

# TULSA MEDICINE

Tulsa County Medical Society | A Newsletter for the Medical Community

September 2023



## APPRECIATION DAY AT THE TULSA ZOO

Sunday, September 10th, 2023

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# TULSA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT'S LETTER



**TULSA COUNTY  
MEDICAL SOCIETY**  
Physicians Advancing Health Care

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## TULSA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY & TCMS FOUNDATION

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Well, we've finally made it to September!

Can you believe it? If you are like me, you're happy to have some cooler weather on the horizon after this summer's 100+ degree days. September 23rd is the last day of summer, and I think we'll all be glad to enjoy a more comfortable autumn with all its beautiful weather and changing leaves.

School has started for our children, and of course it has started up for new medical students too. I recently attended the welcome lunches for first-year medical students at OSU and OU, which is always an exciting and inspiring time. It was great to see so many eager faces ready to pursue their medical career and serve their community when they graduate. And it was an honor to share with them the value of being a part of TCMS and OSMA.

Speaking of OSMA... The OSMA Board Trustees meeting took place in August, and I had the pleasure of attending as a trustee, participating in making a positive difference for those of us working and giving back through the healthcare field. I am happy to shares that the proposed changes in membership structure for the OSMA has been officially approved by the OSMA House of Delegates, and I look forward to reviewing the specifics of those changes as they become available.

I definitely encourage anyone with an interest in becoming involved in a leadership role in OSMA or TCMS to do so. It's fulfilling to make an impact, and these groups can only benefit from the volunteerism and involvement of caring members of our healthcare community — like *you!*

Onto fun things now! September has so many opportunities for you to celebrate family!

This year, Labor Day is September 4th, and I hope that, like me, you are making plans to take a little time off to relax and recharge. As members of the healthcare field, we can tend to work long hours, burn the candle at both ends, and stay so busy that we don't take time for ourselves and our families. So, yes — go to brunch, get a massage, and engage in

a little self-care on this holiday that honors all your hard work and dedication to your patients.

Join us on Sunday, September 10th for TCMS Member and Project TCMS Volunteer Appreciation Event at the Tulsa Zoo. This fun day for the whole family is a way to say thank you to our Tulsa County Medical Society, TCMS Foundation, and Project TCMS members and volunteers. Zoo admission, lunch, face painting, and an animal chat with appearances from zoo animals are all included. More information can be found [here](#). Be sure to register in advance so we can plan for who's coming — and best of all, it's free!

Plus, September 10th is also Grandparents Day — and whether it's a trip to the zoo, or a special dinner, or a visit to help them do a little work around the house, make time to show a little extra love to the grandparents in your life. For those of you who are grandparents already, reach out to your grandkids that day and enjoy their presence somehow. These moments of life are precious, and we all benefit mentally, emotionally, and physically from strong, healthy relationships with others. I encourage you to make every moment with them count — this September, and every other chance you get. They are one of the main reasons we do what we do.

All the best,

Sharon Smallwood, M.D.

*"Change is good- unless it isn't!"*



**Sharon C.  
Smallwood, M.D.**  
TCMS President

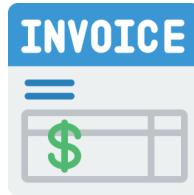


## DUES INVOICES COMING SOON

Tulsa County Medical Society will be sending out Membership Dues Invoices at the beginning of October.

Please be on the look out for these in both your email inbox and physical mail. If your status has changed, such as going to part-time or retiring, please let us know so we can make the appropriate changes by emailing [joetta@tcmsok.org](mailto:joetta@tcmsok.org) or call 918.743.6184.

Thank you for your membership and support of organized medicine!



