

# Buckeye Osteopathic Physician

**Sandra L. Cook, DO**  
OOA President Profile



# Help us build a strong osteopathic future through your generous donation!

Our foundation, the Ohio Osteopathic Foundation, serves the osteopathic profession in many ways. The OOF serves as an AOA-accredited body for osteopathic continuing medical education and certifies osteopathic CME in Ohio. The OOF also provides scholarships and support for student leaders who are working to create a stronger profession. Further, the OOF supports Ohio physicians seeking a health policy fellowship. In the months and years ahead, the OOF plans on expanding its educational offerings that complement our annual Ohio Osteopathic Symposium. Please know we cannot do this work without your support!



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If you are considering donating or need help determining which opportunity is the best fit, contact OOA Executive Director/OOF President Matt Harney, MBA, today to talk more about it. You can also contribute online on the "Foundation" page under the "Affiliate" portion of our website—[www.OhioDO.org](http://www.OhioDO.org). No gift is too small. Please know donations are tax deductible as the OOF is a 501(c)3 charitable organization.



OHIO  
OSTEOPATHIC  
FOUNDATION

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# Buckeye Osteopathic Physician

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OOA President Sandra L. Cook,  
DO (*left*) during one of her trips to  
Alaska to see the northern lights.

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# Executive INSIGHT

By Matt Harney, MBA

**To** borrow a line from an English poet, “hope springs eternal!” A year ago, few would’ve predicted we’d be physically distancing and mask-clad for most of 2020. But here we are. Fortunately, we’re about to step into the next stage of the pandemic, understanding it’s at the very least a two-pronged effort to combat the virus: 1. The nascent vaccine approval/distribution/administration while at the same time 2. Exploring the expansion of testing capabilities in smaller clinics. This of course, in addition to the ongoing patient education effort regarding best practices, personal responsibility and the ongoing considerations of time, space, people, and place in daily life.

There is still so much we do not know--such as the public’s willingness to vaccinate and the duration of immunity from the approved vaccines. Since we’re a hopeful bunch, we realize that despite the heartache and incredible exhaustion this pandemic has brought upon the globe, this is a time of opportunity.

As an association, we’ve been as responsive as possible to the evolving needs of our members. Since the start of the pandemic, your association has worked diligently to keep our finger on the membership pulse through regular surveys. We’ve worked to keep them short out of respect for your valuable time. Informed by these surveys, we’ve created a COVID-19 resource page with Ohio-specific info on topics including testing, clinical guidance, telehealth, state orders, coding, licensure, and vaccination enrollment among much else. We keep this resource page updated as new information arises.

We’ve also joined a partnership consisting of other state medical associations for group purchases for PPE--including gloves, masks, shields, and gowns. As you might guess, OOA members receive a discount. Go to our website—www.



OhioDO.org—to order and contact the OOA office for your member discount code (or see a recent OSTEOFACETS). We will continue to use your survey input to inform our efforts to build an association that benefits you. So please be sure to respond to those surveys!

## Bringing DOs Home

Another item of incredible importance to the osteopathic profession is the recently-announced new DO pathway for AOA board certification. DOs certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) prior to November 21, 2020, can now receive reciprocal certification from AOA Certifying Board Services without taking a high-stakes initial certification exam or paying initial certification fees. To maintain AOA board certification, DOs will simply be required to meet their specialty/subspecialty board’s requirements for Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC). The application fee is \$0 for AOA members and \$299 for non-members. Visit the AOA Board Certification website for more details on OCC requirements.

The new pathway is designed to provide increased options and inclusivity for ABMS-certified osteopathic physicians and helps reinforce osteopathic distinctiveness. This new pathway represents a concerted effort by the AOA to remove any barriers to AOA board certification for DOs. Without a doubt, the osteopathic family will be made stronger through this opportunity for reentry to the osteopathic continuum.

Our work is only possible through your OOA membership and commitment. We are honored and thankful to serve on your behalf and look forward to the hope 2021 brings! ■

# Leading in a Pandemic

## with a Focus on Wellness

**OOA** President Sandra L. Cook, DO, is the first to say she's not tech savvy. But the family physician from Ashtabula has mastered videoconferencing in short order to lead OOA Board meetings, meet with staff, and participate in State of Ohio events.

"I wouldn't wish this type of year on any future OOA president," she said. "It's so different virtually. One of the wonderful things about the OOA is when we get together at the Symposium or a meeting there's the interaction and personal touch and conversation. All of this kind of contact is important, it's what creates our osteopathic family. We are a profession trained to use our hands, to touch." She joked: "It's hard to do over Zoom."

In fact, before becoming president Cook would take a few minutes at Board meetings for small actions to encourage wellness, like having everyone stand to stretch or giving their seatmate a shoulder rub or using a few relaxation techniques. At the annual Symposium she is often found at the OMT table helping a fellow physician.

She's advocated for bigger actions as well. She serves as the OOA representative on the Ohio Physician Advisory Council and Ohio Physician Wellness Coalition that address burnout by



providing wellness initiatives. During her presidential term this year, she had hoped to institute some type of support system at the Symposium or in-person meetings.

At her job as assistant medical director at Medical Mutual, she incorporates wellness practices with her team, like guided relaxation to start a meeting. At the start of the pandemic in March, she added a 15-minute virtual "huddle" to allow the group to de-stress as they talk about cases.

The whole person philosophy of osteopathic medicine has long resonated with Cook. She calls herself a touchy-feely people person who has always had a passion for psychoneuroimmunology, or mind-body medicine. The mind, body, spirit connection emphasizes the need for creating balance to maintain optimal well-being. For Cook, connecting with nature is her way to do that. She enjoys traveling and has been to Alaska multiple times. When the pandemic is over perhaps she'll go again.

She talked with *Buckeye Osteopathic Physician* via Zoom. →





*First topic: COVID. What are you looking forward to after the pandemic?*

I'm hoping to go to Colorado to visit the national parks there.

I've been working remotely since March, so I'm no longer spending two hours a day driving to Cleveland. The downside is there's no in-person contact with coworkers or with OOA. It's been difficult. It's taking a toll on doctors and health care workers everywhere. We'll get through it—and we'll see positive changes for medicine. In the aftermath of any big event we always see innovation. I think we'll see huge strides in immunology. We've already seen much more communication and increased collaboration among researchers.

