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## Ortho News This Week

### ADVOCACY



#### Reducing physician burnout starts with increasing advocacy

This article is to inspire orthopaedic surgeons to get engaged in improving the healthcare bureaucracy, which in turn will benefit physician well-being. Some may recommend that the way to prevent physician burnout is to practice yoga, mindfulness, or laughter therapy—these are excellent stress reduction and resiliency techniques. But, some of the contributors to physician burnout is having to deal with layers of bureaucracy and regulations that interfere with your ability to take good care of your patients. Positive change in your life must be made in all of these areas.

#### What must physicians do to bring about positive changes?

##### One answer is simple: advocacy.

Physicians know how factors impact them and your patients' lives. When policies harm patients—such as time-consuming prior authorizations—physicians need to speak out and get involved; physicians need to advocate for change.

Most physicians know little about how to engage in system change. You are busy taking care of your patients and continuing your medical knowledge. As the systems in which physicians practice medicine have changed, getting engaged in advocacy is more important and can reduce your stress and distress. It can be energizing to speak out for the betterment of your profession, your patients, and work environment. It is not effective to sit back and let those who have not walked (or practiced) in your shoes tell physicians that these regulations or policies are necessary.

Your voice and the voices of your patients and colleagues need to reach the ears of those in a position to make better laws, policies, regulations, and work environment. That is what advocacy can do. Each of us can make change happen in your own organizations, and at the local, state, and national level.

Since advocacy takes time, how is this possible?  
Physicians all have too little time in your workplace these days.

First, “many hands make light work”—the more physicians who are involved, the less time it takes to impact change. Second, if physicians want better systems, regulations, and policies, they must be at the table and part of the conversation and decision making. Third, advocacy can make a difference to reduce burnout and disengagement.

Here are **4 tips** for effective advocacy:

1. Join California Orthopaedic Association--your advocacy group in California--and get educated on the issues. To join or pay your 2019 dues: <https://coa.org/members/>
2. Get active in COA to work on system improvements on the state and national level.
3. Invite your elected official to have coffee or visit your office.
4. Use the “take 5” approach. Take 5 minutes to call, email, or write a letter to your elected official on a specific topic. Remember: Keep it simple and specific.

If you are inspired to take action, [let COA know and we will help with introductions.](#)

If you already know your local representative, [let COA know, so that we can alert you when there is an important issue affecting orthopaedic practice that your representative will be voting on.](#)

COA email: [admin@coa.org](mailto:admin@coa.org)

Your Participation Will Make a Difference.



## California DOJ greenlights CHI-Dignity merger, with conditions



Modern Healthcare

The California Justice Department gave its conditional approval Wednesday of the merger between Dignity Health and Catholic Health Initiatives, marking an important—but not final—step toward finalizing the merger. The department's green light follows a rigorous review process. The combined entity, which will be called CommonSpirit Health, has already received approval from the Federal Trade Commission and the Catholic Church, and is on track to close by Dec. 31 to create a not-for-profit health system with 140 hospitals and more than 700 care sites across 21 states, including 30 hospitals in California. [READ MORE](#)

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