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# Welcome.

Medical Malpractice Insurance Crisis 202? –  
Will History Repeat Itself, Again?

*Presented by John Marshall, Principal & Shareholder*

October 17, 2019



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## Introduction

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- What are we talking about and why?
- Trends 20 years ago, trends now
- What drives the cost of Medmal insurance?
- National results, Regional results, Nebraska results
- Nebraska Liability Fund: what's going on there
- Other factors affecting Medmal trends

## What Are We Talking About and Why?

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- Medmal insurance has lost money on underwriting three years in a row on national basis
- Nebraska not profitable and rates are too low (95% state loss ratio for 2017)
- Nebraska cap is seeing more severity too since cap went up in 2015
- Avoiding the same surprises again that happened 20 years ago
- Lots of emerging trends not favorable for Medmal exposures (ex. opioids)
- Negative outlook for industry per AM Best



## Trends 20 Years Ago, Trends Now

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- Largest Medmal carriers – 1999
  - St. Paul Companies – DONE
  - Medical Liability Mutual of NY – SOLD
  - Medical Protective – SOLD to Berkshire Hathaway
  - Healthcare Indemnity – SOLD
  - C.N.A. Companies – STILL HERE
  - MIIX-New Jersey – OUT OF BUSINESS
  - PHICO Group – OUT OF BUSINESS
  - Doctors Company (TDC) – STILL WRITING

## Trends 20 Years Ago, Trends Now (cont'd)

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- Largest Medmal carriers – 2018
  - Berkshire Hathaway (medical protective)
  - Doctors Company (TDC)
  - C.N.A.
  - ProAssurance
  - COVERYS
  - NORCAL
  - MCIC Vermont
  - MagMutual



## Trends 20 Years Ago, Trends Now (cont'd) \_\_\_\_\_

- What was going from 1999 – 2006?
  - St. Paul leaves market end of 2001 (largest writer in Nebraska)
  - PHICO, other top writer, went insolvent
  - Medmal underwriting losses rose 938% from 1996 – 2001
  - Insurers in 2001 paid \$1.65 for every \$1 they earned in premiums
  - Average jury award tripled from 1994 – 2000

## Trends 20 Years Ago, Trends Now (cont'd) \_\_\_\_\_

- Other risk factors at the time
  - Most doctors independent, usually only had \$1 million/\$3 million limits
  - Medmal insurance was profitable, everyone chased price to bottom
  - Tort reform was falling apart at state level that was enacted 1990 – 1992
  - This all happened before 9/11, which then added reinsurance pressures
  - Lagging of results caught up to everyone in short period of time

## What Drives the Cost of Medmal Insurance?

- Supply and demand (shrinking pool of premium)
- Medical and legal cost inflation
- Social inflation (punish business with higher verdicts)
- Tort reform (NE cap increased from \$1.75 million to \$2.25 million)
- Long time from when charge a dollar and close the books (five to seven years)

## What Drives the Cost of Medmal Insurance? (cont'd)

- Current national trends and market cycle
  - Frequency: flat
  - Severity: up
  - Investment returns: decent
  - Capital: excess capacity
  - Reserves: still redundant
  - Reinsurance: already challenging for higher limits

## National Results – Medmal Industry Profitability

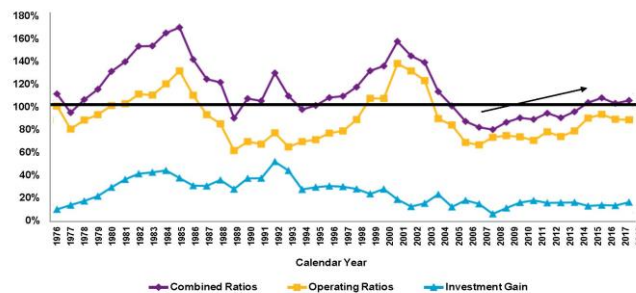
- Doctors paying less than they did in 2001, without adjusting for inflation
- Rate of claims also dropped in half since 2003
- Huge surplus or investment returns can offset underwriting losses (for years)
- Carriers entering new states, usually cutting rates to gain market share
- Carriers usually setting 84% of claims for zero payment

