



Regional Osteopathic Medical Education Conference MID ATLANTIC

The Maryland Association of Osteopathic Physicians and the AOA have partnered to host one of only two Regional Osteopathic Medical Education Conferences (ROME) in 2010. Join us **July 29-31, 2010** for ROME—Mid-Atlantic at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay in Cambridge, MD. Register today to spend time with your family and earn up to 26 hours of Category I-A CME credit, pending approval by the AOA Council on Continuing Medical Education. The 2010 ROME Mid-Atlantic conference will be held in lieu of the 2010 MAOP Chesapeake Regional Osteopathic Scientific Conference usually held at the end of June each year.

Register now at http://www.do-online.org/index.cfm?au=D&PageID=rome_midatlantic



Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay
Cambridge, MD

MAOP Supports Army Medical Textbook Drive

“The results of the U.S. Army medical text book drive, conducted in partnership with Operation Medical Library, a grassroots initiative started by the UCLA School of Medicine Alumni Association, are in! Thanks to the generosity of the members of the Maryland Association of Osteopathic Physicians who brought their donations to their recent Chesapeake Regional Osteopathic Scientific Conference, eight boxes of books were collected. These reference books and text books will be shipped to Iraq to be distributed free of charge to Iraqi physicians and medical students to support their practice and studies.”

MAOP Scholarships Awarded

**Congratulations to the 2009 recipients
of the MAOP Student/Resident Schol-
arship Award:**

Eugene Bukhman, DO PGYI
Mojirayo Sarumi, PCOM 2011
Timothy Snow, WVSOM 2012
Andrew Teffeau, PCOM (GA) 2010

The Quick Need-To-Know About Health Care Reform by M. Sarumi, OMS-III, MPH

On the national level; the President's plan still remains the same

President Barack Obama was not shy with the promises made during his campaign; one particular promise rings a loud bell, and that is his promise to reform the nation's health care system. Thus, after his inauguration in November of 2008, the President began to initiate a new dialogue in a long political conversation dated back to the 1960s when President Lyndon Johnson signed Medicaid and Medicare into law. The dialogue has evolved with time and it has taken a new spin: the nation's debt, the unstable economy and the war in Iraq/Afghanistan have been major players in shaping the course of this most recent attempt. The President's plan has stayed the same but his promise is not yet fulfilled. Below are a few highlights of President Obama plan regarding the health care system overhaul: For those with health insurance the President wants to increase government regulation of health insurance companies in order to prevent discrimination based on pre-existing conditions, gender and age. Furthermore, the President's plan promises to place a cap on deductible prices placed on citizens by insurers; the plan also includes the maintenance of Medicare and the elimination of the "doughnut" hole currently in its system. For those without health insurance the President wants to create an "exchange" marketplace that will allow uninsured citizens and small businesses to compare health insurance rates. The plan also promises to give tax incentives to small businesses for insuring all employees and to give tax incentives to people who buy personal insurance. The plan also promises to include a public health option which will be part of the exchange marketplace; this aspect of the plan has been most controversial thus far.

Where does AOA stand on the health care debate?

American Osteopathic Association (AOA) recognizes the need for change in the health care system; that is why AOA President Dr. Wickless attended one of the most important meetings on health care reform at the White House on October 5th 2009. There, he met with President Obama and other physicians from across the nation to discuss the implications of a health care system overhaul to current and future osteopathic physicians. The highlights of what Dr. Wickless advocated for at the White House were: (1) Quality and Affordable Health Care for all Americans (2) Promoting prevention and public health through incentives (3) Increasing the number of physicians practicing in primary care and general surgery (4) Improving/transforming the current physician payment system (5) Addressing medical liability. Although the current health care bill only addresses some of these highlights, the AOA has remained a supporter of the bill and is advocating for changes to be made within the bill. Most recently, the AOA supported the House of Representative's Affordable Health Care for Americans Act which was passed on November 7th, 2009.

Current updates on the political conversation around health care reform

The public health option has been the biggest set back in passing the health care bill in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. Nevertheless, on November 7th, 2009, the Affordable Health Care for Americans Act was passed in the House - 220 to 215. December 8th, 2009: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid proposed to remove the public option from the health care bill and replace it with a Medicare buy-in plan for citizens that are 55-64 years old. The change also involved the federal government negotiation, through an agency, with insurance companies regarding national health benefit plans.

December 12th, 2009: Senator Joe Lieberman threatened to vote against the health care overhaul bill if it includes the Medicare buy-in plan; Senator Lieberman's failure to vote for the bill would have resulted in the failure of the bill to pass. His vote was important to obtain 60 votes needed to pass the bill. As a result, Senator Reid reintroduced a revamped public health option.

December 19th, 2009: Senator Ben Nelson agreed to vote for the health care overhaul bill if it limits the amount of funding provided for abortion. Senator Ben Nelson's vote is important to obtain 60 votes in the Senate. No less than 60 votes will allow the bill to pass the first of three votes in the Senate.

December 21st, 2009: The Senate voted - 60 to 40; the bill passed the first procedural vote and will need to go through two more votes under the senate. The bill does not include the public option. The bill also excludes the creation of new agencies to regulate health insurance companies.

How does the health care overhaul bill become law?

After the Senate has approved a bill, the bills from both Chambers (the House of Representatives and the Senate) will be merged through negotiations. The merged bill then makes its way back to the House and to the Senate for approval; once approved, the Bill is signed into law by President Obama.

Sources:

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