

Rounds

NEWS FROM MEDICAL MUTUAL



Issue #5

SPRING 2024

Company Vice Chair provides rural health care perspective to national underwriters' association conference.

At the 2023 MPLA's Underwriters Workshop in Pittsburgh, PA, David B. McDermott, MD, Vice Chairman of the Board of Medical Mutual gave a report on emerging trends in rural healthcare, identifying opportunities and risks, and addressing their potential impact on underwriting.

McDermott highlighted access as one of the most critical issues in rural health care due to a staggering number of hospital and service line closures—OB and surgery services, for instance—due to financial instability and staffing issues. Many residents of rural areas must travel 30 minutes just to access everyday care. And an abundance of rural areas are classified as ambulance deserts.

Opportunities that could improve the state of rural medicine include the rise of Telemedicine, which has grown exponentially since 2020, and offers improved access. In addition, new accelerated education tracks, training modules, and opportunities for immersion education have made it easier to train and recruit nurses to rural areas, and have greatly expanded the pool of talent.

McDermott also identified red flags and potential pitfalls for underwriting as a result of these trends. For example, non-physician practitioner training is already on average 5+ years less than physicians and many accelerated NPP education programs are online (Purdue Global). Both could raise the specter of a potential increase in medical errors over time. While the trend toward increasing numbers of physician assistants and nurse practitioners is not new—and is important to ensuring proper staffing and patient access to care—the relative concentration of such extended service providers could factor into underwriting decisions by medical carriers in the future, if they haven't already.



David B. McDermott, MD, an emergency physician in Dover-Foxcroft, ME and Vice Chair of the Medical Mutual Board with Dave Johnson, Medical Mutual VP of Underwriting, at last fall's MPLA Underwriters Workshop in Pittsburgh, PA, where McDermott reported on emerging trends in rural healthcare and what they could mean for underwriting.

SAVE THE DATE

Do This, Not That

Navigating the Murky Waters of Claims, Peer Review, and the Dreaded Board Complaint



Medical Mutual's 2024 Risk Management Seminar
Wednesday, June 12, 2024 | Harraseeket Inn, Freeport, Maine