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### September 4, 2023

Happy Labor Day - TCMS Offices Closed

### September 10, 2023

TCMS Member and Project TCMS Volunteer Appreciation Day at the Tulsa Zoo - *More details at left*

### September 19, 2023

OSDS Regular Scheduled Series  
Location: Mahogany Prime Steakhouse  
RSVP: [joetta@tcmsok.org](mailto:joetta@tcmsok.org)

### September 23, 2023

Oklahoma Allergy and Asthma Society (OAAS) Annual Meeting  
First National Bank in OKC  
[Click Here](#) to register

### September 29 - October 1, 2023

District VII 2023 Annual District Meeting 2023 theme, Your Best You: Succeeding at Life and Work - Tulsa, Oklahoma  
If you have questions, send them to [district7@acog.org](mailto:district7@acog.org)  
PLICO is partnering with ACOG District VII to offer Risk Management premium credit for attendance at the Friday, September 29, 2023 sessions.

### October 11, 2023

TCMS Board of Directors Meeting

### October 24, 2023

PLICO Evening Rounds at TCMS  
Dinner: 5:00pm-6:00pm  
Program: 6:00pm-8:00pm  
MPL Lessons Learned: 10 Years in Review  
Graham Billingham, MD, FACEP, FAAEM  
Chief Medical Officer, MedPro Group  
For questions, please call 405.815.4800

PLICO are hosting other Evening Rounds events in Tulsa this fall  
Please [Click HERE](#) for more information

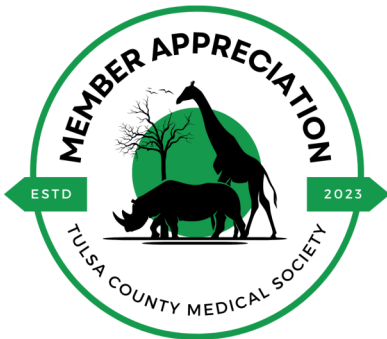
### PROPER PRESCRIBING VIRTUAL CME

Friday, September 15, 2023; Noon - 1 PM

*To sign up or for more information, contact Sandy Deeba, 405-601-9571*

\*Signed into law in 2018, Oklahoma's Senate Bill 1446 mandates that all physicians complete one hour of CME in pain management per year. To help Oklahoma's physicians better understand how this new law impacts their practice and patients, the Oklahoma State Medical Association is hosting special CMEs in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. This one-hour event offers insight to the legal issues affecting pain management and an overview of the new laws connected with prescribing opioids to patients. All Oklahoma physicians with a DEA license are required to take this one hour course annually.

## APPRECIATION DAY OVER 350 REGISTERED!



The response has been overwhelming for our inaugural TCMS Member and Project TCMS Volunteer Appreciation Event. We have over 350 people registered to attend!

Tulsa County Medical Society and the TCMS Foundation wish to thank our members and volunteers by providing a fun day for the whole family. If you missed the registration deadline, we still want to say 'Thank you' so be on the lookout for a letter coming to you this September.

Again, thank you for your partnership and support!

Since 2012, Project TCMS (Tulsa Charitable Medical Services) has had a significant impact on our community.

Total Referrals	1,551
Total Services	5,736
Physician Volunteers	185
Total Donated Care	\$9,629,224

## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

There are several opportunities for leadership within TCMS and OSMA. This includes TCMS Board of Directors positions as well as Trustee and Alternate Trustee positions with OSMA.

If you have any interest in these roles or would like more information, please contact Mark McElreath, Executive Director, at 918.743.6184 or email [mark@tcmsok.org](mailto:mark@tcmsok.org).



## SAVE THE DATE

NOV  
3

The Tulsa County Medical Society Annual Meeting and Scholarship Awards Dinner will be held on the evening of **Friday, November 3, 2023**.

*The time and location will be announced soon.*

In addition to a guest speaker, we will recognize and congratulate the TCMS Foundation Scholarships recipients.

## ANNUAL MEETING & *Scholarship Awards*

NOVEMBER 3, 2023

For 100 years, the Oklahoma Medical Board has promoted the Health, Safety and Well-being of the citizens (patients) of Oklahoma by requiring high levels of qualifications, standards and continuing education for regulated medical licenses.

We take pride in our agency's ability to ensure that qualified healthcare professionals are available to the citizens of this state.



