



## 2024 Legislative Agenda

### **AzHHA Priorities**

#### Hospital Certificate of Necessity (CON) Exemption

Interfacility transport and patient flow has long been a challenge but has recently reached unsustainable levels. AzHHA will lead an effort to improve patient transport by exempting certain interfacility transports from CON requirements. This effort will include the creation of a new Certificate of Operation (COO) for any interested hospital to operate their own interfacility transports or contract with a local fire department/district to get patients to the right level of care at the right time. Delays in transportation and increased costs have left hospitals in an impossible position when attempting to transfer to higher level or specialty care facilities. This effort aims to alleviate the wait time for transport and free up hospital beds to care for those in the community that need acute care services.

#### Health Plan Accountability

AzHHA will continue to hold health plans accountable and ensure timely payment and credentialing of providers. This includes requiring health plans to provide current contact information for personnel responsible for handling grievances, establishing a neutral third party to hear grievances and speeding up time for credentialing of providers. This bill also aims to require payment for medically necessary care provided during the credentialing process if the provider is enrolled with the health plan.

### **AzHHA Supported Efforts**

#### MA Scope of Practice

AzHHA will support efforts from provider partners to expand the scope of practice for Medical Assistants (MA) that will ultimately reduce the administrative burden on providers. This effort will allow MAs to communicate documented medical advice, documented interpretation of test results, and documented orders from a licensed medical provider. Their expanded scope would

also include the ability to obtain, process, and communicate medication and/or procedure prior authorization as documented and ordered by a licensed medical provider.

## **AzHHA Budget Efforts**

### Permanent Increase to the CAH Pool

Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) are vital to serving the health care needs of our rural community. During the 2023 legislative session, CAHs received a one-time supplemental pool increase of \$5 million (\$12 million total fund). We are thankful for this increase, but this must be converted to ongoing funding. AzHHA will focus on an ongoing general fund appropriation to the CAH Supplemental Payment Pool.

### Protecting Budget Priorities

AzHHA is aware of upcoming budgetary constraints the State of Arizona is expecting. We will remain vigilant ensuring that hospitals across our state are a priority and work to reduce any decrease in funding for hospitals and overall patient care.

## **AzHHA Defense**

Consistent with prior years, AzHHA will oppose legislation that negatively impacts hospital operations, hospital finance, or evidence-based best practices.