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## National Results – Medmal Industry Profitability (cont'd)

### MPL Industry Profitability



- ➔ For the first time in 10 years, combined ratios crept above 100% in 2015 and have continued at that level through 2018.
- ➔ 2018 investment income increased approximately 3 points higher than prior 2015-2017 as a % of premium.
- ➔ Overall operating ratios remain at a profitable level.

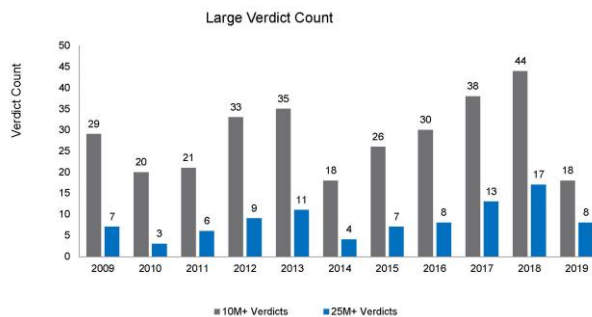


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## National Results – Countrywide Larger Verdict Count

### Countrywide Verdict Count



Source: TransRe as of 7/31/2019

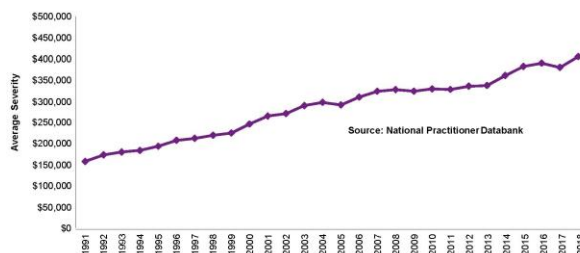


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## National Results – Medmal Industry Severity Trends – Physicians

### Countrywide Severity - Physicians



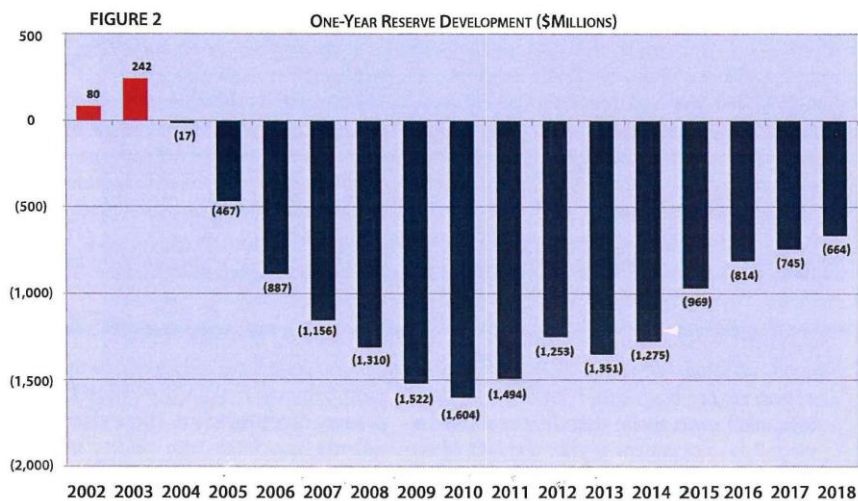
- Graph includes total limit, indemnity only
- Annual severity trend since 2006 is +2.1%
- Overall annual severity trend is +3.3%



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## National Results – Changes in Reserve Redundancy



## Claims Severity – Shock Verdicts for 2018



### Claims Severity: MPL Shock Verdicts in 2018

This map shows several of the multimillion dollar medical professional liability (MPL) verdicts that caught our attention in 2018. The numbers represent initial jury award or settlement amounts in millions with orange dots representing birth injury verdicts. Note: none of the verdicts are from ProAssurance Companies cases. Each dot hyperlinks to a publicly available source for more information. For those receiving a print copy of this chart, you may access the list of links by visiting [bit.ly/2R6D1Xt](http://bit.ly/2R6D1Xt).