Learn more about our purpose and vision at [www.okmedicalboard.org](http://www.okmedicalboard.org)

# PHYSICIANS OPINION POLL (POP) RESULTS

## POP Question 1.1:

Which is THE team/university?  
(A fun question to help break the ice)

**OU = 63 %**  
OSU = 18 %  
Other = 05 %  
Neither = 14 %

**2.1** The TCMS Board is considering putting together a one day event, possibly with CME, aimed at providing physicians, residents, and medical students with information on practice management.

Please indicate your interest in the following topics:

Scale (1=Not Interested, 2=Somewhat Interested, 3=Interested, 4=Very Interested, 0=Does Not Apply)

	1	2	3	4	0
Advocacy, Political Process	0%	32%	18%	32%	18%
Billing - Revenue Cycle, Collections, Claims	18%	23%	14%	18%	27%
Benefits to Staff, Employees	32%	14%	23%	5%	27%
Financial - Banking	18%	27%	27%	18%	9%
Financial - Loans (Business & Personal)	23%	41%	5%	14%	18%
Financial - Estate Planning	27%	9%	23%	32%	9%
Importance of Organized Medicine	9%	23%	23%	32%	14%
Legal - Contract Review, Negotiations	14%	14%	18%	32%	23%
Media Relations - Marketing, Branding, Addressing Media	23%	9%	23%	23%	23%
Medical Malpractice	18%	32%	18%	14%	18%
Medical Supplies	45%	23%	5%	9%	18%
Real Estate - Commercial	50%	9%	9%	14%	18%
Real Estate - Personal	45%	14%	14%	9%	18%
Staffing	27%	27%	14%	14%	18%
Technology - IT	14%	27%	18%	27%	14%
Technology - EHR / EMR	23%	18%	23%	18%	18%

**2.3** Would you attend a one day conference held on a Friday from 9 AM-4 PM, with lunch served?

	Maybe	Yes	No
	59%	23%	18%

**2.4** If yes, would you attend a networking/happy hour from 4-5 PM?

	Maybe	Yes	No
	45%	32%	18%

Scale (1=Makes No Difference, 2=Somewhat Interested, 3=Interested, 4=More Interested, 0=Does Not Apply)

	1	2	3	4	0

**2.5** If CME were offered, would you be:

	1	2	3	4	0
	23%	0	14%	41%	23%

**2.2** Are there any additional topics of interest that were not listed, but you'd like to have the board consider?

Some answers shared with us:

- Budgeting and Investing
- Addressing insurance issues with the State Insurance Commissioner
- Education
- Physician Leadership in Healthcare
- Retirement
- Examples of private practice physicians
- Advocacy and Scope of Practice
- Managing no-shows and late cancellations
- Health policy in OK
- AI applications to medicine

**Thank you to those who took the time to complete this Physician Opinion Poll. If you have not yet completed it, there's still time to take the poll. We'll leave the poll open for a few more weeks to allow you the time to voice your opinion.**

[Click Here to Vote](#)

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# HOW MUCH DO PRIOR AUTHORIZATIONS COST YOU?

In this article I share how much income prior authorizations (prior auths) are costing you annually. Be forewarned: it's a lot of money.

## Background

I live with Long Covid. It sucks. However, it gives me rare nights when I am wide awake at 2:00 a.m., in the zone, and laser-focused. One of those nights, I calculated how much income prior auths cost the average physician annually. My exercise, or challenge if you will, involved pulling together disparate data from the American Medical Association (AMA), the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA), and the Coalition for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH). Claire Ernst, MGMA's Director of Government Affairs, vetted my extrapolations and calculations, so I feel pretty good with my effort.

## The bottom line

Prior auths reduce your personal bottom line by an estimated \$11,046.67 annually. Let's extrapolate. It's important to include nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other clinicians seeing patients in the office, as they generate prior auths as well.

10 clinicians: \$110,466.70 annually  
25 clinicians: \$276,166.75 annually  
50 clinicians: \$552,333.50 annually

Want to know something scary? Those expenses do not factor in appeals of prior auth denials. Appeals increase the expense quickly because appeals involve your time as well.

I looked at 2,000 upper endoscopy prior auths over 18 months with one payor. Our first pass success rate was 97.3%, but it cost us \$9,740 in employee expense. We appealed the residual 54 denials and got all but 8 overturned. The cost of these appeals in lost clinician time? \$9,450 over and above the \$9,740 spent in employee time.

