

Why TMA's Physicians Benevolent Fund is Important: A Conversation with John Flores, MD

When physicians and their families encounter personal hardship – such as a wife left with a family to raise following her physician husband's death, or an elderly couple struggling to make ends meet as their savings dwindle following a dementia diagnosis – the Texas Medical Association's [Physicians Benevolent Fund](#) (PBF) is here to help.

PBF provides financial support to physicians and their families during times of personal hardship. For more than six decades – thanks to the generosity of Texas physicians – PBF has helped families pay for their residence, mounting medical bills, and other necessities.

TMA asked members of the PBF Committee – TMA physicians and TMA Alliance representatives – to answer a few questions about what inspires them to serve and what they'd like other TMA Family members to know about PBF. Committee members review the applications to determine if physicians or physician families qualify for funding.

TMA Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates John Flores, MD, of Little Elm, has served on the PBF Committee since 2021 and here's what he had to say about PBF and the committee.

TMA: What is the most important thing you want your TMA family to know about PBF?

For most physicians asking for help is difficult, even when they find themselves struggling to make ends meet. We are trained in a culture where we are the ultimate decision-makers. Our decisions, made every day, greatly affect our patients and their families. To all of the sudden find ourselves in need is a dramatic shift in perspective and to some extent, sobering. We have to realize it is not a failure to be the one in need of help. The PBF was established to provide help in a confidential matter. My hope is that this fund is able to continue its important work for years to come.

TMA: What interested you in joining the PBF Committee and what keeps you involved?

My involvement in the PBF is as committee chair. Prior to that appointment, I was only vaguely aware of what the fund actually did. Since then, I have come to know intimately the stories of many of my colleagues – most of them who have spent their lives and careers improving the health of their patients and now find themselves needing help. Most have become patients themselves, unable to work and struggling to pay their bills. I think it is wonderful this fund exists to give back to our colleagues in their time of need and, in some cases, to their loved ones.

TMA: What are you most proud of about the work of this committee?

I am most proud such a fund exists and dispenses funds in an equitable manner. No one is given preferential treatment, and any Texas physician is eligible.

TMA: Sometimes people are hesitant to ask for help. If someone becomes aware of a physician family in need, how can they connect the family to PBF?

If you know of a colleague in need, please reach out to a TMA board member or contact Chris Johnson, PBF director, at (512) 370-1602 (or [email](#)). TMA staff will contact the family in need, keeping the referral confidential.