

FACT SHEET

What crisis?

Myth: Oklahoma is facing a medical malpractice lawsuit crisis.

Fact: Medical malpractice lawsuits decreased 60 percent from July 2003 to Oct. 2004 in the state's eight largest counties. (*Tulsa World*, October 6, 2004).

Fact: Medical malpractice lawsuits continued to decrease: From 2004-05 there was a 19 percent decrease in medical malpractice suits filed in the 12 largest counties. (Oklahoma Supreme Court Network).

Fact: Oklahoma medical malpractice insurers paid \$43.8 million in claims in 2005, according to the Oklahoma Insurance Department. This makes the total payout of medical malpractice claims less than 1 percent of health care expenditures.

Fact: According to the federal government's Medicare program, Oklahoma doctors spend an average of only 1.7 percent of their practice incomes on malpractice insurance, 56.4 percent less than the national average.

Fact: From 2007-08, Oklahoma physicians' medical malpractice premiums remained flat. (*Medical Liability Monitor*, Rate Survey Issue, Oct. 2008, Vol. 33, No. 10).

Myth: Oklahoma needs to be more welcoming to doctors.

Fact: The state's population grew by 7 percent from mid-1997 to mid-2007. The number of doctors grew by 24 percent during this time. (The Journal Record, "Is Oklahoma losing doctors?" April 3, 2008).