

# Practice Management Insight

A report on events affecting behavioral health and substance abuse providers

February 2018

## Oklahoma Medicaid providers could face rates cuts in March

Medicaid providers could face a cut again as soon as March, particularly if the nasty flu season continues.

The Oklahoma Health Care Authority faces a budget shortfall in the coming months because of problems with federal and state funds. The authority administers SoonerCare, the state's Medicaid program, and there isn't much the board can do to generate substantial savings other than to cut rates, or hope that the Legislature comes up with some extra funding, deputy CEO Garth Splinter said.

"That's seemingly the only two realistic expectations," he said.

Cash flow problems are expected to start in March, said Tasha Black, the authority's budget fiscal planning director told board members at their Thursday meeting. Trouble could start sooner if the authority gets a high volume of medical claims, she said. So far since July, claims have been lower than expected, but that could change because of widespread flu activity.

The state portion of the shortfall is about \$9.5 million the Legislature didn't appropriate to make up for revenue the authority lost when the Oklahoma Supreme Court struck down the \$1.50-per-pack cigarette tax, Black said. The initial shortfall was about \$70 million, but program cuts and special appropriations narrowed the gap.

The bigger problem is about \$31.8 million the federal government says was improperly paid and has decided to recoup. The authority received the money and distributed it to the medical schools at University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. The idea was to compensate the schools for services their medical students provide to Medicaid patients and to help ensure a steady supply of new doctors, Splinter said.

[For more information](#)

Telehealth put to use in rural America	Can Small Organizations Survive
SAMSHA offers an online treatment services locator to help consumers find behavioral health providers in their region. But this web tool also demonstrates the shortage of substance use treatment providers in many rural areas. Meanwhile, between 1999 and 2015, opioid-related overdose death rates in rural areas quadrupled among those 18 to 25 years old and tripled for females, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.	We've found that coverage of financing and reimbursement in health and human services draws a lot of comments from our members. So does the issue of insolvency. Our reporting on the recent study of the financial status of non-profit community-based organizations drew lots of comments—see If 1 In 8 Community-Based Organizations Are Insolvent, The Answer Is? Most of the comments were from executive directors of organizations under \$5 million in revenue who shared their strategic challenges.
"Looking at SAMSHA's map of Michigan, pretty much anywhere above Grand Rapids, there is only a dot here or there. Health Services in Traverse City.	<a href="#">For More Information</a>

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## House fails to pass 'Step Up Oklahoma' budget plan on initial vote

The Oklahoma House of Representatives failed to pass the Step Up Oklahoma budget plan on an initial vote, officials announced Monday night.

Although the vote failed, House Speaker Charles McCall said he's keeping the vote open until midnight. "Oklahoma teachers gathered earlier on Monday for a rally at the state capitol. Hundreds of advocates from education, health care, nursing home, business and other groups are at the state capitol in support of Step Up Oklahoma, calling for reform, including a plan for a \$5,000 salary increase.

The sweeping package of tax hikes on tobacco, motor fuel and oil, natural gas and wind production that would generate nearly \$600 million to fund a teacher pay raise cleared two key Oklahoma legislative committees last week.

Special budget committees in the House and Senate each passed House Bill 1033 on Thursday, setting up potential final votes in the House and Senate early next week.

[More Information](#)

## Conference of Opioid Addiction Fellows

OKLAHOMA CITY – State Rep. Mike Ritze recently attended the inaugural National Conference of State Legislators' Opioid Policy Fellows in New Orleans on Jan. 26-28.

Ritze, a board certified family practice physician and surgeon, was invited to the conference after being selected as one of 25 state lawmakers from across the country to be an NCSL Opioid Addiction Fellow. Conference attendees had the opportunity to build knowledge about new research and policy, exchange ideas and solutions related to opioid misuse and overdose, meet and learn from other legislative leaders, connect with leading researchers and policy experts, and identify practical information to use in their home state to develop action steps to combat the opioid epidemic.

"This isn't a partisan crisis or a socioeconomic crisis," Ritze said. "This is an American crisis. This conference provided lawmakers from both sides of the aisle an opportunity to learn more about and understand the current opioid epidemic as well as to network and talk about potential legislative steps that are or aren't working in their home states. The conference was informative and a great tool heading into the upcoming legislative session."

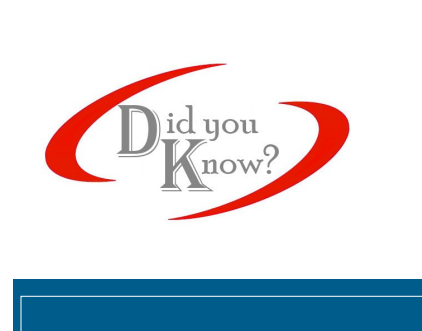
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Drugmakers Spent Millions Promoting Opioids To Patient Groups	Workplace tips: How to handle work when you're depressed
Drugmakers Gave millions of dollars to pain-treatment advocacy groups over a five-year period beginning in 2012, in effect promoting opioids to individuals most vulnerable to addiction, according to a new report released Monday by a U.S. senator. The 23-page report, put out by Missouri Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill, sheds light on the pharmaceutical industry's efforts to shape public opinion and to fuel demand for such lucrative and potentially addictive drugs as OxyContin, fentanyl and Vicodin. These drugs have played a key role in the addiction crisis that has swept the U.S. in recent years, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives.	Work can be challenging in even the best of circumstances — but when you're depressed and not feeling your absolute best, getting through each workday can be a real struggle. Many folks grapple with depression in both their personal and professional lives, and it can make getting through each day and handling daily responsibilities difficult. According to a recent study by The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), "an estimated 16.1 million adults aged 18 or older in the United States had at least one major depressive episode in the past year. This number represented 6.7% of all U.S. adults."
<a href="#">For More Information</a>	<a href="#">For More Information</a>



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR


<a href="#">February 2</a> Ground Hog Day
<a href="#">February 8</a> OHCA Board Meeting <a href="#">More Information</a>
<a href="#">February 14</a> Valentines Day
<a href="#">February 16</a> Mental Health First Aid Youth ODMHSAS
<a href="#">February 16</a> Addiction Severity Index Update <a href="#">More Information</a>
<a href="#">February 17</a> American Society of Addiction Medicine Criteria <a href="#">More Information</a>
<a href="#">February 19</a> Presidents Day
<a href="#">February 21</a> Suicide Prevention Conference <a href="#">More Information</a>



- February is...
- American Heart Month
  - Black History Month
  - National Children's Dental Month
  - Canned Food Month
  - National Weddings Month
  - National Cancer Prevention Month



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