## What you should do

Prior auths are overhead. They take money out of your pocket.

1. Refer to testing and infusion centers that do the prior auths for you. Let them spend their employee time on the auths.
2. Whether you refer to places that do them for you or your office does the prior auths, get your documentation and ICD-10 codes right the first time. Know what is needed by the payor, and get it right the first time. It will save you time and money, and it will get your patients the care they need sooner.
3. Consider gold carding\* with guardrails. You don't need blanket gold carding that covers anything you could conceivably order, and no payor will grant it. Instead, you want to ask that you be given a gold card for certain procedures/ tests you order frequently so that you don't need to go through the prior authorization process for them. In the aforementioned upper endoscopy example, I used my documented 97.3% first pass and 99.6% second pass success rates in my gold card request. I did not ask for gold carding for things gastroenterologists don't normally do or order; I kept the focus tight to succeed in my request.
4. Change never happens for the better when we stand on the sidelines. Make your voices known legislatively. I use 'voices' rather than 'voice' because prior auth delays impact your patients (care delays) and your employees (more expenses means less money for raises). Via e-mails, flyers in exam rooms, and the like, each of them can take 2-3 minutes to make their voices heard and thereby make a difference. Here are the things to include in the ask:
  1. Automate the prior authorization

process. Practices pay employees thousands upon thousands of dollars annually to wait on hold for payers.

2. Standardize the prior authorization guidelines and processes across payers, including step therapies.
3. Adopt reasonable and achievable gold carding thresholds for procedures/tests.
4. Finally, it is important to know your numbers to put things in perspective. Sharing my upper endoscopy statistics, including care delay time frames, makes it real. And if I can share how the care delay impacted the care of a patient, it makes it human. A little work on the front end is needed to bear fruit on the back end.

## Does it seem like you're doing more prior auths than ever?

If it does, you are right. I have estimated the volume of prior auths is up 23.9% over pre-pandemic levels. That's scary. If first-pass prior auths cost your practice \$100,000 in 2019, it is costing you \$123,900 this year. And that errantly assumes you are paying your staff what you did in 2019; your actual overhead increase is much higher.

For now, I ask that you focus on reducing your prior auth overhead. Refer to those who do the prior auths for you, fine-tune your documentation, track your numbers, and make your legislative voices known.

\* Gold carding is the term used when a payor permits a clinician to forego the prior authorization process for a procedure, test, or group of either.

Lucien W. Roberts, III, MHA, FACMPE is a mostly retired private practice administrator. He has been a member of the Physicians Practice family for many years and continues to share his insights and opinions on occasion.



## Letter from the Owner

Hello! I'm Tiffany Turner, the owner of Swallowing and Neurological Rehabilitation, a regional adult medical speech pathology center here in midtown Tulsa. I am a board certified swallowing specialist, one of only a handful in the midwest, and my team and I offer several highly specialized services that no one else in the area provides. I first opened SNR almost 10 years ago, and we just recently expanded the clinic and tripled our space in order to be able to serve more patients in need of our services.

We regularly treat individuals with diagnoses such as head and neck cancer, progressive neurological diseases, strokes, traumatic brain injuries, laryngeal injuries or pathologies, dementia, autoimmune conditions, and many others.

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- endoscopic swallow studies (FEES),
- videostroboscopy voice exams,
- neuromuscular electrical stimulation and other treatments for swallowing impairments,
- the SPEAK OUT! Parkinson's voice treatment program,
- myofascial release/manual therapy for fibrosis and lymphedema,
- individualized treatment for various voice, swallowing, and airway pathologies, and
- standardized testing and individualized treatment for aphasia and cognitive-linguistic impairments.

We truly love what we do and would love the opportunity to serve your patients. Please feel free to reach out if we can help in any way, and I'd love to connect.

