



## **AMA Medical Education Activities in 2008 -**

**Barbara S. Schneidman, MD, MPH**

The AMA, through its Council on Medical Education, Divisions of Undergraduate and Graduate Medical Education, Section on Medical Schools, Medical Student Section, and Resident and Fellow Section, is actively addressing key medical education issues, including: the educational implications of the medical home; enforcement of duty hours standards and improving resident, fellow, and patient safety; diversity in the physician workforce and access to care; improving parental leave policies for residents; and discrepancies in benefits for resident employees.

### **AMA House of Delegates actions**

At its 2007 interim meeting in November, the AMA House of Delegates (HOD) took several actions related to medical education:

- Resolved to actively work to reinstate the “20/220 pathway,” a loan deferment program for residents, and support alternate mechanisms that better address the financial needs of trainees with educational debt. The pathway had allowed residents eligible for economic hardship to defer payments on subsidized loans for up to 3 years without accruing interest on the debt (Reference Committee L). Subsequently, an extension was secured from the Department of Education of the 20/220 pathway until November of 2008 and, possibly, until June of 2009. AMA efforts also resulted in the introduction of legislation to permanently retain the 20/220 program (S.2303 and H.R.4344).
- Voted to refer for further study two similar resolutions concerning at-home call. One resolution asked the AMA to urge the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) to collect additional evidence on the number of residency programs nationwide that have changed prior in-house call rotations to at-home call since July 2003. Another asked the AMA to oppose the use of at-home call to circumvent the intent of current ACGME duty hour restrictions (Reference Committee K).
- Adopted policy to oppose payment cuts to any teaching program on the basis that the attending physician is concurrently or sequentially supervising more than one resident, fellow, or student (Reference Committee J).
- Voted to explore the barriers to primary care medicine as a career choice and the impact of these barriers on the profession of medicine as a whole and on access to health care throughout the country (Reference Committee F).

For more information, see:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/469/refcommhighlightsi07.pdf>

Other meeting information:

- Also approved by the AMA HOD at the Interim Meeting, the AMA Council on Medical Education will no longer support the Fifth Pathway as a mechanism for eligibility to enter the first year of ACGME-accredited graduate medical education after July 1, 2009. The last Fifth Pathway program class to be supported is the January 2009 entry class which ends December 2009.

## **Initiative to Transform Medical Education (ITME)**

The AMA Initiative to Transform Medical Education (ITME) aims to promote excellence in patient care by implementing reforms in the medical education and training system across the continuum from premedical preparation and medical school admission through continuing physician professional development. Phase 1 of ITME (2005-2006) identified strengths and opportunities for improvement in the preparation of physicians to interact with patients, function effectively and efficiently within their own health care organizations and the larger health care system, and act as caring professionals in society. Phase 2 (2006-2007) developed recommendations for change to remedy these gaps in the education and training system. Phase 3, now underway, is focusing on developing implementation strategies for bringing about change in priority areas identified during Phases 1 and 2.

The first area selected for attention is the learning environment for medical students and residents. Many have cited this as an important factor in the professional development of physicians. On December 13-14, 2007, ITME held an invitational conference of 40 experts from various disciplines and perspectives, including researchers in medical education and organizational change, medical school and residency program administrators and faculty members, and members of medical education-related associations and organizations. This diverse group first developed a comprehensive definition of the learning environment, prioritized factors and developed recommendations for change. The final report of the meeting will be available in June, 2008. During 2008, ITME will also address physician reentry to practice, lifelong learning, and medical school admissions. The full ITME Phase 1-2 report is available online via the AMA Council on Medical Education Web site:

<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/377/finalitme.pdf>

## **AMA Section on Medical Schools**

The Interim meeting in November 2007 focused on innovative approaches in medical education showcasing medical schools that have novel programs. Participants identified strategies for training physicians to meet the challenges impacting the profession.

The next AMA-SMS meeting will be held June 13-15, 2008 in Chicago, in conjunction with the AMA House of Delegates Annual Meeting. This meeting will provide medical education colleagues an opportunity to network, help develop AMA policy, discuss issues impacting medical education, and elect the next AMA-SMS Governing Council. The educational session will focus on teamwork in medical education and the impact on patient care.

On June 13, the AMA-SMS will hold a joint educational session with the AMA Medical Student Section on the recommendations resulting from the recent comprehensive review of the U.S. Medical Licensure Examination and the potential impact on licensure. Dr. Peter Scoles of the National Board of Medical Examiners and Dr. James Thompson of the Federation of State Medical Boards will be the featured

speakers.

Also in June, the Section will also hold a joint educational session with the AMA Council on Medical Education and Council on Science and Public Health, on the state of the faculty, discussing the many challenges facing medical schools and their faculty in a changing environment.

For meeting details, consult the Section's Web site or e-mail [jackie.drake@ama-assn.org](mailto:jackie.drake@ama-assn.org).

### **AMA staff note**

- Barbara Barzansky, PhD, secretary of the Council on Medical Education, has been appointed secretary of the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) from the AMA and director of the AMA Division of Undergraduate Medical Education. Barbara previously was assistant LCME secretary. Recruitment is underway for a Council on Medical Education secretary.

### **AMA medical education products**

The AMA continues to publish annually the *Graduate Medical Education Directory* ("Green Book"), the official list of ACGME-accredited programs, and to produce FREIDA Online, the leading resource for medical students seeking information on residency/fellowship programs. Other products of note include:

- The *Guidebook for GME Directors and Coordinators*, a free 70-page resource book of GME information. It is mailed to all newly appointed program directors. Available at: [www.ama-assn.org/go/gmeguidebook](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/gmeguidebook)
- The *GME e-Letter*, a free monthly e-mail newsletter that covers a wide range of issues affecting GME; available at: [www.ama-assn.org/go/gmenews](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/gmenews)
- *State Medical Licensure Requirements and Statistics*, an annual publication that provides updated data from state licensing authorities on licensure requirements; more information is available at: [www.ama-assn.org/go/licensure](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/licensure)
- The new *Health Care Careers Directory* (formerly the *Health Professions Career and Education Directory*) published in March. The Directory now includes 8,000 educational programs in 77 different health care fields including dentist, nurse, optometrist, pharmacist, physician (allopathic and osteopathic), podiatrist, psychologist, veterinarian, and veterinary technologist/technician.
- The winter issue of the *Medical Education Bulletin* includes information on reports/resolutions from the interim meeting.

### **Medical education data**

- By the end of the National GME Census cycle, 90% of programs completed both program and resident surveys. The listing rate for FREIDA Online was 55%, with over 200 more listers than in 2006. The third update of FREIDA Online occurred in February. Plans are under way to rewrite FREIDA Online to provide more benefits to AMA members.

- GME data from the 2006-2007 National GME Census were published in the Medical Education issue of *JAMA* in September 2007. The latest version of State level GME data, with data from 2006-2007, is now available for purchase on the AMA's Web site.

## **Other activities**

- The AMA Council on Medical Education hosted a panel presentation and group discussion on "Medical Education in the Medical Home" at the 2007 AMA interim meeting in November. Visit [www.medicalhomeinfo.org/Joint%20Statement.pdf](http://www.medicalhomeinfo.org/Joint%20Statement.pdf) for more information about the patient-centered home.
- The AMA Physician's Recognition Award has recognized physician participation in continuing medical education for 40 years. Recently approved learning formats include Performance Improvement CME and Internet Point of Care. Information on the PRA and new learning formats is available at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/go/prabooklet>.
- The AMA Division of Continuing Professional Development received a 6 year accreditation with commendation from the ACCME, an outstanding achievement for the Medical Education Group.