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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Future of Emergency Medicine

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In early July, Joe Wood, MD FAAEM, Mike Ybarra, MD, and I traveled to Dallas to represent AAEM at a "Future of Emergency Medicine" summit meeting involving virtually every emergency medicine society in the United States. Despite the title of the meeting, the agenda only dealt with the projected workforce shortage in emergency medicine. Despite the number of organizations represented, we had few disagreements during the two days of deliberations. However, we did not discuss the "future of emergency medicine," but only one specific issue.

All organizations agreed we will not have enough board certified emergency physicians in the foreseeable future. We cannot fill every emergency department with board certified emergency physicians. In our detailed discussions, all organizations agreed that only ABEM or AOBEM diplomates may rightfully call themselves emergency medicine specialists. With the exception of the original practice-eligible diplomates, one must complete residency training in emergency medicine to call oneself a specialist in emergency medicine. We felt gratified to hear this consensus from around the room, including representatives from the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP).

The group worked on developing a consensus regarding quantification of the demand for emergency services, regionalization and categorization of emergency departments, quality standards, increasing GME funding for emergency medicine, increasing the number of emergency physicians and the use of non-physician and non-EM

trained physicians. ACEP, the sponsoring organization of this summit meeting, plans to write a white paper from the proceedings of this meeting. We expect the white paper to include AAEM's views on these issues.

Even though the organizers of this meeting restricted the agenda to workforce issues, each organization did have an adequate opportunity to express their concerns for the future of emergency medicine. We had the opportunity to discuss our imperiled practice rights and ongoing threats to the academic integrity of emergency medicine, as well as the ever-increasing threats to our professional integrity from lay corporate ownership of emergency medicine practices, often operating in violation of state laws.

During this meeting, many attendees approached us to express their appreciation for our advocacy, especially in the area of emergency physician practice rights. I left the meeting with a strong reaffirmation that AAEM's principles reflect the mainstream of organized medicine. We consistently advocated for physician practice rights, we consistently advocated for high academic standards in emergency medicine and we consistently advocated to maintain the professional integrity of medical practice by opposing illegal lay corporate practice models. We see a future where violations of physician practice rights will no longer occur, where other physicians will respect emergency medicine as a strong academic discipline, and where no emergency physician will work under the control of lay people.

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- Update your contact information.
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- 2010 Membership applications now being accepted!

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Visit www.aaem.org to learn more and watch for new features coming soon! Please contact info@aaem.org or 800-884-2236 with any questions.