

### ASC ADVOCACY IN ACTION

On February 28 and March 1, ASCA members representing 31 states attended more than 100 meetings as part of ASCA's National Advocacy Day. Fly-in attendees met with six physicians: Representatives Neal Dunn (R-FL), Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA), Kim Schrier (D-WA) and Brad Wenstrup (R-OH) and Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and John Barrasso (R-WY). Thank you, Drs. Cassidy, Dunn and Wenstrup, for supporting the [Outpatient Surgery Quality and Access Act of 2023](#).



Representative Kim Schrier, MD, (D-WA) (center) meets with National Advocacy Day participants.

### PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY TO EXPIRE MAY 11

In late January, the Biden Administration announced plans to allow the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) to expire on May 11. Numerous health policies that expanded the scope of healthcare to address the PHE will expire at that time. These include mandates that commercial payers cover COVID-19 tests, vaccines made available without cost sharing and increases in federal matching funds for Medicaid. The unwinding of pandemic-related Medicaid policies could have significant effects on the number of beneficiaries covered by Medicaid in each state; total Medicaid enrollment grew by more than 20 million people between February 2020 and October 2022.

ASCs that temporarily enrolled as hospitals as part of the [Hospitals Without Walls](#) initiative will be required to certify as hospital outpatient departments (HOPDs) or return to ASC status. Telehealth services will remain covered for all Medicare beneficiaries until December 31, 2024, and Medicare telehealth services for behavioral/mental health-care are permanently allowed going forward.

### JOIN ASCA IN LOUISVILLE

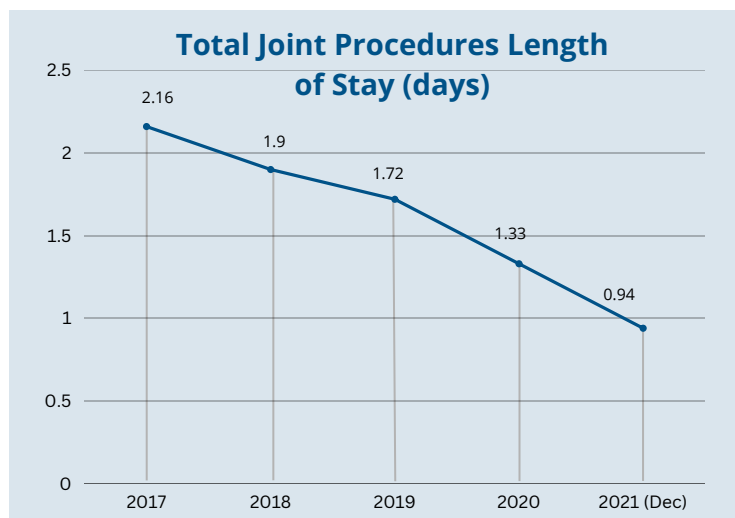


The [ASCA 2023 Conference & Expo](#) will take place in Louisville, Kentucky, May 17–20. Register and encourage your ASC's staff to register today.

### PANDEMIC ACCELERATED TOTAL JOINT MIGRATION TO OUTPATIENT

[New research](#) published in *The Journal of Arthroplasty* shows how the pandemic accelerated the movement of total joint arthroplasty (TJA) procedures, specifically total knee arthroplasty (TKA) and total hip arthroplasty (THA), to the outpatient setting. Researchers from the University of Southern California looked at all patients who underwent primary elective TKA or THA between 2017 and 2021.

Overall, volume for total joints was 35% and 30% lower in 2020 and 2021, respectively, compared to pre-pandemic levels. Average length of stay, however, dropped considerably from an average of 2.2 days in 2017 to 0.94 days by the end of 2021. This means that while less than 1% of patients were discharged same-day in 2017, almost one-third (30.5%) of elective TJA patients were discharged same-day in 2021.



Source: Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Keck School of Medicine, USC

To get involved or learn more about ASCA's advocacy efforts on the federal level, please reach out to [David Opong-Wadee](#), follow [@ASCAPAC](#) on Instagram or visit [ASCAPAC online](#).