

8th District Branch Council Report
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Blue Cross/Blue Shield (Health Now) has notified physicians that they will now reimburse for SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment.) This evidence-based program is used to identify, reduce and prevent use, abuse and dependence on alcohol and illicit drugs. The Blues have stated that this change in policy was precipitated by the work of the MSCE.

The MSCE hosted its annual Legislative Breakfast on Friday, January 19, 2018. Attending were Senators Gallivan, Jacobs, Assembly members Norris, Schimminger, Wallace and Walters. Also in attendance were Erin Baker (Chief of Staff, R. Walter), Paul Bologna (Chief of Staff, M. Norris), Kenneth Burlinski (Chief of Staff, R. Schimminger), Jennifer Devoe (Staff for S. Ryan) Michael Hettler (General Counsel, M. Ranzenhofer), Sean O'Neil (Field Representative, C. Jacobs), Rick Rodgers (T. Kennedy), Eamon Weber (Chief of Staff, A. Morinello), Lisa Yaeger (General Counsel, C. Peoples-Stokes). Discussion centered on local response to the enactment of the expansion of the statute of limitations without med-mal reform, and the expectation that patients may be subject additional radiation exposure due to inconclusive radiological reports as well as increased costs to the entire healthcare system because of defensive medicine. The legislators were advised that a number of radiologists have announced that they will no longer read mammograms; that a number of physicians were looking at opportunities to leave NYS and have initiated a review of current office policies and procedures so as to be in compliance with patient discharge, transfer of medical records and custodianship of records when licensure is granted from physician friendly states. Other issues that were discussed the potential impact patient care if CRNAs are allowed independent practice and retail clinic expansion.

The medical societies of the counties of Genesee, Niagara and Orleans announced that as of December 31, 2017 they have legally dissolved the organization formerly known as the Medical Society of Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, aka MSGNO. Each society will now act independently. Discussions are on-going between the 8th District and the Genesee and Orleans County Societies for administrative services and oversight to be provided by the District.