*"It's important to keep in mind the mindset of the plaintiff's lawyer. The verdicts you read about in the paper impact his or her view of the value of the case they are taking to the courthouse next Monday. If the headlines proclaim these very large verdicts, then in his or her mind the value of his or her case just went up. That doesn't mean (s)he'll realize that value, but it does mean (s)he's going to be seeking more than he would have sought the week before. That's obviously just a single anecdotal example, but that's why an increase in severity ripples back through every open claim you've got. The claim is the same; it didn't change overnight, but the plaintiff's lawyer's evaluation of the claim is what has changed."*

W. Stancil Starnes  
ProAssurance CEO



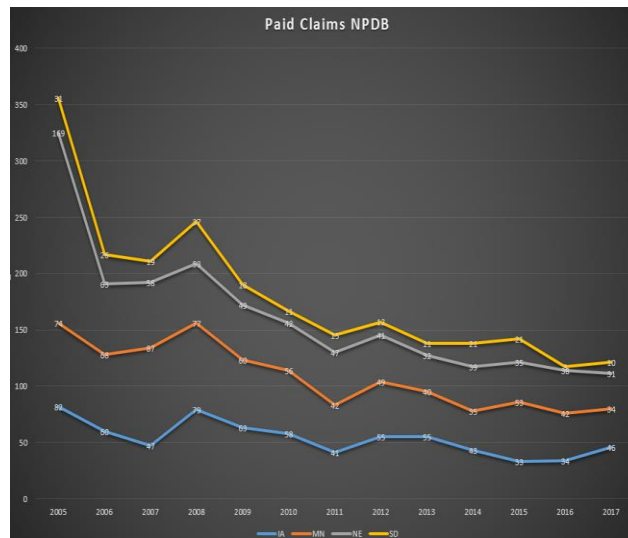
## Largest States – 2017 Medmal Premium Volume

- NY: \$1,549,238,557
- CA: \$760,302,111
- PA: \$646,129,908
- FL: \$590,429,824
- IL: \$442,152,424

## Midwest States – 2017 – Medmal Premium Volume by State

- NE: \$32,097,142
- IA: \$61,303,635
- SD: \$15,305,321

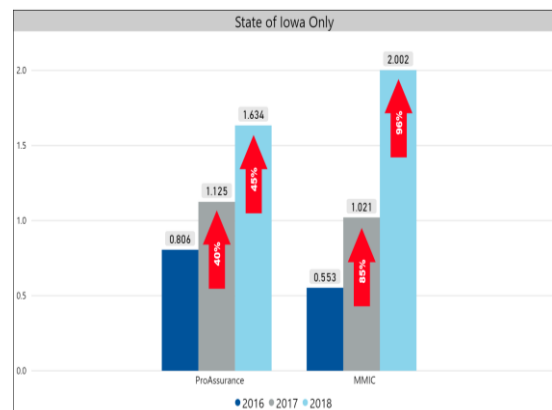
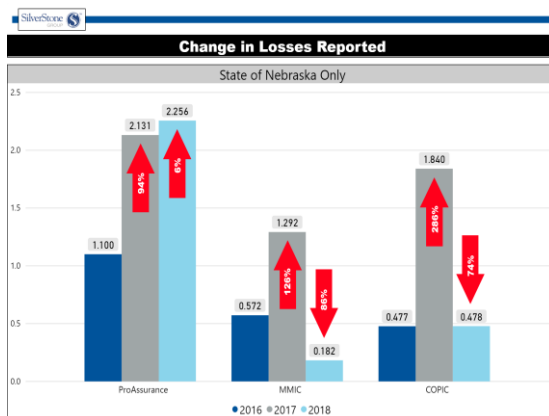
## Regional Results – National Practitioner Databank