*Let's talk about your career. You're currently working in insurance, what did you do before?*

I was in private solo practice in Ashtabula for 15 years, from

1994 to 2009. It was a very traditional practice taking care of newborns to geriatrics. I did everything: administrative, patient care, home visits, hospice. If something broke in the office, I fixed it. Economically, Ashtabula County ranks among the poorest counties in the state. Which made a private solo practice challenging, but also rewarding. With minor modifications in patient care, I could see life-changing effects. After closing my practice I did urgent care. In 1999 I started at Medical Mutual as a part-time consultant and then accepted a full-time position in 2016.

*Why did you choose osteopathic medicine? Tell us about your path to medicine.*

In kindergarten I decided I was going to be a doctor. Growing up, my family physician was a DO and we always used Cuyahoga Falls General, an osteopathic hospital. But it was an unusual dream for a girl growing up in the 1950s. I had no professionals

in my immediate family to serve as a model. And at that time it was assumed girls would become nurses.

Osteopathic medicine made sense for me, since I always had a passion for psychoneuroimmunology, which is mind-body medicine. It's the whole-person philosophy. But when I finished undergrad there were only five osteopathic schools in the United States. It was very competitive to get in. So I went to graduate school and then taught microbiology and general biology for 10 years. By then we had OU-COM. I quit my job at Sinclair Community College and applied knowing I wanted to go into Family Medicine.

*That was a big life change.*

When I started teaching, I thought that would be my career. But one summer I spent three months living on a sailboat. It was a life-changing experience and that's when I decided to pursue medicine.

*When did you become involved with the OOA?*

My involvement started primarily after the OOA combined districts. I called up the executive director of the Cleveland Academy to find out about their meetings and projects. (*Editor's note: In 2006, the OOA House of Delegates, upon request from officers of the Madison Academy District XI, dissolved the district and transferred physician members in Lake, Ashtabula, and Geauga counties to the Cleveland Academy of Osteopathic Medicine, District VII.*) I was always interested in state leadership—mostly because I saw a need for more women in leadership roles.

*Let's talk a little more about that.*

We're improving, but there's still a huge need for women in leadership positions within the profession. Over 50% of students in medical school are women. Women have been an important part of the osteopathic profession since Andrew Taylor Still's first class at the American School of Osteopathy in 1892; there were five women and sixteen men. But consider there's only been one female president of the AOA.

*Do you have any projects you want to focus on during your term?*

Physician wellness. The suicide rate among physicians is increasing. We also see medical students and residents experiencing burnout. There is so much stress in medicine: student debt is tremendous, the expectations are overwhelming. Now with this pandemic, we have another level of stress added to medical professionals. I am proud that we had an entire day of wellness programming during the Virtual Spring Seminar. It's still an area where we need to make changes to support physicians at all levels: students, residents, attendings, and retired.

#### 4 Things We Probably Don't Know About You

I used to repair cars. My father was an auto mechanic and I grew up working with him when I was a teenager. During college I continued to go to the garage to help out. I've since hung up those tools, but I could (and have) fixed my own car in a pinch.

I still use tools. I've done plumbing and electrical work, installed a hanging chandelier in my dining room, put in ceiling fan. It's a sense of accomplishment. And when I'm stressed, I like to fix things.

I did a tandem skydiving jump.

I've been to Alaska to see the Aurora Borealis.

*How do you relieve stress in your own life?*

Connecting with nature and seeing the natural beauty of the world is a stress reliever. One of my favorite trips was Yellowstone in winter. It's harder to travel during a pandemic. I also do crafts and beading. But one of my greatest stress relievers is pounding hot, hot steel. I make Damascus steel

So much of what physicians have to deal with is negative. Spending time in nature is healing and restorative.

*What don't people know about the OOA that you wish they did?*

I think OOA does a pretty good job. Though I wish we had some magical way to pull doctors back in that have done allopathic residencies. We do a great job engaging our medical students. When they get to residency it's a little bit harder given all the demands on their time. The tough piece is bringing them back in after residency, particularly those who didn't go the osteopathic route.

*What do you see as one of the biggest challenge DOs face today?*

Some people still don't realize there are two complete schools of medicine in the US, osteopathic and allopathic. We just saw the whole situation with the White House physician, Sean Conley, DO, where media mischaracterized the entire osteopathic medical profession (*Editor's note: See page 6 for the statement Cook issued.*)

*Speaking of students and residents, what advice do you have for them?*

Be sure you make time for yourself and your family. That's advice for students, residents, and attendings. Never hesitate to ask for help or answers. Always be willing to ask. We are trained to believe we should have all of the answers. But we don't have all of the answers. We are human beings with needs of our own. ■



# OOA Works to Combat Misinformation about DOs

When President Donald Trump was hospitalized with COVID-19 in early October, White House Physician Sean Conley, DO, conducted press briefings to provide updates on the president's illness and treatment. The ensuing media spotlight on Conley wrongly questioned his qualifications as a physician and cast dispersion about the entire osteopathic medical profession. Well-known personalities on CNN, MSNBC, and social media were among those who spread misinformation.

The American Osteopathic Association conducted a national effort to set the record straight. In Ohio, the OOA issued the following statement on October 16, 2020:

With President Trump's recent COVID-19 diagnosis, there's been increased attention on osteopathic physicians and, unfortunately, much of it has been misinformation. Inaccuracies have been rampant on social media, in traditional media, and on broadcast channels. The spotlight on White House Physician Sean Conley, DO, has wrongly resulted in mischaracterizations of the entire osteopathic medical profession.

To be clear, only DOs and MDs have unrestricted licenses. Doctors of osteopathic medicine (DOs) attend four years of medical school and train for 3-7 years as a resident, depending on their specialty, before becoming a practicing physician. The same is true for allopathic physicians (MDs).

In Ohio, DOs and MDs are also

required to obtain at least 50 hours of continuing medical education (CME) every two years to maintain licensure. In fact, DOs were the first medical practitioners to require CME as a condition of re-licensure back in the 1940s. There are additional requirements for board certification. While DOs and MDs are educated at different medical schools, they are treated equally in statute, rules, and credentialing.

