

CANA Files Motion to Intervene in CSA/CMA v. Schwarzenegger

The California Association of Nurse Anesthetists (CANA) has filed a motion to intervene in litigation challenging Governor Schwarzenegger's decision to opt out of the Medicare and Medi-Cal Condition of Participation for supervision of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs).

Upon filing their motion, the CANA Board of Directors issued the following statement:

"Since we recognize the importance of protecting patient access to care and the ability of California's healthcare facilities to continue to deliver safe, affordable, high quality anesthesia services, CANA has filed a motion to intervene in the case of CSA/CMA vs. Schwarzenegger."

"CANA has moved to intervene in this case because we strongly believe our perspective on the realities and scope of CRNA practice, the rural healthcare environment, and patient safety will be valuable to the court as the issues in this case are considered. Governor Schwarzenegger met all aspects of the requirements for opt-out; therefore CANA is confident the court will uphold the legality of his actions."

"Since 2001, the Governors of 15 states have opted out of the Medicare supervision requirement. Results in these states are uniformly positive--individual facilities can make anesthesia staffing choices most suitable to their needs, access to care is ensured, and there has been no report whatsoever of an adverse patient outcome relating to the opt-out."

"Removal of the CMS supervision requirement for CRNAs facilitates access in locations of need, especially for hospitals that serve rural communities and indigent populations. In many of these areas, there are no anesthesiologists. Unrestrictive use of CRNAs keeps hospital costs affordable, and patient costs down without jeopardizing safety."

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