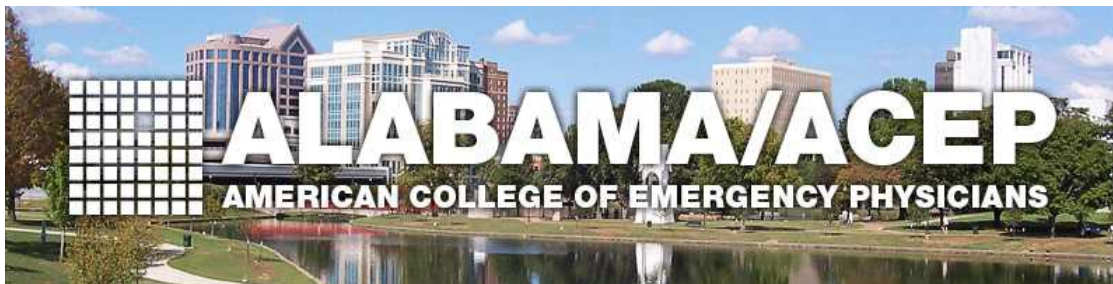


A Newsletter for the Members of the Alabama Chapter - Spring 2025

[View Web Version](#)



In this edition:

[Tort Reform and Emergency Medicine: Where Alabama Stands](#)

[New Guidelines from AL Board of Medical Examiners](#)

[Pediatric Emergencies on the Rise: Key Trends for Alabama EDs](#)

[EMerald Coast 2025: Save-the-Date](#)

[Alabama's Opioid Epidemic: What Emergency Physicians Need to Know in 2025](#)

[South Alabama Announces Newest Members of Residency Program](#)

News from ACEP:

[Resources and Latest News](#)

[Upcoming ACEP Events & Deadlines](#)

Tort Reform and Emergency Medicine: Where Alabama Stands

Alabama's 2025 legislative session has reignited debate around tort reform, a key issue for physicians—especially in high-risk specialties like emergency medicine. Senate Bill 293 is among several proposals aimed at reducing the cost and risk of malpractice litigation. The bill includes measures to cap noneconomic damages in lawsuits, limit third-party litigation financing, and allow courts greater control over venue changes in civil cases.

Supporters argue that these reforms could reduce frivolous lawsuits, lower malpractice insurance premiums, and make Alabama a more attractive state for practicing physicians. Critics warn that such changes could limit patients' ability to seek justice and hold negligent providers accountable. For emergency physicians, the stakes are high: EDs are often named in lawsuits due to high patient acuity, documentation challenges, and split-second decisions.

Alabama ACEP and other advocacy groups continue to monitor these bills closely and are working to ensure that any legal reforms also protect patient safety and physician integrity.

More reading:

- <https://aldailynews.com/tort-reform-legislation-discussions-to-continue/>
 - <https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1729399>
-

New Guidelines from the Alabama Board of Medical Examiners

The Alabama Board of Medical Examiners (BME) and the Medical Licensure Commission have issued several regulatory updates relevant to emergency physicians and advanced practice providers. Key changes include amendments to licensing procedures for physician assistants and anesthesiologist assistants, updates to controlled substance certificate requirements, and a new election process for commission officers, including term limits for the chair.

These updates are designed to streamline administrative processes and ensure greater transparency and accountability within the BME. Emergency physicians, particularly those supervising APPs or managing controlled substances, should be aware of how these rules may affect credentialing, practice logistics, and compliance efforts.

The BME website provides a full breakdown of changes and timelines, and physicians are encouraged to review the updates or consult their hospital's compliance officer to avoid disruptions. [Read here](#).



WHY I GIVE

"I give to ALAPAC because it truly matters who represents us in Montgomery and across the state! Healthcare policy evolves quickly and medicine needs a seat at the table and ALAPAC helps provide that. When laws change, it affects not only us as emergency physicians but also our patients. We must each do our part to support ALAPAC's efforts on our behalf."



**Text ALAPAC to 91999
to donate today!**



**Bryan Balentine,
M.D., FACEP,
Emergency
Physician and
Member,
ALAPAC
Birmingham
Regional Board**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON PAC CONTRIBUTIONS. Contributions to Alabama Medical PAC (ALAPAC) are not tax deductible. Political contributions to ALAPAC are voluntary and are not limited to the suggested amount. The Medical Association will not favor or disadvantage any person based on the amount of the member's contribution or a failure to contribute. This is not a solicitation for PAC contributions from any individuals who are foreign nationals (non-green-card holders). Contributions by foreign nationals are prohibited by Federal law.

Pediatric Emergencies on the Rise: Key Trends for Alabama EDs

The 2024–2025 respiratory season has led to a noticeable spike in pediatric ED visits across Alabama, primarily due to RSV, influenza, and COVID-19 co-circulation. RSV alone has caused a sharp increase in hospital admissions for children under age five, with regional hotspots reporting bed shortages and longer wait times for pediatric specialty care.