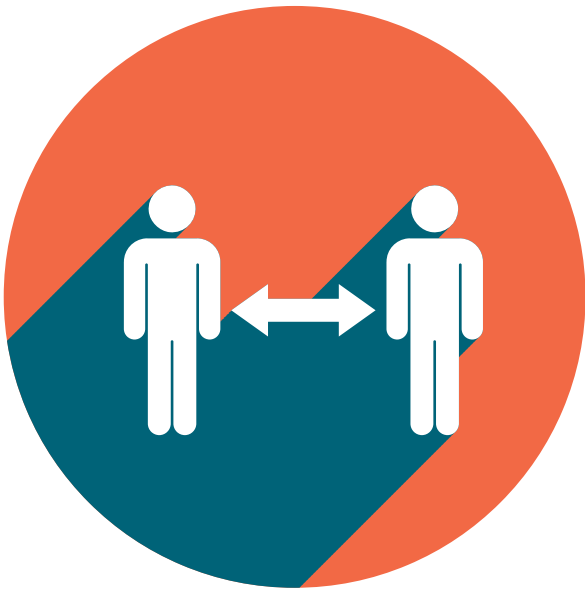
Osteopathic medicine is a separate and distinctive philosophy and practice of medicine and wellness. The osteopathic approach emphasizes physician-patient relationships; prioritizes prevention and wellness; and considers a patient's environment, beliefs, and values in their diagnosis, treatment, and care. One of the tenets of the profession stresses the body is

a unit—made up of body, mind, and spirit. We know this holistic approach is exactly what our patients have come to expect.

There are over 7,000 licensed DOs in Ohio practicing a variety of medical specialties. And it is a growing profession, increasing 63% in the past decade and nearly 300% over the past three decades. One-quarter of all medical students nationwide attend an osteopathic medical school. In Ohio, the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine at Ohio University, with campuses in Athens, Dublin, and Cleveland, graduates 1,000 physicians every four years.

The bottom line is while there may be a somewhat different approach to wellness, DOs are one of only two groups of health care providers with unrestricted medical licenses. ■





# COVID-19 Continues Unchecked in Ohio

## OOA Supports DOs During Pandemic

**O**n March 9, 2020, Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine declared a state of emergency and Ohio had its first known case of COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

Nine months later there are more than 520,000 cases statewide, with nearly 60% of them recorded during a six-week timeframe starting November 1, and 7,187 Ohio deaths from the disease. About 4% of Ohio's population—or one in 25—has contracted COVID-19. Nationwide, there are 15.5 million cases and 289,000 deaths.

Since the outset, the OOA has strived to support Ohio DOs. That includes lobbying for physician needs, working with staff from the Governor's office and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), collaborating with other physician associations to bring issues to the forefront, assessing member needs, and much more.

A social media campaign Doctor's Orders: Mask + 6 Feet was launched using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other channels to urge Ohioans to wear a face covering and practice physical distancing when in public. As part of the campaign, OOA members were invited to use the hashtags #DoctorsOrders and #MaskPlus6 and share photos and selfies of themselves wearing masks while not only at their medical office or hospital, but also while doing day-to-day activities. The effort was jointly sponsored by OOA and other medical associations. To complement the social media initiative, t-shirts were designed with the #DoctorsOrder logo. →

As the vaccine is deployed over the coming months, OOA is committed to using social media and other avenues to promote vaccine education and provide members with the most up-to-date information. State polling indicates that just more than half of Ohioans would not be willing to get the vaccine. So educating the public about the importance of getting vaccinated will be crucial. The most trusted voices when it comes to COVID-19 are an individual's personal physician, medical experts, and emergency room doctors, followed by public health officials. Whether you are a vaccine provider or not, you can be one of those trusted sources of information for your patients and community. In addition, OOA President Sandra L. Cook, DO, serves on statewide vaccine workgroup convened by ODH.

Through a new partnership developed over the summer the OOA is helping members secure personal protective equipment (PPE). Gloves, gowns, surgical masks, face shields, KN95 masks, and hand sanitizer are offered at a discounted rate from a vetted bulk supplier at [www.ActionPPE.org](http://www.ActionPPE.org). Founded in South Carolina by a county medical society, the enterprise has distributed over 2 million PPE pieces so that medical practices can operate safely.

In November, DeWine attended the OOA Board of Trustees meeting, held over the videoconference platform Zoom. Physicians discussed vaccine distribution, the impact of state orders, and other issues related to pandemic planning. DeWine outlined a plan for priority distribution to nursing homes and health care workers. Separately, a member of the DeWine team attended the meeting to discuss rapid antigen testing for licensed independent practitioners. ■

**Physician Support Line  
888-409-0141**

No appointment necessary.  
Open 7 days a week, 8:00 am - 1:00 am ET

Free confidential telehealth line from a network of 600+ volunteer psychiatrists joined together in the determined hope to provide support for physician colleagues and American medical students during the COVID-19 epidemic.

**Self-care is critical during this time.** Here's how to support your mental health if you are feeling overwhelmed:

- Step away from the news and limit exposure to a small chunk of time each day.
- Find solace with a community of people that share your fears, where you can talk openly about why you're afraid.
- Try to avoid confrontational conversations that might heighten your anxiety, including debates with family and friends who may have voted differently from you—at least for now.
- Find a routine, exercise, or distract your mind.
- Channel your feelings of unrest into a cause or activity you find fulfilling.

*From the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*



**These Ohio DOs  
want you to  
STAY SAFE!**



**#MaskPlus6  
#MasksOnOhio**



# The Power of a Mirror

From Our Partners at



Your role as an osteopathic physician is much like a mirror; you act as a compelling, reflective tool for your patients. Through careful examination, you help them see how their past medical decisions could affect them currently and potentially in the future. You then present your best diagnoses and counsel them as time progresses for optimal health and well-being. Here's a question: When was the last time you looked in the mirror and thought, "Who's taking care of me?"

Just like your patients, you are ultimately in charge of yourself and your financial health. You, like many people, may already be minimizing the aches and pains related to money: debt, longevity, retirement and beyond.

And honestly, nobody's going to tell you to spend less time working and more time preparing for your or your family's financial future. Unless you ask us for our professional opinion.

Choosing to slow down long enough to create a strategic plan is exactly what you need to do.

We work in the financial planning space and are approved to offer our services through the Ohio Osteopathic Association.

Our team delivers a holistic understanding of your unique financial situation and creates a comprehensive plan to help you reach your goals, building trust through integrity. Providing clear communication, professional service and financial education, we take time to develop relationships and meet your needs while securing confidence in your future.

A number of members recently leveraged our support in taking care of themselves and their businesses for the first time in a long time. →



When was the last time you looked in the mirror and thought, "Who's taking care of me?"





