

Optum public policy and regulatory experts share the right information at the right time

We've all heard the saying, "knowledge is power." But when it comes to uncovering information about the twists, turns, stops, and starts of legislative and regulatory policy development, a more appropriate saying might be "patience is a virtue."

"Sometimes we just don't know what we don't know," says Kevin Tribout, Vice President of Public Policy and Regulatory Affairs for Optum Workers' Compensation. To remain as informed as possible, he and others work tirelessly to monitor and track developing legislation and regulation so they have the right information to share with clients at the right time.

As Adam Fowler, Manager of Public Policy and Regulatory Affairs, explains, "Legislation is unpredictable and can take months, or even years, to go through the process." After numerous modifications, hearings, and resulting amendments, "The day a bill passes, it often looks vastly different from the day it was introduced."

That's why the Optum Public Policy and Regulatory Affairs (PPRA) team works directly with policy makers during legislative and regulatory development. Using their industry expertise and ability to view changes from a pharmacy, ancillary, settlement, or medical provider position, they offer insight on topics as wide-ranging as fee schedules and formularies, physician dispensing and opioids, medical marijuana and Medicare Set-Asides.

“

We make sure our clients only receive news that is relevant to them and not industry noise.



Adam Fowler
Manager of Public Policy
and Regulatory Affairs

Evaluating legislation and regulation involves lots of details to organize, legalese to interpret, if/then statements to flowchart, and updates to sort. This is where the Optum PPRA team really shines.

According to Kevin, “We spend a lot of time weeding through hundreds of federal and state policy actions to determine the level of information we need to share with clients; what actions, if any, a client should take; what actions, if any, Optum should take; and any other next steps needed.

Adam agrees, “And then we do this over and over and over, so our clients have just the information they need about what might be coming their way until the bill passes or dies.”

So, why not just tell clients everything? Because policy changes can mean program changes. For a payer — and a claims management company like Optum — a change could require updates to billing and processes, which in turn require IT development and system changes. Both of these use resources and time. Passing along updates before a bill is passed can be a slippery slope. Since the bill often changes up until the day it is signed into law, too much information too soon could be a futile experience.

“

We do it because we want our clients to know that when they see an email or a post or a presentation from Optum, it means something to them and may impact how they do business.



Kevin Tribout
Vice President of Public
Policy and Regulatory
Affairs



“We work really hard to be the gatekeeper of policy information for our clients and the industry,” states Adam. “Through regular client updates, presentations and calls, podcasts, industry events, and even a policy tracker on our website, we make sure our clients only receive news that is relevant to them and not industry noise.”

“That’s right,” stresses Kevin. “The goal here at Optum is to make sure that injured persons receive the right treatment at the right time. We really share in that goal by making sure our clients receive the right information at the right time.”

The well-known author and speechwriter James Humes said “The art of communication is the language of leadership.” This sums up one of the primary goals of the Optum PPRA team — leading by thoughtfully communicating.

As Kevin puts it, “The work we are doing here isn’t flashy. Not many people wake up every morning excited to dive into a pile of policy updates. But we do it because it helps make the process better for our clients. We do it because we want our clients to know that when they see an email or a post or a presentation from Optum, it means something to them and may impact how they do business. We do it because it’s important.”

For more information on all the legislation or regulations the Optum PPRA team is tracking, visit our [Legislative and Regulatory Tracker](#) webpage. Plus, check out Kevin and Adam on their [Policy Guys podcasts](#) for updates and information on legislative actions.

The journey of California legislation, [Assembly Bill 399 \(2021/2022\)](#)

**February
2021**

Introduced to address medical provider networks and limit contracting

**January
2022**

Significantly amended to replace most of the prior provisions and simply require basic MPN information be provided to injured persons

**May
2022**

Major amendment to instead apply to independent bill review (IBR)

**July
2022**

Still pending...

About Optum Workers’ Compensation and Auto No-Fault Solutions

Optum Workers’ Compensation and Auto No-Fault Solutions collaborates with clients to lower costs while improving health outcomes for the injured persons we serve. Our comprehensive pharmacy, ancillary, managed care services, and settlement solutions, combine data, analytics, and extensive clinical expertise with innovative technology to ensure injured persons receive safe, appropriate and cost-effective care throughout the lifecycle of a claim. For more information, email us at expectmore@optum.com.

© 2022 Optum, Inc. All rights reserved. All other brand or product names are trademarks or registered marks of their respective owners. Optum continuously improves our products and services and reserves the right to change specifications without prior notice. TL-22-1275