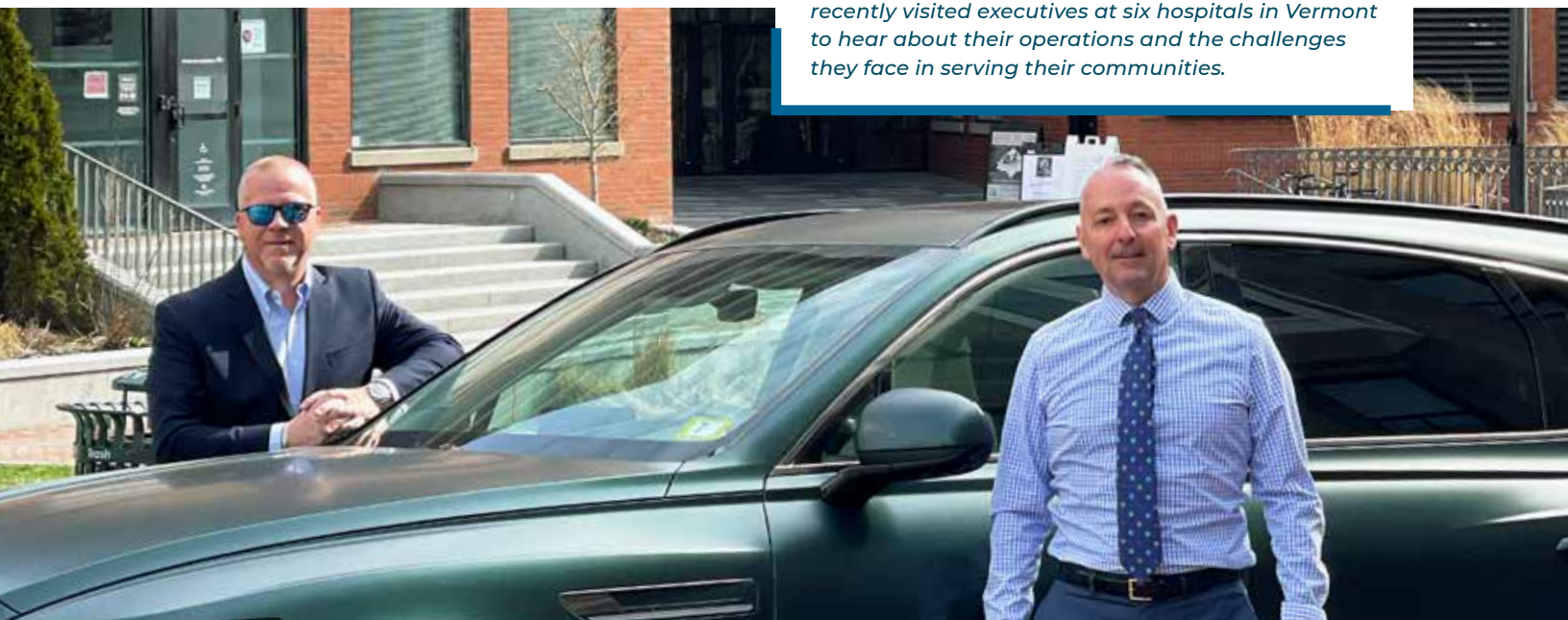
Listening Tour Tradition Continues

In keeping with tradition, Shawn Anderson, President/CEO, and John Doyle, V.P. of Marketing & Administration, visited six Vermont hospitals from January 8-10, 2024.

Medical Mutual's Listening Tour is a popular client outreach effort begun 18 years ago by Doyle and then-President & CEO, Terrance Sheehan, MD. The goal is to visit with executives and key staff at client hospitals periodically to learn about their operations and hear the challenges and concerns they face in the care environment and their communities.

"The challenges are universal," said Doyle. "Everyone is worried about staffing, recruiting and financial issues. In Vermont, in particular, they are concerned about the effects of the Green Mountain Care Board, and Universal Budgets, part of a movement that could usher in major reforms in how care is delivered in the Green Mountain State. A forced consolidation of specialty services into designated regions, for instance, is one potential recommendation that could create significant upheaval for providers."

And off they went. Shawn Anderson, President & CEO and John Doyle, VP of Marketing & Administration, recently visited executives at six hospitals in Vermont to hear about their operations and the challenges they face in serving their communities.

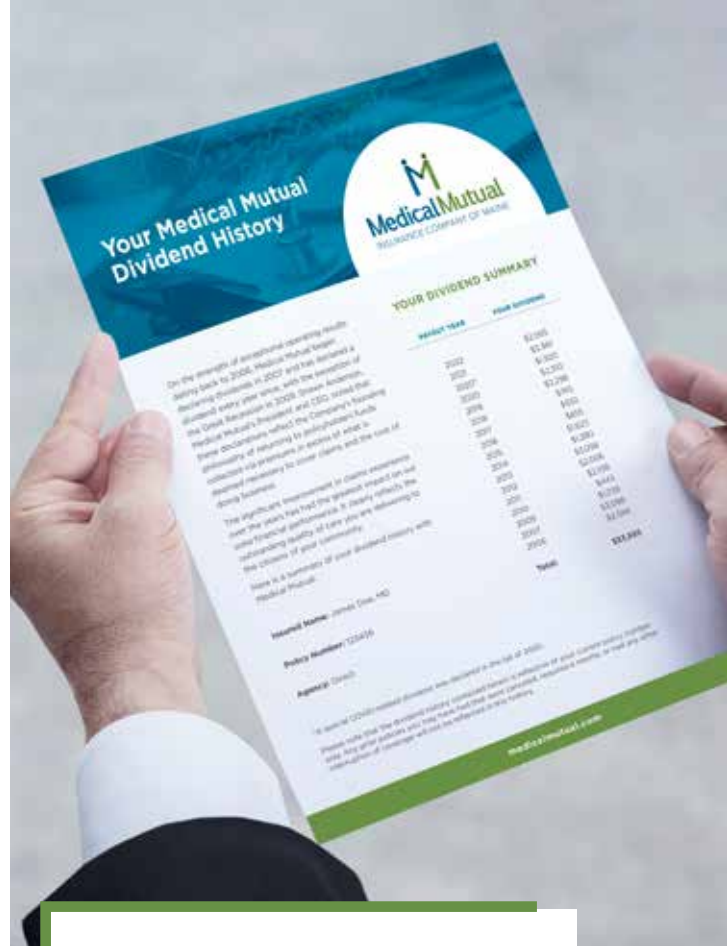


Board approves \$4.5 million Dividend

In a letter to member-policyholders dated February 28, 2024, Shawn Anderson, Medical Mutual's President and CEO, announced that the Company's Board had voted to declare a \$4.5 million dividend for 2023. It is the 17th dividend in the past 18 years, not including a special mid-year dividend in 2020.