### Do You Own a Business?

There's plenty to think about day or night while running a business. How do you attract the best people? What if you get sick or injured? How will you exit from the business? These questions can weigh heavily on your mind.

As your business evolves, an integrated approach to planning can help put you at ease. Here's how:

Start by brainstorming what's important to you now and what will be important to you in the future. Then, assess what you are already doing to take care of those goals as well as where there are gaps that require additional attention.

If you're like most business owners, you may have addressed your needs five or 10 years ago but haven't refreshed your plan in years. No matter where your business is in its life-cycle, we recognize that the goals you have for your business and family are likely intertwined.

Our job is to coach you through what else could be happening in the financial plan to help your business and family succeed in the future. Our team of experts specialize in business planning and work closely with your other advisors, such as your accountant or attorney. We help manage the full scope of your needs and goals. Illuminating a picture of your financial life will deliver the clearest view to your success—in business and in life.

### 5 Ways to Make Your Money Work for You

Let's start with a discussion around money: whether you have a little or a lot, the way you manage it makes a difference. And the decisions you make today can have a tremendous impact on what you'll have tomorrow.

The best financial plans revolve around balancing five basic actions: save, spend, grow, protect and give.

Let's take a look at each area more closely.

**Save:** Build up the resources you need to cover today's goals and any surprises that come up while also preparing for the lifestyle you want in the future.

**Spend:** Plan and manage your expenses. By spending wisely, you can afford the things you need, strategically eliminate debt like student loans, and still have cash for what you want.

**Grow:** It's important to be strategic about where you invest your hard-earned money, as it can have a big impact on its potential to grow over time.

**Protect:** You need a plan to help protect it all - your loved ones, the money you've already accumulated and your future income - by having the right insurance coverage in place.

**Give:** Where would you like to make a difference? By setting aside a few hours or dollars a month or year, you can make an impact to causes that matter to you.

But you don't have to do it alone. Utilize the power of a mirror. At Northwestern Mutual, we help you reflect and see your whole financial picture, find out what you truly want and design a plan together to get it.

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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Matt Harney, MBA

The OOA continues to advocate for the osteopathic profession regarding legislative priorities. This work endures even during the pandemic and a very enthusiastic lame duck session. Despite several members of the legislature testing positive for COVID-19, both chambers have been actively hearing bills in committee and on the floor in November and December.

At the time this update was written, the lame duck session has not adjourned. We will provide a comprehensive report of legislative action from Ohio's 133rd General Assembly in the next edition of *Buckeye Osteopathic Physician*.

The OOA is currently tracking nearly 100 bills of impact to the health care community. Below is a summary of the most noteworthy bills:

## **HB 61 Public records**

To include forensic mental health providers, mental health evaluation providers, regional psychiatric hospital employees, emergency service telecommunicators, and certain Ohio National Guard members as individuals whose residential and familial information is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Law and to address matters related to contact tracing.

**OOA position:** Interested party

**Status:** Passed House; passed Senate. Conferees named in Senate 9/22/2020.

## **HB 177 APRN scope of practice expansion**

Regarding standard care arrangements entered into by advanced practice registered nurses and collaborating physicians or podiatrists. Would provide for a "transition to practice" for APRNs to practice without a collaboration agreement after 2,000 hours of collaboration with a physician or APRN that had received the requisite 2,000 hours. Also, would allow for clearances by licensed health professionals of concussed student athletes.

**OOA position:** Opponent

**Status:** Eight hearings in House Health Committee. Last hearing was 11/18/2020.

## **HB 210 Health screenings**

Regarding the screening of child care and preschool employees for tuberculosis and the disclosure of information about public assistance recipients to public health authorities.

**OOA position:** Interested party

**Status:** Passed House; passed Senate.

## **HB 224 CRNA scope of practice**

Regarding the practice of certified registered nurse anesthetists. Allows CRNAs to order drugs, tests and intravenous fluids if the facility has a policy creating that authority, however, supervising physicians can opt out of that authority if the physician believes it's in the best interest of the patient.

**OOA position:** Opposed to initial version, neutral on final (signed) version.

**Status:** Passed House; Heard in Senate Health, Human Services, and Medicaid Committee. Ultimately absorbed into COVID-19 related bill, HB 197. Signed into law 3/27/20.

## **HB 253 Revises Fireworks Law**

Initial version allowed broad-based consumer use of fireworks. Substitute bill retains statewide prohibition on discharge and

- Allows localities to allow discharge on July 3, 4 or 5;
- Removes provisions related to ground sparklers;
- Allows for geographic transfer of current licenses 260 days after the effective date; and
- Extends moratorium of new licenses through 18 months after geographic transfer deadline.

**OOA position:** Opposed to initial version, neutral on substitute.

**Status:** Passed House; multiple hearings in Senate Transportation, Commerce & Workforce Committee. →

### **HB 329 Sun lamp tanning**

The bill prohibits the operator or employee of a tanning facility from permitting an individual under 18 from using sun lamp tanning services at the facility. Under current law, the operator or employee of a tanning facility may allow an individual who is 16 or 17 to use those services after obtaining consent in person from the individual's parent or legal guardian; the consent is valid for 90 days. The duration and number of sessions are limited as well. In the case of an individual under 16, the operator or employee must obtain consent from the individual's parent or legal guardian for each session, and the parent or legal guardian must be present at the facility for the duration of each session of sun lamp tanning services.

**OOA position:** Proponent

**Status:** Heard in House Health Committee.

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### **HB 388 Surprise billing/out-of-network care**

The bill seeks to protect patients by requiring a health plan issuer to reimburse an out-of-network provider for unanticipated out-of-network care when the care is provided to a person at an in-network facility and the services would be covered if provided by an in-network provider. Under the bill, "unanticipated out-of-network care" means health care services, including clinical laboratory services, that are provided under a health benefit plan and that are provided by an out-of-network provider when either of the following applies:

- The covered person did not have the ability to request such services from an in-network provider.
- The services provided were emergency services.

