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FEEL MORE LIKE A PROBLEM?**



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COA Report

California Orthopaedic Association

December 31, 2021



How Clinical Collaboration Improves Efficiency & Care
Speed Workflows, Ease Scheduling & Satisfy Patients

View Webinar

Happy New Year!

COA is looking forward to a prosperous 2022 for all our members and partners. As we reflect on the past year for the industry, we would like to provide the readers of the *COA Report* a look at the most accessed articles from 2021. Our regular publication will resume Friday, Jan. 7.



**Appropriate Patients
for Topical Therapy:
Important
Considerations**

CHARLES ARGOFF, MD

Professor, Neurology
Albany Medical College
Director, Comprehensive Pain Center



**LEARN
MORE**

Legislative Win for COA

COA-Sponsored Legislation Passes – Governor Signs Into Law
AB 356 (Chen) – Fluoroscopy – Temporary Permit

No longer will surgeons moving to California be delayed in getting into practice as they apply and wait to take the California state-mandated fluoroscopy certification test. Getting scheduled for this test can take 6 months since it is a very manual process, during which time, the surgeon is prevented from using fluoroscopy in their surgeries.

AB 356 sponsored by the California Orthopaedic Association and the California Podiatric Medical Association authorizes a licensed physician and surgeon or doctor of podiatric medicine who has used fluoroscopy in another state to receive a one-time 12-month temporary permit authorizing them to operate or supervise the operation of fluoroscopic x-ray equipment while they wait to take the fluoroscopy certification test. The California Radiological Society also supported the bill.

COA had sought a solution to this issue for the last several years as we had continually received complaints from orthopaedic groups who were adding new surgeons to their group. **This bill helps all orthopaedic surgeons coming to California regardless of their practice setting.** The bill struck the right balance. Allowing surgeons to utilize fluoroscopy, but still maintaining radiation safety for patients.

SPONSORED VIDEO



JEFFREY GUDIN, MD

Professor of Medicine
Department of Anesthesiology,
Perioperative Medicine and
Pain Management

University of Miami Miller
School of Medicine

ACP/AAFP Clinical Guideline Updates

The American College of Physicians (ACP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) recently revised their clinical Guidelines for Pain to recommend topical NSAIDs as first line therapy for the treatment of non-low back pain from musculoskeletal injuries in adults. Listen to Dr. Gudín share his insights for clinicians.

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

NEW COA MEMBER BENEFIT

COA

VERADIGM STAND-ALONE ePRESCRIBING PLATFORM

As of January 1, 2022 two things will change in prescribing medications:

1. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) is requiring that Part D prescriptions for Medicare patients for controlled substances must be submitted electronically.
2. California is mandating that all prescriptions be submitted electronically.

To assist COA members in complying with these requirements, COA has partnered with Veradigm (a business unit of Allscripts) to offer its members access to a stand-alone application for e-prescribing. A stand-alone option allows physicians to e-prescribe even though they do not have an EHR system in their practice.

Veradigm ePrescribe is fully compliant with all California and federal mandates and has the following capabilities:

- Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Substances (EPCS)
- Connectivity to CURES - California's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)
- Electronic Prior Authorization (ePA) within the ePrescribing workflow
- Ability to access patient-specific drug price information at the point of care via Veradigm RxTruePrice



Veradigm is offering COA members a 15% discount on their e-prescribing app.

- \$29 per health care provider per month with ads
- \$33 per health care provider per month without ads.

For more information, [listen to the video presented at COA's 2021 Annual Meeting](#).

Helena Molyneux can be contacted at: 908-283-1364 or helena.molyneux@veradigm.com.

[Click her to sign-up for the COA program.](#)

Top 10 Developments in California Workers' Comp — 1st Half of 2021

Boxer+Gerson, LLP

From July 9: At midyear, it's time to assess the top developments in California workers' comp during the first half of 2021. Separating the signal from the noise is not always easy. But here is my assessment of the important developments and trends, in the California system, in no particular order.

[READ MORE](#)

What Physicians Should Know About Biden's Tax Proposals

Healio

From March 19: With the Democrats controlling both houses of Congress, there is a likelihood that President Joe Biden's tax proposals may pass this year. To understand what new tax laws might look like, we can examine what has been proposed, what Biden talked about during the campaign and some ideas that have been brought up since the campaign. While we have no way of knowing what actual tax law will be passed, it is helpful for physicians to know at least what has been discussed as they connect with advisors to have 2020 tax returns prepared and look ahead to 2021 tax planning.

[READ MORE](#)

DWC Legal Counsel Answers 4 Key Questions Asked at COA's 2021 QME Course — Clarifies Other Issues

DWC

From July 2:

Question 1

Discussion at the meeting:

Labor Code 4062.3 requires parties to confer prior to sending records to QME/AME and to send the records 10 days in advance of evaluation. If the QME/AME does not get the records 10 days prior to the evaluation, they can communicate to the parties that the records were received, but not reviewed pursuant to California Code of Regulations 9793 (n) because they were not received 10 days prior to the evaluation. Parties will have to send a request for a supplemental report asking the QME/AME to review records.

