- ▶ Behavioral Health/Mental Health treatment



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## Keeping Physicians Informed

- ▶ E-Physician
  - ▶ Published digitally each week
- ▶ ND Physician Magazine
  - ▶ Print and digital form
- ▶ Social media




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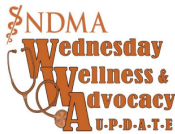
## Other Benefits of Membership

- Best Card/CHIPD Partnership
- ND Physician Magazine
- Weekly E-physician
- COPIC Insurance Partnership
- Collegiality with Other Physicians

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NDMA  
Physician  
Advisory  
Group



NDMA  
Wednesday  
Wellness &  
Advocacy  
U-P-D-A-T-E

- ▶ Physician Advisory Group (PAG)
  - ▶ Up-to-Date News on State-Level Issues
  - ▶ Up-to-Date Information on vaccine developments
  - ▶ Physician Support Group
- ▶ Wellness Wednesday Webinars
  - ▶ Advocacy Tips
  - ▶ Wellness Tips
  - ▶ Touch-Point With Other Physicians

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