The bill also requires an insurer to reimburse:

- o An out-of-network provider for unanticipated out-of-network care provided at an in-network facility;
  - o An out-of-network provider or emergency facility for emergency services provided at an out-of-network emergency facility;
  - o An out-of-network ambulance for emergency services provided in an out-of-network ambulance;
  - o An out-of-network provider or facility for clinical laboratory services provided in connection with unanticipated out-of-network care or emergency services.
- Prohibits a provider, facility, emergency facility, or ambulance from balance billing a patient for unanticipated or emergency care as described above when that care is provided in Ohio.
  - Provides that a covered person's cost-sharing responsibility for the services described above cannot be greater than if the services were provided in network.
  - Establishes the default reimbursement rate as the greatest of the in-network rate, the out-of-network rate, or the Medicare rate and establishes procedures by which payees (providers, facilities, emergency facilities, and ambulances) may seek to negotiate the reimbursement in lieu of the default reimbursement rate.
  - Permits certain payees to seek arbitration if negotiation is unsuccessful, establishes criteria to be eligible for arbitration, and establishes procedures for the conduct of the arbitration.
  - Requires the Superintendent of Insurance to select an arbitration entity to conduct arbitrations under the bill using specified criteria.
  - Requires a provider to disclose certain information to patients regarding the cost of out-of-network services that are not

unanticipated out-of-network care or emergency services.

**OOA position:** Proponent

**Status:** Passed House; multiple hearings in Senate Insurance & Financial Institutions Committee.

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### **HB 412 Establishes the Rare Disease Advisory Council**

The bill would create the Rare Disease Advisory Council. This bill, which passed the House with a unanimous vote, would establish a rare disease council made up of 25 members. Three members of the Council must be public members who are living with a rare disease. In addition, awareness of rare disease would be expected to increase within the state due to the bill requiring periodic reports detailing incidence of specific rare diseases within Ohio.

**OOA position:** Proponent

**Status:** Passed House; passed Senate.

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### **HB 484 Impacts athletic training**

The bill would require a trainer to practice under a collaboration agreement with a physician or podiatrist and eliminate the requirement a trainer be employed by an educational institution, a professional or amateur organization, or an athletic or health care facility. It makes various updates to a trainer's scope of practice, including consideration of providing emergent care, therapeutic interventions and injury rehabilitation; promoting and educating about wellness; and performing athletic training research.

**OOA position:** Interested party

**Status:** Passed House; Referred to Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee.

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### **HB 606 Civil immunity**

To make temporary changes related to qualified civil immunity for health care and emergency services provided during a government-declared disaster or emergency and for exposure to or transmission or contraction of certain coronaviruses.

**OOA position:** Proponent

**Status:** Passed House, passed Senate, signed by Gov. DeWine 9/14/2020 (effective in 90 days).

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### **SB 311 Health orders**

To modify the law governing public health orders, quarantine, and isolation. The bill would limit the executive branch powers, specifically curtail Ohio Department of Health (ODH) authority to order quarantine and isolation; block ODH from issuing statewide quarantine orders for people who aren't ill or haven't been directly exposed to an infectious disease; and give the state legislature authority to rescind state public health orders.

**OOA position:** Opponent

**Status:** Passed Senate; Passed House; Vetoed by Gov. DeWine on 12/3/2020.

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### **SCR 14 Racism**

To declare racism a public health crisis and to ask the Governor to establish a working group to promote racial equity in Ohio.

**OOA position:** Proponent

**Status:** Multiple hearings in Senate Health, Human Services & Medicaid Committee. ■

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# Applications to Osteopathic Medical Schools Hit **All-Time High**

**D**emonstrating the continuing growth and appeal of osteopathic medicine, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) reported that a record number of applications have been received during this current cycle. With several months still to go until the deadline, AACOM has received more than 24,000 applications, which represents an 18.2% increase over this time last year and already eclipses the entire number of applicants from last cycle.

“We have seen steady growth in osteopathic medicine over the years and this cycle’s record application pool confirms that prospective medical students are recognizing the appeal and value of osteopathic medical education,” said AACOM President and CEO Robert A. Cain, DO. “DOs are ‘physicians with a philosophy.’ We focus on overall health and wellness, making sure we look at the whole person—mind, body and spirit. In these complicated and stressful times, that philosophy is resonating with more and more students.”

Currently, 25 percent of all US medical students are enrolled in osteopathic medical schools. There are 37 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine, educating nearly 31,000 future physicians, at 58 teaching locations in 33 US states. The 2020-2021 application cycle for osteopathic medical school opened this past May and closes April 2021. AACOM has a centralized application service for all US osteopathic medical schools and provides a user friendly, streamlined process for applicants.

Over the last several years, AACOM has developed some innovative new programs to increase awareness and outreach to prospective students. In 2018, the first virtual medical school fair was held, and the numbers of participants has grown steadily ever since. This current cycle featured four virtual fairs to date, including one partnering with Tour4Diversity in Medicine aimed at increasing diversity in the application pool. Another major innovation was the ChooseDO Explorer, launched in 2019. This fully searchable database allows students to

explore all accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the US, and easily navigate application deadlines, tuition rates, and other important stats.

The Association of American Medical Colleges also reports a sharp increase in applications.

Some medical school admissions officers have called the deluge of applications ‘The Fauci Effect,’ referring to Anthony Fauci, MD, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, who has played an important role during the coronavirus pandemic. Experts say the pandemic, for a variety of reasons, is one explanation for the increase.

“Whatever the reason, it’s wonderful so many smart and talented individuals want to pursue medicine,” said OOA President Sandra L. Cook, DO. “And to me it makes sense, particularly during a pandemic, that they connect to the osteopathic philosophy and see it as part of their career path.” ■



# Student Update: ATHENS

The OOA works with many Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OU-HCOM) students, particularly Student Government Association (SGA) and Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) leadership. SGA presidents from each campus—Athens, Dublin, and Cleveland—are invited to OOA Board meetings and are allotted time on the agenda to report on campus activities. SOMA is an AOA affiliate and the nation's largest network of osteopathic medical students.

These student leaders volunteer their time, energy and effort. As medical students, they already have a lot on their plate. Yet, they still find time to commit to their community, peers, and profession.

*Buckeye Osteopathic Physician* invited student leaders from the Athens campus to provide an update of their activities and goals for the year. We'll hear from Dublin and Cleveland campus leaders in future issues.



## LAUREN DONOVAN

SGA President,  
Athens Campus

The Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine SGA and Administration have shown great resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. From finding innovative ways to continue hosting classes online to virtual club meetings with creative events and informative speakers. One especially important event is the White Coat Ceremony for our first-year students. Pictured you can see some of the OMS-Is with Executive Dean Ken Johnson, DO, and the Athens Dean Beth Longenecker, DO, outside of Irvine Hall for part one their white coat celebration. The students were coated by their campus dean in late August and will have a virtual ceremony during winter break, where their families can coat them and enjoy the official ceremony.