Suggested sentence to put in Medical-Legal Report – Records were received but not reviewed per CA Code of Reg 9793 (n). If you want me to review the records, please send a request for a supplemental report. (If Declaration not received with records, add – Please also send the required Declaration which includes the number of pages of records sent.)

Response from DWC Legal Counsel:

In review of Labor Code § 4062.3 and regulation § 9793(n), we cannot find where it requires records be delivered to the QME 10 days in advance of the evaluation. However, there is a reference in regulation § 35(i) which indicates that the physician's course of action if the records have not been received 10 days after the date of the evaluation.

[READ MORE](#)

Kaiser Laying Off Hundreds of Healthcare Workers Across Northern CA

KRON

From June 4: Kaiser Permanente is laying off hundreds of healthcare workers across Northern California. The layoffs will affect more than 200 healthcare workers at facilities all over Northern California, Union Press Secretary Renée Saldaña confirmed with KRON4. The workers impacted include admitting staff who are often the first line of interaction with patients, patient transport staff who help get patients to the right place for care in Walnut Creek and Antioch, and patient care technicians who provide bedside care in Oakland, among others.

[READ MORE](#)

California Plans to Open Up — June 15

California Medical Association

From June 11: As California businesses begin to transition back the physical workplace, employers understandably have many questions about what is, and is not, allowed as we continue to grapple with the fallout of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Working with employment lawyer Oscar Rivas of Landegger Rivas Verano & Davis, the California Medical Association (CMA) prepared an FAQ to help employers understand their rights and obligations. Download the document: [Returning to the Physical Workplace: Legal parameters and considerations for employers.](#)

[READ MORE](#)

News from the Division of Workers' Compensation

From Oct. 15:

A Must Watch Course for Qualified Medical Evaluators (QMEs)

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has launched an update to their educational training module, "Evaluating California's Injured Workers: Qualified Medical Evaluators." This course is strongly recommended for all California Qualified Medical Evaluators (QMEs) and treating physicians and staff who want a better understanding of evaluating impairment issues. The course is complimentary.

To access the training module: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/OnlineEducationalModules/QME.htm>

Click on: "QME Training Module — Including Importance Guidance on Apportionment"

Log in

Scroll down to find the training module entitled, "Evaluating California's Injured Workers: Qualified Medical Evaluators."

DWC Updates the OMFS for Physician and Non-Physician Services (treatment fee schedule) Effective March 1, 2021

COA

From Feb. 19: The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has updated the Official Medical Fee Schedule (OMFS) for Physician and Non-Physician Services to include the 2021 CMS Medicare updates.

Unlike CMS, the DWC does not calculate the reimbursement amount for each CPT code based on your geographic location. COA provides this service.

To order an Excel spreadsheet of the updated Official Medical Fee schedule and the updated coding rules, [click here](#).

Complimentary for COA Members
\$250 for Non-Members

To pay your 2021 COA dues, so that your membership is current and you can receive complimentary access to the Fee Schedule, [click here](#).

AAOS Board of Directors Approves Update to Clinical Practice Guideline

AAOS

From Sept. 9: The AAOS Board of Directors approved the full update to the 2013 Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG) for Treatment of Osteoarthritis of the Knee. The 2021 Clinical Practice Guideline on Treatment of Osteoarthritis of the Knee (Non-arthroplasty) Third Edition includes updates to all 19 evidence-based recommendations included in the second edition of the guideline, with a total of 29 nonsurgical treatment recommendations.

[READ MORE](#)

DWC Releases Updates to the Medical-Legal Fee Schedule — Effective April 1, 2021

From March 5:

Highlights of the new Fee Schedule:

- Flat rate system starting at \$2,015 which includes 200 pages of records. \$3.00 per page of records thereafter. A projected 25% increase over existing reimbursement levels.
- Supplemental Medical-Legal Evaluation – \$650 - includes review of 50 pages of records.
- Reimbursement for Missed Appointments – \$503.75.
- Depositions - \$455 per hour – 2 hour minimum.

[READ MORE — DWC Newsline Medical-Legal Fee Schedule](#)

[COA Summary of Changes](#)

[Attend COA's 2021 Annual Meeting/QME Course to learn more about these changes.](#)

Apportionment Issues — California Workers' Compensation System

From Sept. 17: Steven Feinberg, M.D., a well-respected AME, shares his thoughts on sorting out Apportionment Issues — when preparing a Permanent & Stationary (P&S) Report as a treating physician for injured workers or as a Qualified Medical Evaluator (QME).

To read his thoughts, [click here](#).

If you want to share your comments/thoughts about Apportionment with Dr. Feinberg, contact him stevenfeinberg@hotmail.com with a copy to COA — admin@coa.org.

COA Report

Connect with COA



[Hailey Golden](#), Director of Publishing, Multiview, 469-420-2630 | [Download media kit](#)
[Brie Ragland](#), Asst. Executive Editor, Multiview, 469-420-2604 | [Contribute News](#)

California Orthopaedic Association
1246 P Street | Sacramento, CA 95814
916-454-9884 | [Contact Us](#) | www.coa.org

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