

RESOLUTION 45-15

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3 Title: Oposing the Establishment of an Assistant Physician Program
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5 Introduced by: Gunjan Malhotra, Sarah Gorgis, Tamara Roumayah, Jeremy
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8 Graham, and Joshua Donkin for the Medical Student Section
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10 Original Author: Sarah Gorgis
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12 Referred to: Reference Committee E
13
14 House Action: APPROVED AS AMENDED
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17 Whereas, each year an increasing number of medical students are not
18 successful in obtaining an internship or residency through the Matchⁱ; and
19

20 Whereas, 2015 will be the first year when more medical students will be
21 graduating from Michigan medical schools than there are residency positions
22 available in the state of Michiganⁱⁱ, and
23

24 Whereas, the state of Missouri has created a special licensing pathway for
25 Doctors of Medicine who have not yet obtained a post-graduate ACGME- or AOA-
26 accredited residency position, (referred to as the “Assistant Physician” program),
27 which allows medical graduates to practice in underserved areas under collaborative
28 practice arrangements similar to physician assistantsⁱⁱⁱ, and
29

30 Whereas, although the Doctor of Medicine and Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
31 degrees entail a broad knowledge of physiology and pharmacology that facilitates
32 advanced training, medical school does not prepare MD or DO graduates sufficiently
33 for independent practice, and
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35 Whereas, in order to practice independently, all states require a minimum of
36 one year of Graduate Medical Education (GME) training or completion of a residency
37 program to become a fully licensed physician^{iv}, and
38

39 Whereas, the “Assistant Physician” program only requires 30 days of training
40 before being allowed to practice within 50 miles of the supervising physician, posing a
41 significant safety concern, and
42

43 Whereas, after the short training program, “Assistant Physicians” do not need
44 direct on-site supervision by the collaborating physician and only require as few as 10
45 percent of charts of patients cared for by “Assistant Physicians” to be reviewed by a
46 fully licensed physician, which is not consistent with ACGME and AOA guidelines on
47 PGY-1 supervision, and

48 Whereas, less clinically-experienced medical school or osteopathic school
49 graduates working under the “Assistant Physician” title are more likely to order more
50 unnecessary tests and procedures, resulting in an increased cost of healthcare^v, and
51

52 Whereas, there is an increasing shortage of physicians each year, and
53

54 Whereas, diverting MDs and DOs from this path will only increase the shortage
55 by preventing medical school graduates from fully using their extensive medical
56 training, and
57

58 Whereas, the State of Michigan is working to address these shortages through
59 programs such as MiDocs and the Michigan State Loan Repayment Program
60 (Essential Health Provider Program)^{vi}, and
61

62 Whereas, the “Assistant Physician” Program, as well as other special licensing
63 programs, have not adequately addressed the bottleneck in physician training that
64 exists due to insufficient GME funding available for residency training, leading to an
65 ongoing stream of physicians diverted from the appropriate course of their training
66 and expanding the pool of MD and DO graduates without recourse to complete their
67 residency training, and
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69 Whereas, medical organizations such as the AMA, AAMC, and AAPA all
70 oppose the “Assistant Physician” concept due to its numerous flaws^{vii}; therefore be it
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72 RESOLVED: That MSMS opposes special licensing pathways, including the
73 “Assistant Physician” pathway, for physicians who are not currently enrolled in an
74 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education or American Osteopathic
75 Association training program, or have not completed at least one year of accredited
76 post-graduate US medical education.
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79 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: None

ⁱ N Engl J Med 2013; 369:297-299 July 25, 2013 DOI: 10.1056/NEJMp1306445

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp1306445?viewType=Print&viewClass=Print>

ⁱⁱ French, Ron. “Michigan gets med school boom-doctor bust.” Bridgemi. The Center of Michigan. 12 June 2012
Web 8 Feb 2015 <http://bridgemi.com/2012/06/michigan-gets-med-school-boom-doctor-bust/>

ⁱⁱⁱ M. Crane, “Missouri Law Creates New ‘Assistant Physician’ Designation” 15 July 14

^{iv} AMA Medical Licensure 2015 <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/becoming-physician/medical-licensure.page>

^v J Gen Intern Med 2005; 20:497–503: “Does Experience Matter? A Comparison of the Practice of Attendings and Residents”, M. Charlson, J. Karnik, M. Wong, 2015

^{vi} Michigan Department of Community Health. “Where are Michigan’s Designated Shortage Areas?” 2015
http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-2945_47514_47515-176079--,00.html

^{vii} AAPA “American Medical Association House of Delegates Rejects ‘Assistant Physician’ Concept” June 12, 2014