Delegates
Maryanne Bombaugh
Theodore Calianos
Alain Chaoui
Ron Dunlap
Mario Motta
Richard Pieters
David Rosman
Thomas Sullivan
Lynda Young

Alternate Delegates
Alice Coombs
Melody Eckardt
James Gessner
Lynda Kabbash
Frank MacMillan
Christie Morgan
Glenn Markenson
Carolyn Payne
Ellana Stinson
Steve Young

Link to the full meeting - http://www.ama-assn.org/sub/meeting/index.html

As part of the MMS Ambassador Program, Four ambassadors shadowed our delegation at this meeting.
  • Sanjay Aurora, MD
  • Karl D’Silva, MD
  • Christopher Garofalo, MD
  • Peter Rappo, MD

In addition, we had many specialty representatives, organized medical staff section (OMSS), medical
student, resident, young physician, senior physicians, women physicians, and international medical graduate
representatives.

The MA AMA Delegation sponsored five resolutions at this meeting which in turn were supported by the
New England Delegation.

  • Assessment of the Impact of High Deductible Health Plans on Patient
    Health and the Financial Impact on Medical Practices - #121
    HOD ACTION: Policies H-165.828, D-155.987, H-155.960 and H-
    185.939 reaffirmed in lieu of Resolution 121.

  • Transfer of Jurisdiction over Required Clinical Skills Examinations to
    LCME-Accredited and COCA-Accredited Medical Schools - #316
    HOD ACTION: Alternate Resolution 311 adopted as amended in lieu
    of Resolutions 311, 316, 317, and 321

  • Appropriate Labeling of Sleep Products for Infants - #429
    HOD ACTION: Alternative Res. 429 adopted in lieu of Resolution 429
    This resolution began in Essex South co-authored by Drs. Nobil, Aurora and
    Chaoui.
• Support for Detergent Poisoning and Child Safety Act - #430 – Adopted
  During the meeting, one of the members of the AAP received an email from Proctor & Gamble reassuring that their pod bags will be child proof and redesigned and available this summer.

• Promotion of Milliliter-Only for Liquid Medication Dosing - #518 - Adopted as amended. This resolution also originated in the Essex South District.

**Resolutions from other state delegations supported by Massachusetts**

• Requiring Secondary and Supplemental Insurers to Medicare to Follow Medicare payments - #120 – Adopted as amended

• USP Compounding Rules - #204 - -Adopted as amended

• Telemedicine Encounters by Third Party Vendors - #234 – Adopted as amended

We also collaborated with other states in regards to the Maintenance of Certification policies at the AMA and offered an amendment that was accepted as policy.

**RESOLVED, That our AMA continue to support the requirement of Continuing Medical Education (CME) and ongoing, quality assessments of physicians, where such CME is proven to be cost-effective and shown by evidence to improve quality of care for patients.**

The meeting began with the customary report from the AMA president, Steven Stack. He reminded everyone that physicians live in a world of contradictions. It’s a profession of rewards and privilege amid the toll of frustration and burnout, borne of administrative hassles and bureaucratic overreach. The challenge is to persevere and lead the way for others.

In his many travels this year he shared his belief that it is our opportunity, our obligation and our great privilege as leaders to recognize the challenges but to not allow ourselves to be consumed by them.


So once Saturday’s pomp and circumstance was done, Sunday we began our work with the 986 page handbook ‒ ‒ filled with many reports and resolutions from the delegations and the Councils.

**Resolution Highlights**

• Fixing the VA physician shortage with physicians – Late Resolution 1010
  RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association work with the VA to enhance its loan forgiveness efforts to further incentivize physician recruiting and retention and improve patient access in the Veterans Administration facilities (Directive to Take Action)
RESOLVED, That our AMA call for an immediate change in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program to allow physicians to receive immediate loan forgiveness when they practice in a Veterans Administration facility (New HOD policy)

RESOLVED That our AMA work with the Veterans Administration to minimize the administrative burdens that discourage or prevent non-VA physicians without compensation (WOCs) from volunteering their time to care for our veterans.

Fourth Resolve was referred, which stated that the AMA, "Advocate that the VA compensate physicians adequately to encourage recruitment."

- Gun Violence as a Public health crisis – Late Resolution 1011 – as a result of the tragedy in Orlando Florida
RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association immediately make a public statement that gun violence represents a public health crisis which requires a comprehensive public health response and solution (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA actively lobby Congress to lift the gun violence research ban. (Directive to Take Action)

- Zika Funding – RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association urge Congress to enact legislation, without further delay, to provide increased and sufficient funding for research, prevention, control, and treatment of illnesses associated with the Zika virus, commensurate with the public health emergency that the virus poses, without diverting resources from other essential health initiatives.