The Student National Medical Association (SNMA) on the Athens campus typically teams up with the SGA to host interviewee dinners with underrepresented minority (URM) students the night before their interview. This dinner serves as an opportunity for the interviewing students to calm their nerves about their upcoming interview and ask questions about the school. With the nature of the virtual times we're in, SNMA has diligently worked to continue supporting URM students and has opened up these dinners to allow for students on the Dublin and Cleveland campuses' SNMA executive boards to join the meetings and welcome the interviewing students. The SGA has also partnered with SNMA by creating a Diversity and Inclusion position on SGA.

Additionally, the SGA Graduate Student Senate Representative, Suji Baskar, has been working with the Ohio University Graduate Student Senate (GSS) for a campus flu

shot campaign. In order to ensure students are receiving their flu shots, the GSS has been developing a social media campaign and implementing places on campus for students to easily access flu shots. In November, the SGA celebrated the 40th reunion of the first graduating class of osteopathic physicians from what was then Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

The SGA is excited to see what new ways our students come up with to continue supporting education and advancement during these unique and challenging times. If any physicians would like to collaborate with one of our student organizations to speak or host an event, please reach out to Lauren Donovan ([donovl8669@ohio.edu](mailto:donovl8669@ohio.edu)) with any ideas or questions. The SGA hopes everyone and their families are staying mentally and physically healthy and well and continue to do so! →

## Student Leaders

### Student Government Association (SGA), Athens

President Lauren Donovan

Vice President Haley Gianfrancesco

Secretary David Hartman

Treasurer Addie Davis

Community Outreach Caroline Hyman

Graduate Student Senate Representative Suji Baskar

Student Senate Representative Salonas Ayad

Wellness Position Dana Powers

Diversity Liaison Monet McCalla





## JONAH KUVIN

SOMA President  
Athens Campus

This year, Athens SOMA leadership has several goals to improve chapter involvement within the organization. With the obvious challenge of the existing pandemic of COVID-19, the focus will be towards virtual events, as well as COVID friendly fundraisers/philanthropic events.

One major goal for this upcoming year is to strengthen the relationship with Ohio University's Pre-SOMA organization. Pre-SOMA has established themselves as an official organization with national SOMA. Multiple virtual events are being planned to get to know the organization better as well as being a support system for pre-SOMA students.

Another goal is to educate students on the opportunity they have to create an impact on the osteopathic profession through health policy. Athens SOMA also plans to continue to be advocates in Addiction Medicine, with an emphasis on addressing the opioid crisis. This will be done through continued collaboration with Region III's Opioid Task Force and previous National Liaison Officer, Emily Artz, OMS-III. Lastly, SOMA will remain passionate towards serving the Athens community through multiple philanthropic events. Current activities planned for the upcoming year to address these goals include:

- Pre-SOMA
  - Pre-SOMA Night
    - Lecture from OU-HCOM faculty on history of Osteopathic Medicine and Q&A
  - “Coffee & Bagel” Event
    - Get to know the undergraduate members better and address their concerns with medical school/Osteopathic Medicine
- Resolution Workshop
  - Event collaborating with Cleveland and Dublin campuses
  - Goal: To learn about how a resolution is created as well as the process of getting a resolution passed
- Addiction and Empathy Event with KYCOM
  - Guide to treating patients from therapists, researchers, and physicians
  - Panel of 4 leaders in this field answering questions
- Project Linus
  - Purchasing fabric kits for students to make blankets from their own homes, providing blankets to children in need
- Representing OU-HCOM's student voice at national conferences

Athens SOMA would welcome the guidance and clinical expertise of current osteopathic physicians. Physicians who would like to host a seminar highlighting important issues they see in clinical practice are welcome to contact SOMA President Jonah Kuvin, OMS-II, at [jk774019@ohio.edu](mailto:jk774019@ohio.edu). ■



### Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA), Athens

President Jonah Kuvin

National Liaison Officer Siddhant Srivastava

Vice President Kyle Isaacs

Secretary Madeleine Sorrick

Treasurer Chloe Harless

Community Outreach Director Anna Gebhardt

Pre-SOMA Director Jonathan Rose

AMA Delegate CeCe Hanline

**New Scholar Series Videos Released**

Scholar Teacher Part 2 is the latest set of educational videos released as part of the popular Scholar Series. This latest release is a continuation of Scholar Teacher, a faculty development resource or residency programs with Osteopathic Recognition. Part 2 is divided into five sections: Introduction, Case Introduction, OMM Lab, Becoming the Teacher, and Skills Prompt.



The videos were developed by Robert W. Hostoffer, Jr., DO, who founded the Scholar Series four years ago. All of the videos are free to view and are eligible for free AOA Category 1-A credit. See the entire series at [www.OhioDO.org/scholarseries](http://www.OhioDO.org/scholarseries).



**AOA Offers Pathway to Board Certification for ABMS-Certified DOs**

DOs certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) prior to September 1, 2020, can now receive reciprocal certification from American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Certifying Board Services without taking a high-stakes initial certification exam or paying initial certification fees.

The new pathway is designed to provide increased options and inclusivity for ABMS-certified osteopathic physicians, said AOA CEO Kevin Klauer, DO, EJD. “It’s time to bring our DOs home,” he said.

AOA President Thomas Ely, DO, said reducing this barrier will lead to more open lines of communication within the profession. “The osteopathic community should and needs to be inclusive, not exclusive,” he said. “We want every DO to be a part of the osteopathic professional community, including AOA board certification. This is a big step in service of

that goal.”

To maintain AOA Board Certification, DOs will be required to meet their specialty/subspecialty board’s requirements for Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC).

The application fee is \$299 for non-members and free for AOA members.



**State of Ohio to Overhaul Medicaid**

The Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) collected proposals from insurance companies in November to begin overhauling the program that provides health coverage to 3 million Ohioans. The goals are to improve care and health outcomes, especially for those with special needs; focus on wellness; increase transparency and accountability; and emphasize personalized care experience.

Last year, ODM collected feedback from physicians, enrollees, and others to assess current services and ideas for improvement. The state agency heard from 1,100 individuals and organizations, including the Ohio Osteopathic Association.