Sincerely,

*Tiffany Turner*

**Tiffany Turner, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S**

☎ (918) 928-4700

✉ therapy@tulsasnr.com

🌐 www.tulsasnr.com

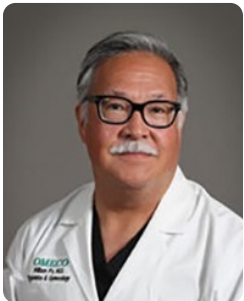


## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



### **Patrick J. Kennedy, M.D.**

Kennedy Centers for Wellness  
Christian Healthcare  
Physician Owner  
1215 N. Birch Ave  
Broken Arrow, OK  
[info@kennedyCentersforWellness.com](mailto:info@kennedyCentersforWellness.com)



### **William D. Po, M.D.**

OB-GYN  
Clinical Professor  
OSU Obstetrics & Gynecology  
717 S Houston Ave Ste 200  
Tulsa OK 74127  
918-586-4500



### **Pratyaksha Sankhyan, M.D.**

Pulmonary Critical Care Medicine  
Ascension Medical Group  
1725 E 19<sup>th</sup> St Ste 200  
Tulsa OK 74104  
918-748-8361

*By joining TCMS and OSMA our members are among friends, colleagues, and peers, who share their interest, concern, and dedication, to the medical profession. Our strength relies on individual members like these, who are committed to making an impact on the field of medicine.*

*Share with them the opportunity to join! Have them visit [www.tcmsok.org/join](http://www.tcmsok.org/join) or have them contact Mark or Joetta at 918.743.6184 or email [tcms@tcmsok.org](mailto:tcms@tcmsok.org).*



## IN MEMORIAM



### **David O. King, D.O.**

July 24, 1950 To August 27, 1923  
TCMS Member since 2015 (8 Years)

Dr. David O. King, age 73, went on before us into the arms of Jesus on Sunday, August 27th at his home in Bartlesville, OK after a long year of battling bladder cancer. He is survived by his wife, Deborah and their four children, Matthew, Nathan, Jonathan, and

Natalie (East), his two brothers, Greg and Paul, and 7 beautiful grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and sister Valerie.

David was born in Mississippi to Oscar and Lucille King in July of 1950. In early childhood his parents moved him and his siblings to Dewey, Oklahoma where David grew up. David graduated from a Bartlesville high school, received a bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma, and achieved his doctorate in Osteopathic Medicine from Oklahoma State University/Tulsa Osteopathic School of Medicine.

David and Debbie were married in June, a couple of weeks before he graduated from medical school. The couple moved directly to Staten Island, New York where David began his Internship training with the Public Health Service. He continued on with the Public Health Service, training in his residency program for Orthopedic Surgery. He completed his Orthopedic Surgery Residency with the US Army with the highest rank as Major. After serving in the US Army at various stations, the Kings moved from Manhattan, Kansas to Chanute, Kansas where David was in private practice and worked at Neosho Memorial Hospital.

In 2007, David moved his family back home to Bartlesville where he joined an Orthopedic surgeon group associated with Jane Phillips Hospital. He ultimately joined the Orthopedic group, Tulsa Bone and Joint of Bartlesville, where he closed out his Orthopedic Surgeon career with great love and dedication to his community and to his patients.

What David enjoyed most in life was taking care of the people around him, serving them, and loving them. His great passion for audio books and sharing meaningful ideas with others in order to help them on their life's journey, was to ultimately point them to know the Savior Jesus. He believed that having a personal relationship with Jesus was the most important thing above all knowledge, accomplishment, money, influence, or striving. He often said, "The only thing you can take to heaven with you is other people " and that was what he tried to do as he shared the vast knowledge, love, and wisdom that the Lord had blessed him with. He hopes he sees you there.

To view the full obituary [click here](#).

*Our deepest sympathies and condolences to the friends and family of these members.*

If you would like to make a contribution in the memory of these individuals, please mail your donation to TCMS Foundation at 5315 S. Lewis Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74105 or call our office at 918.743.6184.





# TULSA MEDICINE

A Newsletter for the Medical Community | September 2023

Tulsa County Medical Society

5315 S. Lewis Avenue

Tulsa, OK 74105-6539

YOUR  
*schedule*  
MATTERS AT MABREY

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