Children's of Alabama continues to issue guidance for managing RSV and other respiratory illnesses, emphasizing early detection, respiratory support strategies, and effective triage. Meanwhile, adolescent mental health-related visits—including suicide attempts and behavioral crises—are also increasing, particularly in underserved areas without pediatric mental health services.

Emergency physicians should prepare for these dual challenges—infectious illness surges and mental health crises—by reviewing updated clinical pathways, coordinating with pediatric hospitals when needed, and advocating for expanded resources.

Read more:

<https://www.childrensal.org/news/rsv-what-parents-should-know>

<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/data/index.html>

EMerald Coast 2025



Make plans to join us for EMerald Coast 2025, an educational meeting for all emergency medical service personnel including physicians, PAs, NPs, nurses, EMTs, administrators, recruiters and corporate suppliers. This four-day meeting provides attendees with the opportunity to earn CME at the beach along with plenty of free time to relax and reconnect with colleagues.

We have been approved for 18.5 hours of CME!

Monday, June 2 - Thursday, June 5, 2025

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort

Destin, Florida

A tentative agenda and registration information are available on our website. Visit <https://www.alacep.org/meeting-updates/> for details.

Accreditation Statement

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama through the joint providership of the Medical Foundation of Alabama and the Alabama Chapter-American College of Emergency Physicians. The Medical Foundation of Alabama is accredited by the Medical Association of the State of Alabama to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

Designation Statement

The Medical Foundation of Alabama designates this live activity for a maximum of 18.5 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™]. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Alabama's Opioid Epidemic: What Emergency Physicians Need to Know in 2025

Alabama's opioid crisis shows no sign of abating in 2025, and emergency physicians remain on the front lines of this escalating public health emergency. Recent data reveals a troubling rise in fentanyl-related deaths—up 22% in Jefferson County alone—and a 6.73% increase in overdose mortality statewide. Fentanyl, often laced into counterfeit pills and other illicit drugs without users' knowledge, continues to drive the surge in both fatal and nonfatal overdoses.

Emergency departments have seen firsthand the evolving nature of opioid-related presentations—patients arriving in profound respiratory depression, sometimes unresponsive to standard naloxone doses due to the high potency of synthetic opioids. Compounding the crisis is the increasing prevalence of polysubstance use, including combinations of fentanyl with xylazine (“tranq”), methamphetamines, or benzodiazepines, which complicate reversal and withdrawal treatment.

In response, Alabama has launched a Central Data Repository (CDR) in coordination with the Alabama Opioid Overdose and Addiction Council. The CDR is a surveillance system designed to collect real-time overdose data from EMS, law enforcement, and hospitals. The goal is to detect overdose “hot spots,” issue rapid alerts, and better coordinate local and regional responses—an essential tool for overstretched EDs and public health officials alike.

Emergency physicians are not only critical to acute overdose management but also to connecting patients to long-term care. Tools like prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs), buprenorphine waiver training, and bridge

programs to addiction treatment are increasingly vital. Many EDs are also adopting protocols to initiate medication-assisted treatment (MAT) in the ED and coordinate immediate follow-up with outpatient providers.

Key clinical considerations for Alabama EDs in 2025:

- **Carry and administer high-dose naloxone** in suspected fentanyl/xylazine cases.
- **Screen for polysubstance use** and provide appropriate supportive care.
- **Use CDR data** to anticipate regional overdose trends.
- **Incorporate MAT options** and connect patients with community treatment programs.
- **Educate patients and families** about overdose risks, naloxone use, and safe storage of medications.

With overdose deaths still on the rise and synthetic opioids evolving, staying informed, proactive, and connected to broader public health efforts is more essential than ever.

Read more:

<https://druguse.alabama.gov/>
<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/pharmacy/assets/drugthreatassessment2025.pdf>

South Alabama Announces Newest Members of Residency Program

"I am thrilled to announce the newest members of our residency program! We are excited to welcome the following outstanding individuals who will be joining us for the next academic year.

These future colleagues bring exceptional talent, dedication, and passion for emergency medicine. We look forward to welcoming them into our team and supporting their growth as they embark on this exciting journey."

Walker Plash, MD

USA HEALTH | EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Emergency Medicine – Incoming Class - Residents 2025 - 2028

			
Chasen Birdsong	Stephen Curry	William Davis	Grant Harris
DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine	St. George's University School of Medicine	Heersink School of Medicine UAB	Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine
			
Mary Anne Mendes	Mark Slusher	Whitney Vaughan	Erin Ward
St. George's University School of Medicine	University of South Carolina School of Medicine	Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine	Heersink School of Medicine UAB

MATCH 25

UAB Emergency Medicine Residency Program



Margaret Baldwin
University of Alabama at
Birmingham



Sarah Balkcom
Lincoln Memorial
University



Caleb Gatwood
William Carey
University



Anupa Ghimire
University of Alabama at
Birmingham



John Heard
University of
Mississippi



Janie Hubbard
University of
Tennessee



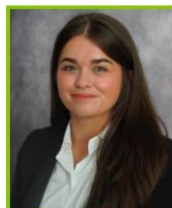
Elle Kartzmark
University of
South Carolina - Columbia