The timeline calls for contracts to be awarded January 25, 2021, with a new system in place in 2022. Of those insured under the program, about 90% are enrolled in managed care. In 2019, the state paid \$17 billion to Medicaid HMOs.



**Osteopathic Heritage Foundations, OrthoNeuro to Move to Dublin Campus**

In the spring, Columbus-based

Osteopathic Heritage Foundations and multi-specialty physician practice OrthoNeuro will open operations at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine facilities on the Dublin campus. Renovations are underway in OhioHealth Medical Education Building 2.

The Osteopathic Heritage Foundations will relocate its central Ohio headquarters. With a mission to improve the health and quality of life in the community through education, research and service, the Foundations are the largest osteopathic-supportive private foundation in United States and a major benefactor of the Heritage College.



OrthoNeuro will open its newest office on campus as an addition to its several locations around central Ohio. OrthoNeuro is a longtime clinical partner of the Heritage College, with whom students have participated in clinical experiences throughout their four years of undergraduate medical education. The Orthopedic Foundation will also move its office to the Dublin campus. It is a philanthropic organization associated with OrthoNeuro that is dedicated to improving the quality of patient care and medical services through research, education, and prevention of orthopedic and neurologic disorders.

In other College news, work is nearing completion on Heritage Hall, the \$65 million, 120,000-square-foot building on the Athens campus. The state-of-the-art facility is intended to promote team-based learning with fewer lecture-style halls and more collaboration between students and professors. Among the features are an OMM lab, one of the premier spaces; simulated patient rooms; a café; a fitness room; and a large, open atrium, which is considered the heart and soul of the new medical school building. ■

## Deaths in the Family

**Nicholas P. DePizzo, DO**, of Youngstown, died October 30, 2020, at his home with his family by his side.

A graduate of Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, he practiced family medicine for 43 years before his retirement in 2003. He was a doctor for the Neil Kennedy Recovery Clinic, medical director at Briarfield Nursing Facility, and on staff at Youngstown Osteopathic Hospital until its closing and Northside Medical Center. He also served as team doctor for Liberty High School.

He was an avid football fan of Youngstown State University and the Cleveland Browns and would climb Cardiac Hill in Pittsburgh to attend a Pitt game. He loved the outdoors, especially gardening. He also loved his gadgets. DePizzo was a member of St. Anthony of Padua Church.

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Marcia; two daughters; four grandchildren; five great grandchildren; and a large extended family. He was preceded in death by his son, Nicholas P. DePizzo II, DO.

Life Member **James E. Mottice, DO**, 87, of Cuyahoga Falls, died November 5, 2020, at his home.

He was a 1959 graduate of the Chicago College Osteopathic Medicine, interned at Cuyahoga Falls General Hospital, and practiced medicine in Cuyahoga Falls and Stow. He retired from general practice in 1998 but continued to work with the elderly in long term care facilities in the Akron area until 2011.

He is survived by his wife, Sandy; seven children and step-children; 23 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; and a brother.

Life Member **George E. Nixon, DO**, died October 8, 2020, at his residence in Estero, Florida.

Before moving to Florida 16 years ago, he resided in Bellefontaine where he practiced Family Medicine from 1963 to the closing of his office in 1997. Taking care of many Logan County families and particularly delivering babies, brought him great joy. After retiring, he continued to work part-time at the newly opened clinic at Mary Rutan Hospital until 2004, when he moved to Florida.

He did his undergraduate at the University of Pittsburgh and received his doctorate degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. Nixon was proud to be a DO and served a term as president of Ohio

ACOPF in 1988.

He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict having served as a corpsman in the United States Navy from 1950 through 1954.

Survivors include his wife, Jane; three children, including Daniel E. Nixon, DO, of Virginia; a sister; eight grandchildren; and four great grandchildren.

**Joseph M. Novi, DO**, of Toledo and formerly of Columbus, died unexpectedly July 12, 2020. He was 57 years old.

Compassionate with a driven nature, he was worthy of the many accolades he received throughout his life. Anyone who came in contact with him knew he was kind and caring.

Novi's competitive nature led him to Brown University where he completed his undergraduate education while playing collegiate level football. He received his DO at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and then chose to enter Obstetrics and Gynecology at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, PA, where his tenure as chief of the department prepared him for a fellowship in the subspecialty of urogynecology at the University of Pennsylvania. At the time, there were less than 50 board-certified urogynecologists in the world, solidifying him as a pioneer in the field.

Utilizing that training, Novi leaves a legacy beyond the training and mentoring of several residents, and paving their way to not only individual success, but increasing the availability and quality of care for many more women, patients and their families.

His humanitarian spirit found expression in numerous surgical mission trips to Africa where he restored the lives of women in Eritrea, Mali, and the Central African Republic through fistula repair and field training of local doctors.

Novi is survived by his mother; wife Traci; four children; a granddaughter; siblings; and many nieces and nephews.

**Robert John "R.J." Nowinski, DO**, 51 of New Albany, died June 25, 2020.

He graduated from Saint Ignatius High School, John Carroll University, and Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1996. He served his residency at Grandview Medical Center in Dayton.

A successful orthopedic surgeon, Nowinski specialized in shoulder surgery at OrthoNeuro in Columbus.

He and his wife were entrepreneurs with

their own wine company, called RJV Wines, and tasting room in Napa, California. He was also an avid golf and polo player.

Nowinski will be greatly missed by many, including his wife Candice; parents; four children; siblings; and large circle of family, friends, and colleagues.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

Life Member **Thomas J. Rusk, DO**, died September 8, 2020, following a brief illness. He was 86 years old.

He grew up in the family business, a corner grocery in Garfield Heights, first stocking shelves as soon as he could reach them.

He graduated from Cathedral Latin High School, John Carroll University, and Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, earning his medical degree in 1961. Following internship and residency training in Detroit, he settled in Warren in 1964 and began practicing anesthesia at the former Warren General Hospital (WGH) in partnership with Joseph Uchino, DO. He served as WGH medical staff chief and was active professionally until his retirement.

He served in and was honorably discharged from the US Army Reserves in 1962.

Rusk enjoyed reading, listening to polkas and medical lectures, and taking meandering drives in the countryside.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia; four children; two granddaughters; and several nieces and nephews.

**Bradley A. Sachs, DO**, died on August 24, 2020, after suffering acute coronary thrombosis while driving in Sylvania Township where he lived. He was 49 years old.

