

June 12, 2008



Michael Maves, MD
Executive Vice President
American Medical Association
515 N. State Street
Chicago, IL 60610

Dear Dr. Maves:

I am writing to express the concerns of members of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists about American Medical Association House of Delegates Resolution number 303, “Protection of the Titles Doctor, Resident and Residency.”

The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) has been the accreditation body for pharmacy residency programs since 1962. Over this 46-year period, pharmacy residents have worked collaboratively with medical residents and attending physicians to provide team-based patient care—an evidence-based model known to improve patient safety and outcomes. The doctor of pharmacy degree was established at the University of California in 1955 and became the entry level degree for all new graduates from accredited schools of pharmacy in 2000.

We believe that the vast majority of physicians who have worked with pharmacy residents would describe their experience in working with these young professionals as positive, and they would note that pharmacy residents consistently present themselves as just that—“pharmacy” residents. Further, pharmacists who hold doctor of pharmacy degrees make clear to patients, health care professionals, and others that they are pharmacists. Therefore, the need for legislation as called for in the resolution to protect the titles resident, residency, and doctor seem unnecessary and unproductive.

Please know that ASHP is committed to working with the AMA and other physician organizations to foster a spirit of teamwork and collaboration between all health care professionals for the betterment of patient care. Pharmacists are proud of their distinct role in patient care and do not seek to infringe on the practice of medicine. If it turns out that resolution 303 becomes official AMA policy I would very much appreciate the opportunity to speak with you further to elaborate on our concerns.

Sincerely,

Henri R. Manasse, Jr. Ph.D, Sc.D.
Executive Vice President—Chief Executive Officer