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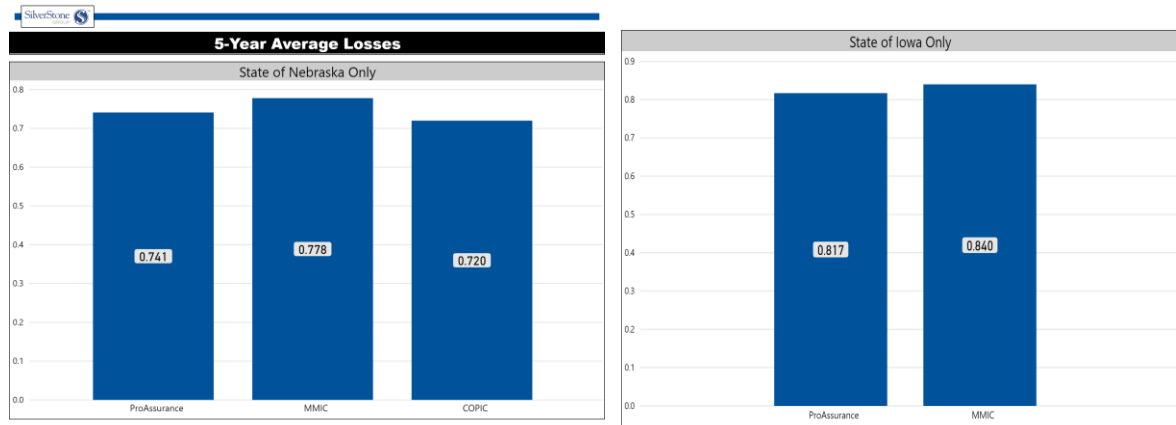
## Regional Results – Nebraska and Iowa (Source NAIC)



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## NE and IA Results – Five-Year Average Loss Ratio (Source NAIC) \_



## Nebraska Liability Fund – What's Going on There? \_\_\_\_\_

- NE rate surcharge history – changes over time

|      |     |
|------|-----|
| 2014 | 18% |
| 2015 | 20% |
| 2016 | 22% |
| 2017 | 26% |
| 2018 | 40% |
| 2019 | 45% |
| 2020 | 50% |

## Nebraska Liability Fund – What’s Going on There? (cont’d) —

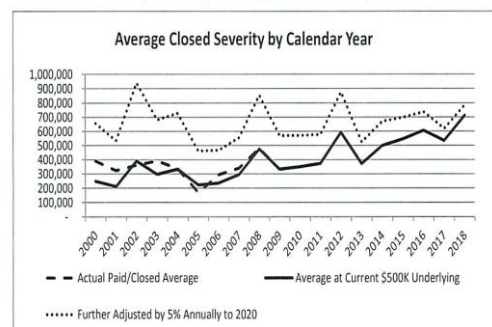
- Costs have simply outpaced surcharge increases
- Total premium in Nebraska keeps shrinking (driven by competitive market)
  - Total premium basis: 2010 – \$25,401,000
  - Total premium basis: 2018 – \$19,899,000
- Consolidation among healthcare providers (feeding shrinking premium basis)
- Even with surcharge at 50%, still forecasting a loss for 2020 per actuaries
- New cap of \$2.25 million applies to claims after January 1, 2015
- Reinsurance costs \$900,000, prevent future crisis (Hepatitis C outbreak)



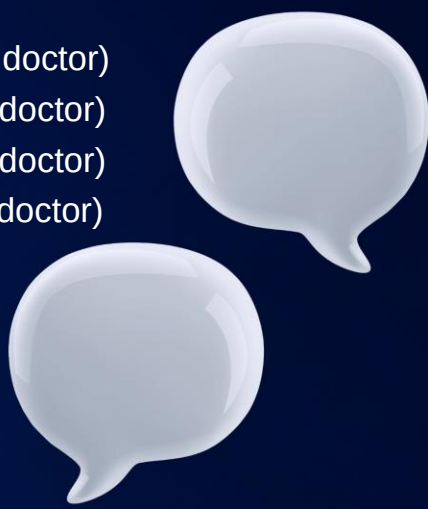
## Nebraska Liability Fund – What’s Going on There? (cont’d) —