Kristen Linares
Baylor College of
Medicine



Nick Orris
Medical College of
Georgia



Liz Pittman
Mercer
University



Thomas Sanders
University of
South Carolina - Columbia



Shahn Washington
University of Alabama at
Birmingham



Ian McCullough
Uniformed Services University
of the Health Sciences

UAB MEDICINE

FROM NATIONAL ACEP



ACEP Resources & Latest News

ACEP Urges Congress to Reject Harmful Medicaid Cuts

This week, ACEP joined 42 national medical organizations in a letter opposing proposed Medicaid changes that would result in devastating coverage losses and reduced access to care. [Read more.](#)

ACEP-Supported Legislation Would Bring Fairness, Due Process to Physicians

Protecting clinical autonomy empowers emergency physicians to always be able to put patients first. That is why ACEP continues to fight for the bipartisan, bicameral 'Physician and Patient Safety Act' to guarantee due process rights for all physicians... [Read more.](#)

ACEP Pushes Back on Efforts to Cut Student Loan Forgiveness

ACEP is pushing back hard on efforts to change the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program and other federal student load programs. [Read more.](#)

ACEP Advocacy Leads to New Boarding Legislation

A new ACEP-developed bipartisan bill to address the boarding crisis has been introduced in the House of Representatives, with a Senate companion soon to follow. [Read more.](#)

Congress Takes Strong Step Toward Better Protections for Health Care Workers

A new bipartisan bill strengthens protections against violence for emergency physicians and care teams, a longtime priority for ACEP. [Read more.](#)

New RAND Report: Insurance Company Tactics Threaten Emergency Care Sustainability and Patient Access

Emergency physicians across the United States are facing increasing financial and operational pressures threatening their ability to provide lifesaving care, according to a [new report](#) authored by RAND and supported by the Emergency Medicine Policy Institute (EMPI). [Read more.](#)

ACEP Launches Emergency Department Accreditation Program (EDAP)

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) is launching a new Emergency Department Accreditation Program (EDAP) to recognize emergency departments that meet the highest standards for emergency medicine, promote a safe work environment and provide exceptional patient care. [Read more.](#)

ACEP Response to ACGME Proposed Changes to EM Program Requirements

ACEP is fully committed to raising the bar for emergency medicine education and ensuring that our future colleagues are prepared to meet the challenges ahead. [Read more.](#)

CMS Clarifies Residency Funding Proposal

ACEP met with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to discuss the ACGME's proposed changes to emergency medicine residency program requirements to share our perspectives and gain clarity on how CMS will approach changes to funding emergency medicine residencies. [Read more.](#)

ACEP, NAEMT Announce EMS Week 2025

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) will recognize EMS Week, May 18-24, 2025, to celebrate emergency medical services professionals. [Read more.](#)

VisualDx Partners with American College of Emergency Physicians to Enhance Measles Diagnosis and Treatment

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and VisualDx, a medical informatics and AI technology company, are partnering to deliver a comprehensive tool for physicians to address the measles outbreak. [Read more.](#)

Upcoming ACEP Events and Deadlines

- [**EmPATH Summit 2025**](#)
May 21 – 22, 2025
The inaugural EmPATH Summit 2025 brings together hospital leaders, emergency care innovators, and frontline emergency and behavioral health teams to redefine psychiatric emergency care. ACEP President Dr. Alison Haddock and President-Elect Dr. Tony Cirillo will both be speaking at this conference, partnered in part with ACEP. [Register.](#)
- [**Revolutionizing ED Workflows from Triage with AI***](#)
May 28, 2025
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM Central Time
The future of emergency care starts at triage. Discover how integrating Artificial Intelligence can hyper-optimize your ED workflows, cutting wait times, improving accuracy, and freeing up your team for critical tasks. Join us to learn how AI is transforming the ED front door. *This event is for ACEP Members Only. [Register.](#)
- [**ACEP25 Scientific Assembly**](#)
September 7-10, 2025
For the first time, ACEP's annual meeting will be in the beautiful city of Salt Lake City, UT. The world's largest emergency medicine educational conference brings together the global EM community. The Pitt actor Noah Wyle and Olympic gold medalist Scott Hamilton headline a can't-miss

speaker lineup at the Sept. 7-10 event in Salt Lake City. [Register](#) with promo code HikeyBikey and save \$100.

Contact Alabama ACEP

Sean Vanlandingham, MD, MBA, FACEP - President

Meghan Martin - Executive Director

mmartin@alamedical.org | 334-954-2500 | [Website](#)

Alabama ACEP

c/o Medical Association of the State of Alabama

19 South Jackson Street, Montgomery, AL 36104

© 2025 Alabama Chapter ACEP. All rights reserved.

Getting too many emails? Update your [ACEP Email Subscription Center](#) and select only what you want to receive.