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AMA at 175: Our national partner contributing to Oakland County Medical Society's success

The gains we constantly make in diagnosing and treating illness and injury are easy to take for granted – until we realize just how far organized medicine has advanced since the mid-1800s, when bloodletting and blistering helped place “bodily humors” back into balance.

Today, next-generation mRNA vaccines and groundbreaking advancements in gene therapy are just two examples demonstrating our tremendous progress in restoring health and maintaining wellness for all, which also means dismantling the structural and social drivers of health inequities.

The American Medical Association (AMA), which marks the 175th anniversary of its founding in May 2022, helps propel the science and research that drives organized medicine forward through advocacy and innovation built around the world’s first-ever code of medical ethics. The AMA’s work to both standardize and modernize medical education and physician training are key elements in meeting its mission to promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health.

As not only an individual membership association, but the convening national body of medicine through its House of Delegates – comprised of more than 190 state and specialty medical societies and other critical stakeholders – the AMA is the nation’s largest and most influential medical organization. The policies adopted by the House of Delegates underpin its advocacy and guide ethical medical practice for millions of physicians in the U.S. and around the world.

Delegates selected by the state medical associations, medical specialty societies, national medical organizations and other recognized constituent associations that comprise the AMA House of Delegates meet twice each year to shape AMA policy and prioritize initiatives in medical education, ethical and judicial affairs, public health, diversity and inclusion, and a host of other subjects.

Oakland County Medical Society has been proud to partner with the AMA since 1831. Oakland County Medical Society advocates for, informs and empowers physicians so they can focus on providing the best quality patient care now and in the future.

Since the earliest days of its founding, the AMA and its state and specialty medical association partners have put patients first – from our earliest efforts to protect the public from medical quackery and fraudulent “medicines” that were ineffective at best and life-threatening at worst. Over the years, we have spoken for physicians in a unified voice in championing vaccine safety and efficacy, confirming the harmful effects of tobacco use while helping ban smoking on airliners, and advocating for seat belts as standard equipment in vehicles, among other initiatives.

The AMA continues to fulfill its mission by working to remove obstacles to patient care, leading the charge to prevent chronic disease and confront public health crises, and driving the future of medicine through innovation and improved physician training and education.

While the AMA can be rightfully proud of its contributions to organized medicine, the organization has also owned up to the fact that some of its prior actions and policies helped create many of the disparities and inequities in health that persist today. The AMA has acknowledged these mistakes and is

working collaboratively to eliminate inequities throughout health care in order to achieve optimal health for all.

As the AMA marks its 175th anniversary, its leadership is grateful for the contributions of time and volunteer service by millions of physician members who have advanced its mission over generations while working tirelessly to improve the health of their patients, communities, and our nation.

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