- Modernized Code of Medical Ethics – adopted as amended
Physicians have just affirmed a comprehensive update of the nearly 170-year-old AMA Code of Medical Ethics, the conclusion of a meticulous project started eight years ago to ensure that this ethical guidance keeps pace with the demands of the changing world of medical practice

Within the Resident/Fellow and Student Sections:

~ McKinley Glover was re-elected as Speaker of the AMA-RFS

~ RFS Resolution (by MA authors) UNIVERSAL PRESCRIBER ACCESS TO PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS – was adopted as presented and will be presented at Interim 2016 to the AMA HOD.

In addition to the student resolution about the Step 2 Clinical Skills Exam:

~ MSS Resolution (by MA author) REMOVING RESTRICTIONS ON FEDERAL FUNDING FOR FIREARM VIOLENCE RESEARCH – was adopted as amended and permitted the medical student section to support the late file resolution at the AMA HOD.

Within the Women Physicians Section:

• Lynda Kabbash, MD elected – Chair of the Section and member at large to the Governing Council
• Alice Coombs, MD elected – member at large to the Governing Council
Resolution 506 – Heart Disease and Women authored by Dr. Kabbash was adopted as amended.

Wrap-up

Within our own ranks, our delegation worked hard and well together. Dr. Motta, Vice Chair and coordinator of the Ambassador Program, worked with our Ambassadors and had an Ambassador breakfast mid-week to “take a temperature” check to make sure their experience was a good one and to see if we could improve upon it. As it was each ambassador had two different “mentors” assigned to them each day so they could get a feel for the meeting through a different set of eyes. This program is unique to Massachusetts – there is no other state society with such a program. The ambassadors were welcome to testify at reference committees and to speak at our New England Delegation caucuses.

Currently, our own Tom Sullivan is the chair of the New England Delegation.

I also wanted to highlight the members of our delegation who serve on AMA Councils:

- Omar Maniya (student) Council on Long Range Planning & Development
- Mario Motta Council on Science & Public Health
- Rick Pieters Council on Medical Education
- James Sabin Council on Ethical & Judicial Affairs
- Lynda Young Council on Medical Service

And finally, Tuesday night we attended the Inauguration of Pennsylvania orthopedic surgeon Andrew Gurman, MD the first hand surgeon to hold the post. [http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/ama-wire/post/sitting-sidelines-involved](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/ama-wire/post/sitting-sidelines-involved)

**Additional links of issues addressed during the meeting**

1. **Code of Medical Ethics modernized for first time in 50 years**
   Physicians have just affirmed a comprehensive update of the nearly 170-year-old [AMA Code of Medical Ethics](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/ama-wire/post/sitting-sidelines-involved), the conclusion of a meticulous project started eight years ago to ensure that this ethical guidance keeps pace with the demands of the changing world of medical practice.

2. **Bright future on the horizon—and we know the path to get there**
   Physicians live in a world of contradictions, outgoing AMA President Steven J. Stack, MD, said in his address. It’s a profession of rewards and privilege amid the toll of frustration and burnout, borne of administrative hassles and bureaucratic overreach. The challenge is to persevere and lead the way for others.

3. **AMA calls for gun research, background checks to prevent violence**
   Calling gun violence a “public health crisis,” the AMA is urging background checks and a waiting period for all firearms purchasers and will lobby Congress to overturn legislation that for 20 years has prevented the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from researching gun violence.

4. **Ethical considerations prompt new telemedicine ground rules**
   With the increasing use of telemedicine and telehealth technologies, delegates adopted new policy that outlines ethical ground rules for physicians using these technologies to treat patients.

5. **Physicians are guiding new payment system, CMS chief says**
   In the effort to design the new Medicare payment system, Andy Slavitt, acting administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), said that the driving factor behind many of the changes was physician input. But the physician’s role does not stop there.
6. **11 new AMA policies your patients should know**
At the heart of policymaking of the AMA is the mission to promote the betterment of public health. Physicians adopted policies that will help improve consumer safety and reduce harm—they range from preventing drug overdose to delaying school start times and supporting paid sick leave.

7. **If you’re sitting on the sidelines, get involved**
Andrew W. Gurman, MD, in his inaugural speech as president of the AMA, issued a call to action for physicians to be leaders and advocates for their profession.

8. **How physicians are making EHRs interoperable**
Electronic health records (EHR) have consistently caused problems for physicians due to a lack of interoperability. Physicians and health IT developers explained how physicians must lead—and are leading—the way forward.

9. **Digital dystopia: Developing tools that work in practice**
Identifying the technology that makes care less efficient and building new tools that are based on physician perspectives from the start are critical to developing a digital practice environment that works for physicians and patients, AMA Executive Vice President and CEO James L. Madara, MD, said.

10. **Physicians take steps to address opioid overdose epidemic**
The physician role in reducing opioid medication misuse, overdose and death is an important one. New policies address factors that are critical to reversing the epidemic, including prescription drug monitoring programs, access to naloxone and addiction medicine as a sub-specialty.