



June 19, 2008

Dear Colleague:

I am writing to bring you up to date on an ASHP advocacy issue. As some of you are aware, the American Medical Association House of Delegates (AMA HOD) met June 14 to 18. Among the policies they considered was [one that advocated for legislation](#) to limit the use of the titles "doctor," "resident," and "residency" to physicians, podiatrists, and dentists, or those in training for those professions (<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/471/232.doc>).

ASHP [communicated its concerns about this resolution](#) to AMA (http://www.ashp.org/s_ashp/docs/files/AMA-HoD-resolution.pdf). The [policy that was adopted by the AMA HOD](#) was much more reasonable and limited in scope. The adopted policy advocates for legislation that requires health care professionals to "clearly and accurately identify to patients their qualifications and degree(s)" and makes it a felony to "misrepresent one's self as a physician." (<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/471/annotatedb.doc>)

The ASHP staff who worked with AMA to make these changes felt that our long-standing relationship with AMA and our previous advocacy partnerships made this process easier and more collegial than it might otherwise have been and contributed to its success.

Sincerely,

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

Text of proposed AMA resolution:

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association adopt that the title "Doctor," in a medical setting, apply only to physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, dentists and podiatrists (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA adopt policy that the title "Resident" apply only to individuals enrolled in physician, dentist or podiatrist training programs (New HOD Policy); and be it further

TOGETHER WE MAKE A GREAT TEAM

RESOLVED, That our AMA adopt policy that the title “Residency” apply only to physician, dentist or podiatrist training programs (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA serve to protect, through legislation, the titles “Doctor,” “Resident” and “Residency.” (Directive to Take Action)

Text of adopted AMA resolution:

RESOLVED, That our AMA advocate that professionals in a clinical health care setting clearly and accurately identify to patients their qualifications and degree(s) attained and develop model state legislation for implementation. (Directive to Take Action)

RESOLVED, That our AMA support state legislation that would make it a felony to misrepresent ones’ self as a physician (MD/DO).