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March 16, 2018



COA Report

California Orthopaedic Association

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TOP NEWS

CMA applauds new efforts to achieve universal access to healthcare



California Medical Association

The California Medical Association applauded legislation that sets a clear and realistic path forward to achieve universal access and improve affordability to healthcare in California. Launched by SEIU CA, Health Access and NextGen America, key components of the legislative package will help increase access to care and expand access to undocumented patients. [READ MORE](#)



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Do you have Workers' Compensation Questions? Need QME CME hours? Attend COA's 2018 Annual Meeting/QME Course for answers. Leading Workers' Compensation experts will discuss apportionment issues and regulations expected in 2018 – Utilization Review and Medical-Legal Fee Schedule.

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Everything you need to know about the new Medicare cards (but beware of scams)



Kaiser Health News

In April, the government will start sending out new Medicare cards, launching a massive, yearlong effort to alter how 59 million people enrolled in the federal health insurance program are identified. Historically, Medicare ID cards have been stamped with the Social Security numbers of members. The new cards address concerns by removing each member's Social Security number and replacing it with a new, randomly generated 11-digit "Medicare number." [READ MORE](#)

Study: PRO tool may help identify patients likely to benefit from lumbar spine surgery



The JAMA Network

A study published online in the journal JAMA Surgery offers evidence to validate a patient-reported outcome measure for patients who undergo lumbar spine surgery. The authors surveyed 1,965 adult lumbar surgical candidates at baseline and at least once postoperatively within three years. Demographic and clinical characteristics included in the final prediction models were age, sex, race, insurance status, American Society of Anesthesiologists score, smoking status, diagnoses, prior surgery, prescription opioid use, asthma and baseline PRO scores. [READ MORE](#)

National analysis projects 2019 premium hikes of 30 percent in some states and cumulative increases of 90 percent or more in the next 3 years



Covered California

A new analysis finds that every state in the nation is at risk for higher than normal premium increases due to continued policy changes and uncertainty at the federal level. In the absence of any federal action to address the current environment, the report estimates that premium increases across the nation could range from 12 to 32 percent in 2019 and have a cumulative premium-increase total between 35 and 94 percent by 2021. [READ MORE](#)

Telehealth billing compliance: Medicare says goodbye to the GT modifier



Health Care Law Today

For over a decade, Medicare has required providers to append special modifiers to their CPT and HCPCS codes when billing for telehealth services. The two primary modifiers for telehealth services were GT (indicating the service was delivered via an interactive audio and video telecommunications system) and GQ (indicating the service was delivered via an asynchronous telecommunications system). Effective Jan. 1, CMS has decided to largely eliminate the requirement to use the GT modifier on telehealth claims. [READ MORE](#)

Study: Cortisone injection within 6 months of primary surgery may increase risk of revision rotator cuff repair



EurekAlert

Cortisone injections are a common nonsurgical approach to treating rotator cuff injuries. However, researchers presenting their work at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's Specialty Day in New Orleans suggest that individuals who receive injections less than six months before a rotator cuff repair may have an increased risk for revision rotator cuff repair. [READ MORE](#)

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