



State of Osteopathic Medicine 2025

Ohio Osteopathic Association

Ohio Senate Health Committee – October 27th, 2025

Dr. Edward Hosbach

Dr. Katherine Eilenfeld

Dr. Douglas Harley

Dr. Hosbach

Acting Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and Members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present on the State of Osteopathic Medicine in Ohio. My name is Edward Hosbach, and I am an Osteopathic Physician practicing family medicine in Mercer County. I also have the privilege of serving as the President of the Ohio Osteopathic Association. We are fortunate to have dozens of Physicians, Residents, and Medical Students visiting the Statehouse as part of our 2025 D.O. Day at the Ohio Statehouse.

One of the most common questions many of us hear is, “What is Osteopathic Medicine?” The simplest answer is that Osteopathic Medicine focuses on the whole person in treating an injury or disease, or in promoting health and wellness. Approximately 11% of practicing physicians in the United States are DOs, and you can find Osteopathic Physicians in every practice setting and

specialty. Osteopathic medical education mirrors the standards for our M.D. colleagues; we will attend an osteopathic medical school, undergo residency and fellowship, and then practice in a variety of inpatient or outpatient settings. We are licensed by the State Medical Board of Ohio and hold national credentials from a national credentialing body for osteopathic medical specialties. Osteopathic Physicians must adhere to rigorous continuing education standards and participate in research to drive innovation in clinical care and treatment.

Currently, there are 7,807 licensed Osteopathic Physicians in Ohio, along with 978 osteopathic medical students. Based on publicly available data, here is a snapshot of specialties for Ohio-based DOs—

- Family Medicine – 1,833
- Internal Medicine – 1,144
- Emergency Medicine - 735
- Pediatrics – 535
- Anesthesiology – 315
- OB/GYN – 315
- Psychiatry – 232

Interestingly, nearly half of Osteopathic Physicians practicing in Ohio specialize in Primary Care. This reflects the core principles of Osteopathic Medicine and its focus on the well-being of people, not patients. I would now like to introduce my colleague, Dr. Eilenfeld.

Dr. Eilenfeld

Acting Chair Johnson and members of the Committee, my name is Katherine Eilenfeld, and I am a Hospice and Palliative Care Physician practicing in the Greater Cleveland area. I am the Vice President of the Ohio Osteopathic Association. My training as an Osteopathic Physician empowers me to treat my patients holistically and with compassion as they enter the final stages of their lives. I am proud to be joined today by so many OOA members,

including several students and residents. I want to highlight some of the current issues facing the Osteopathic Physician workforce pipeline.

Many of the issues we face mirror the challenges faced by our MD colleagues. Physicians often graduate from medical school with crippling amounts of debt. While loan forgiveness programs have proven useful in attracting providers to underserved communities or shortage areas, they are limited in their use. Further, access to residency training opportunities can be challenging for osteopathic residents, as slots are limited. Given the demand for physicians, any new or expanded investments in clinical education for osteopathic physicians, especially with a new medical school opening next year, will have a strong return for Ohio.

I would also urge lawmakers in the next operating budget to review funding for graduate medical education and residency programming to ensure equitable treatment for osteopathic programs. As Dr. Hosbach noted, the Osteopathic approach to patient care leads many DOs to practice in primary care and to focus on rural and underserved communities. Investments in osteopathic medical education will ensure a stable pipeline of physicians in these important areas of focus. Everyone you see here has chosen to either study or practice osteopathic medicine in Ohio, or, in many cases, we have done both. With your help, we can continue to make Ohio a great place for Osteopathic Physicians to work and live. I will now invite Dr. Harley to wrap us up.

Dr. Harley

Members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for allowing us to present to you today. My name is Douglas Harley, and I am the Immediate Past President of the Ohio Osteopathic Association; I have also held leadership roles with the Ohio Academy of Family Physicians. I currently practice family medicine in the Cleveland area. Dr. Hosbach provided an introduction to Osteopathic Medicine in Ohio, and Dr. Eilenfeld shared insights into current workforce challenges. I want to close by sharing some thoughts on where we go from here.

It is an exciting time to be an Osteopathic Physician in Ohio. The number of licensed DOs and osteopathic medical students has been increasing, and the first medical school to open in Ohio in more than 30 years will be an Osteopathic Medical School at Xavier University. Our flagship DO School, the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine at Ohio University, continues to innovate and grow throughout the state. The Ohio Osteopathic Association works closely with hospitals, universities, physician groups, and other stakeholders to help meet the needs of Osteopathic Physicians and the patients they serve.

Having worked with the members of this committee over the years and based on the bills you've introduced and the votes you've taken, it's clear that all of you care deeply for the health and wellness of every Ohioan. As we continue to address the challenges facing our state, both known and unknown, I hope you will prioritize policies that sustain and expand the physician workforce. Ohio's Osteopathic Physicians, and the many students here who will one day be Osteopathic Physicians, are here to help. Thank you for your time, and we would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.