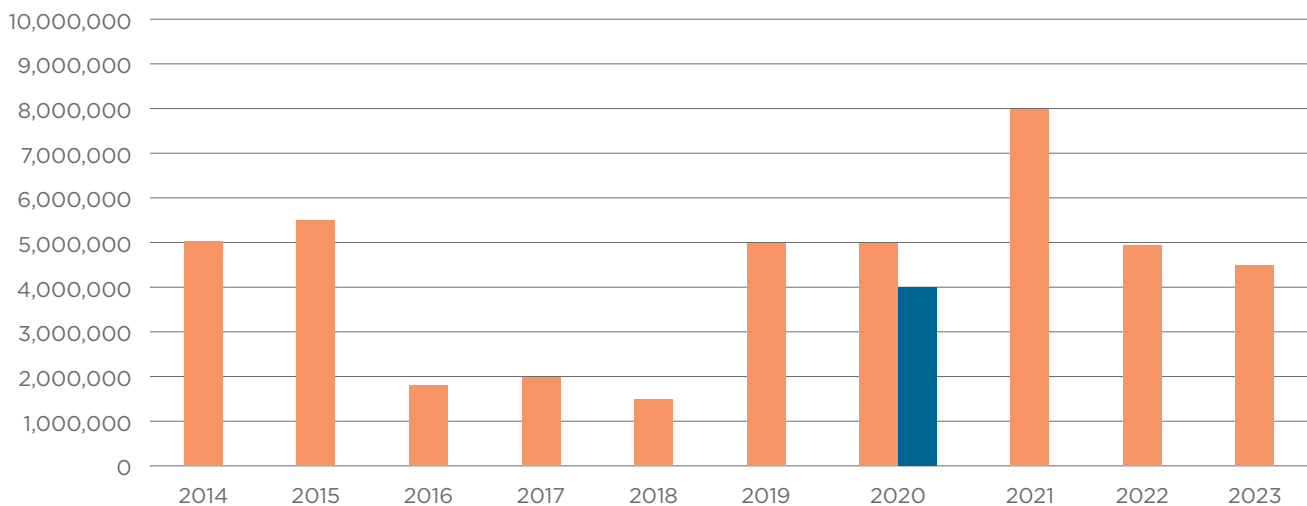
Anderson noted that these declarations reflect the Company's founding philosophy of returning to policyholders funds collected via premiums in excess of what is deemed necessary to cover claims and the cost of doing business.

The extended string of dividends tracks closely with a significant moderation in claims experience over the past 18 years. And that moderation, Anderson said, "clearly reflects the outstanding quality of care our member-policyholders are delivering to the citizens of their communities."



It all adds up. Member-Policyholders received a re-cap of their historical dividend credits when they were notified of the Company's 2023 dividend declaration in February.

POLICYHOLDER DIVIDENDS - TEN YEAR HISTORY



Medical Mutual declared a dividend of \$4.5 million in 2023, the Company's 17th dividend in 18 years, not including a special mid-year cash dividend of \$4 million in 2020.



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Check your mail for your Medical Mutual proxy voting card.

As a member-policyholder of Medical Mutual, you are eligible—and in fact encouraged—to vote for your Company Board of Directors in advance of the upcoming Annual Meeting.

Use the ID from your mailed card and vote online

You must have the unique, personalized ID on your mailed card to vote. So you can just fill out and mail the card, which must be received by April 27, or go online with the ID in hand to cast your vote.

With your ID, go to medicalmutual.com/proxy, or scan the QR code at right. There are five candidates up for three-year terms and you may vote for all, none or any number of the five candidates:



- Rebekah J. Gass, MD, Infectious Disease Specialist and current Company Board Member, Bangor, ME
- Adam W. Kunin, MD, Cardiologist and current Company Board Member, Morrisville, VT
- Jeremy R. Morton, MD, current company Board Member, Portland, ME
- Andrea D. Patstone, Coastal Regional President, MaineHealth, Portland, ME.
- Shawn P. Tester, CEO, Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, St. Johnsbury, VT

Voting closes April 27, 2024, so go online and cast your vote today!