

## **AMA Adopts New Policies on First Day of Voting at Annual Meeting**

CHICAGO - June 17, 2013 - The American Medical Association (AMA), the nation's largest physician organization, voted today during its Annual Meeting to adopt the following new policies:

### **Delivery of Care and Financing Reform for Medicare and Medicaid Dually Eligible Patients**

In 2011, approximately \$300 billion was spent by the federal government and states for individuals who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid. New AMA policy establishes principles for reforming the delivery of care for this population, including customizing benefits for patients, ensuring that care coordination demonstration programs do not interfere with the patient-physician relationship.

"The AMA is working to improve the nation's health care system through sustainable delivery and payment options that give physicians the flexibility to help lower costs and improve the quality of care for patients," said AMA board member Carl Sirio, M.D. "The principles included in this new policy address streamlining care plans while eliminating conflicting payment rules."

### **Oncofertility and Fertility Preservation Treatment**

New AMA policy supports coverage by all insurance providers of fertility preservation therapies for patients requiring cancer treatments that may result in infertility. Approximately 70,000 adolescents and young adults between the ages of 15 and 39 will be diagnosed with cancer this year, and fertility preservation therapy should be an essential part of the management of their cancer. Insurers do not routinely cover payments for fertility preservation treatment.

"When young patients must undergo cancer treatment they should still have the ability to have children later in life if they choose to do so," said AMA board member Albert Osbahr M.D. "This new AMA policy encourages insurance providers to offer coverage so patients have the option to preserve their fertility while working with their physicians to treat their cancer."

### **Gay and Lesbian Medical Association Welcomed to the AMA Policy-Making Body**

The AMA announced today that the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (GLMA) was admitted to the House of Delegates - the AMA's policy-making body. Physicians and medical students unanimously voted to accept GLMA's application for representation in the House of Delegates.

"Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) physicians and medical students will now have an important voice within the house of medicine that will enhance AMA policy and programs, especially those that affect GLBT physicians, students and patients," said incoming AMA President Ardis Dee Hoven, M.D. "GLMA's growth and rising profile has been good for both patients and physicians and has opened eyes regarding the diverse needs of GLBT patients. As a result, all our patients are stronger and healthier."

GLMA's delegation joins the 187 medical societies with representatives in the House of Delegates, improving its role as the nation's broadest representational forum of physicians and medical students, dedicated to guiding the AMA and advancing the health of the nation.

### **Reducing Medical Student Loan Interest Rates**

Medical student debt has a significant and lasting effect on physicians and physicians-in-training,

playing a major role in decisions relating to career path, specialty choice and practice arrangements. To help address rising medical student debt, the AMA today adopted policy to work with other health profession organizations to advocate for a reduction of the fixed interest rate of the Stafford student loan program.

“To help students, residents and physicians manage their medical student loan debt, the AMA has advocated for numerous policies, including the creation of additional tuition assistance and loan forgiveness programs,” said AMA Board Member Stephen R. Permut, M.D. “A reduction in the fixed interest rate of Stafford loans, combined with other advocacy efforts, will help physicians and physicians-in-training better manage their debt burden.”

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**About the American Medical Association (AMA)**

*The AMA, headquartered in Chicago, is committed to enabling a better health care system for patients and physicians to improve the health of the nation. Through its broad reach and deep relationships, the AMA is initiating partnerships to advance results-focused endeavors that improve public health, improve medical education and improve physician practice sustainability and satisfaction. Visit [ama-assn.org](http://ama-assn.org) to learn more about the AMA.*