Sachs, who practiced hematology and oncology at Toledo Clinic Cancer Center for the past 12 years, connected with his patients and their families through his stories and humor. He would tell them about his travels to 18 countries as well as his family life. Patients appreciated his storytelling, knowledge, and compassion.

Born and raised in Michigan, he was a 1998 graduate of Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He was named resident of the year at Henry Ford Bi-County Hospital in Warren, Michigan. After a fellowship at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, he practiced in Iowa and Kalamazoo.



A sports fan, Sachs rooted for Detroit teams and was obsessed with Michigan State football and basketball. He collected and studied rocks, fossils, and minerals—a hobby started in childhood. He also enjoyed weightlifting, walking and hiking in state and national parks, and practicing karate.

He was a supporter of the Victory Center, which helps cancer patients and survivors and their families, and took part in celebrity fundraisers.

Surviving are his wife Lauren; mother; two daughters; and siblings.

OOA Life Member **Tom L. Sefton, DO**, died peacefully with family by his side on August 1, 2020. He was 88 years old.

In practice for 41 years, he was devoted to his patients and a proud osteopathic family physician. He graduated from Otterbein University and from Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed his internship at Grandview Hospital, where he later served as Board trustee and on multiple hospital and community committees. He was honored with the Distinguished Service Award from

Grandview for his lifetime of service.

Sefton was a lifelong member of the American Osteopathic Association, Ohio Osteopathic Association, and Dayton District Academy of Osteopathic Medicine. He was also a member of the Ohio State High School Football Hall of Fame after serving as team physician for over 30 years at Walter E. Stebbins High School. He was asked personally by W.E. Stebbins to be team physician when the high school first opened.

He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather survived by his wife of 65 years Norma; four children including John C. Sefton, DO; nine grandchildren including Grant Sefton, DO; and a great-grandson.

**Steven M. Takacs, DO**, age 60, of Newbury Township, died June 20, 2020, after a six-month battle with ALS. He was surrounded by his family and friends, beloved dog Gem, and the nuns from Christ the Bridegroom Monastery who beautifully sang his favorite hymns

He graduated from Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1986 and spent nearly 30 years caring for the residents of

Geauga County at his office, Newbury Family Practice.

He was an active supporter of local organizations and events, especially Geauga County 4-H and Newbury and Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin sports.

An avid gardener, he loved being outdoors with his family.

As a member of the US Army Reserves, Takacs was an ardent supporter of US military veterans. A military burial was observed.

He is survived by Maria, his wife of 32 years; three children; a granddaughter; a brother; and many friends and neighbors. It was friends who started a GoFundMe page in January to support the family after receiving the ALS diagnosis.

Life Member **Ronald E. Wolf, DO**, of Dayton, died November 5, 2020. He was 83 years old.

He was a 1964 graduate of Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine and practiced family medicine in Montgomery County. *(No other information is available at the time of printing.)* ■

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I certify that the statements made by me are correct and complete.

-Cheryl Markino  
Editor, *Buckeye Osteopathic Physician*





**AOA**

@AOAforDOs

It's a new day at the JAOA! Our favorite Journal is relaunching in a major update, and it starts with a new name! Meet the Journal of Osteopathic Medicine.

5:00 PM · Dec 7, 2020

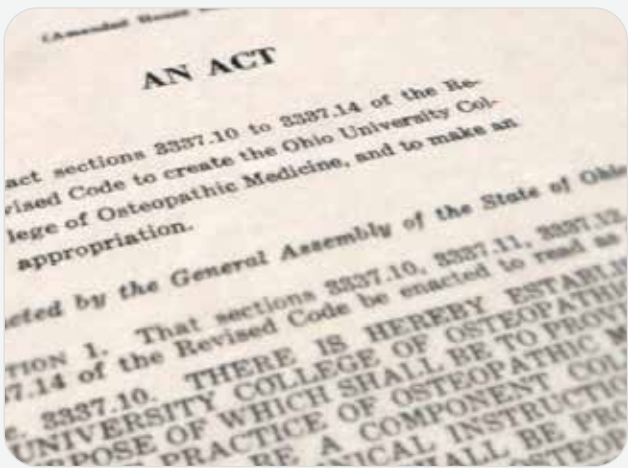


**Heritage College**

@OUHCOM

#TuesdayTrivia: 45 years ago today, Ohio Gov. James A. Rhodes signed HB 229 creating an #osteopathic medical school to train more #primarycare physicians who would commit to practicing in Ohio. And so our story began. #CareLeadsHere

5:11 PM · Aug 18, 2020



**Ohio CTR Course Available On-Demand**

Ohio law provides that physicians with a full, unrestricted state license are eligible to apply for a certificate to recommend (CTR) medical marijuana. To apply, physicians must complete a certified two-hour course—which is now available online and on demand at [www.OhioDO.org](http://www.OhioDO.org).



**OhioOsteopathicAssn**

@OhioDOs

Our health care heroes need your help.



Stay at home unless making a necessary trip for supplies.



Wear a mask every time you leave your house.



Don't gather with those outside of your household.



Work from home if you can.

#StaySafeOhio #MaskPlus6

#InThisTogetherOhio

9:40 PM · Dec 11, 2020



@ Ohio Osteopathic Association



**November 14, 2020**

Thank you to Governor DeWine for joining the OOA Board meeting today. We are grateful for his leadership during this pandemic and for taking time for dialogue with the osteopathic profession.



**OOA Members Get Discount for On-Demand CME**

Earn CME credit from your home or office—or wherever (and whenever) it's convenient for you. Check out the catalog at [www.DOcme.org](http://www.DOcme.org), a collaboration of state osteopathic societies. Get a steep discount for the OOA-produced lectures when you use the discount code OOAfamily.

# THANK YOU DOCTORS



For keeping Ohioans safe. For your service to patients. For being leaders in your community. For everything you do.



## In Memoriam

Honor a deceased physician by making a memorial contribution to the Ohio Osteopathic Foundation

Make your contribution at [OhioDO.org/OOF](https://OhioDO.org/OOF)

An acknowledgement of your gift is sent to the family • No amounts are mentioned

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# We're Celebrating! 122 years



**On December 31, 1898, a small group of Ohio DOs formed the Ohio Osteopathic Association. What a way to bring in the new year!**

*A Distinguished Past...A Dynamic Future*