- 2017: challenge to cap upheld (\$17 million verdict reduced to \$1.75 million)
- Continues to be more
- Many private practice groups seeing non-renewals due to loss ratio

Paid/Closed Claims Severity Trend Is Approximately 3.0 Percent Annually:



## Nebraska Results – Frequency of Claims Filed (Source CNS Reports)

- 2015: 106 Medmal suits filed (six against one doctor)
  - 2016: 154 Medmal suits filed (19 against one doctor)
  - 2017: 136 Medmal suits filed (16 against one doctor)
  - 2018: 110 Medmal suits filed (22 against one doctor)
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## Medmal Rates – Typical Doctors (2009, 2019)

| Specialty                    | 2009 Rate | 2019 Rate |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| OB-GYN – Nebraska            | \$21,608  | \$15,737  |
| OB-GYN – Iowa                | \$27,285  | \$27,285  |
| Internal Medicine – Nebraska | \$4,714   | \$3,434   |
| Internal Medicine – Iowa     | \$5,953   | \$5,953   |

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## Industry Lingo

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- Definition: Hard market denotes cycle of strain for insurance carriers and major change and uncertainty for buyer
  - Has occurred mid-70s, mid-90s and early 2000s
  - Typically lasts 18 months on average
  - Overall P&C industry seeing firming of rates for a variety of reasons
- Definition: Soft market denotes widely available coverage and competitive pricing and terms

## What does a “Hard” Market Look Like?!?

- Deductibles go up
- Reduction in coverage/capacity/limits
- More disciplined underwriting
- Less use of schedule crediting
- Now: Frequency of severity – 17 mega-verdicts in 2018 (\$25 million+); source Conning
- Now: \$25 million towers of insurance harder to get for big accounts
- Now: 2018 had largest number of Securities class actions filed... ever
- Now: Walking away from clients with bad loss ratios, even if long-term client

## Other Factors Affecting Medmal Trends

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- Mass torts: civil action involving numerous plaintiffs
- Employed physicians: now have higher limits to cover a loss
- Physician discipline: 2% of doctors account for 39% of all claims
- Non-economic caps being found unconstitutional (KS, ND, UT, etc.)
- Highest combined ratio since 2002 – current year results
- Investment performance offsetting deteriorating underwriter performance
- Tax Cuts & Jobs Act of 2017: corporate tax rate reduction; positive for carriers

## Other Factors Affecting Medmal Trends (cont'd)

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- E.H.R and impact on claims (and ability to find claims via big data)
  - 15% system and 21% user factors in diagnosis-related claims
- Opioid litigation: making their way to blaming the provider
  - \$9 million claim in Ohio for wrongful patient deaths
- Cyber liability: tying into Medmal products... financial impact?



## Other Factors Affecting Medmal Trends (cont'd) ---

- I'm Sorry Legislation: Sorry not having a financial impact or lessening litigation
- RRGs and alternative risk financial vehicles (captives)
  - All physician specialties getting mailers about newly formed entities
  - Do they have the stamina or financial size to survive?
  - NE cap won't allow non-admitted insurers so non-factor here
- Volume to value-based care: liability implications
- Seeking new procedures or service lines, unknown liability

## Conclusion ---

- Lots of financial capacity out there
- Many liability trends that do not look favorable to providers
- "Limits" inflation and higher cost of healthcare not helping industry when time to assign blame
- Doctors and facilities have higher limits to insure losses versus 1990s
- Midwest is usually protected from severe trends
- We can watch the coasts and financial results and see what happens



## Questions?

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# Thank You.



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