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The Risk Management & Patient Safety Department of the Cooperative of American Physicians, Inc. is excited to announce the debut of our new online communication. This biweekly Risk E-Notes is designed to provide information and education to our physician's office management staff. With the introduction of this risk management communication tool, it is our goal to assist you to improve patient care and reduce the number and severity of malpractice claims brought against your physician(s).

Every two weeks, we will send you, via e-mail, a snippet of information related to the risk management of the physician's medical office practice. We hope that the information will be useful and shared with the other office staff, if appropriate.

As we develop this new communication tool, we welcome your comments and suggestions on future subject matter discussions and possible areas for expansion. You may directly e-mail us with your questions, comments or suggestions at the "Contact Us" at the left.

## Going Paperless - Must the original arbitration agreement be maintained after it has been scanned into the EMR?

Yes. The California courts still require the original arbitration agreement to be provided as evidence that an agreement to arbitrate any dispute exists between the doctor and the patient.



The courts require proof that the agreement meets certain requirements. These requirements include the red, 10-point type notice that advises the patient that he or she is giving up the right to a jury or court trial. Additionally, it is extremely important to provide the original agreement when the patient does not remember signing it. The patient is given an opportunity to examine their original signature.

It is acceptable for the original agreements to be scanned into your EMR system. If possible, color scanning is the best. After scanning, place the original agreement in a file that is in a secure and accessible location.

*If you have any further questions about arbitration agreements, please call the Cooperative of American Physicians Risk Management hotline at 800-252-0555.*