

DEPARTMENT OF AFFILIATE RELATIONS

Suzanne K. Kelley, DO, Chair

Attached are the reports of the bureaus, council, committees and their task forces that comprise the Department of Affiliate Relations. These reports are being submitted as information items, and as such, will not be formally presented.

BUREAU OF EMERGING STATES' CONCERNS - Boyd R. Buser, DO, Chair

The Bureau of Emerging States' Concerns (BESC) last met on July 17, 2008 and has not had any reportable activity since its last meeting. The Bureau is scheduled to meet again on July 16, 2009.

BUREAU OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL EDUCATORS – Humayun Chaudhry, DO, MS, Chair

The Bureau of Osteopathic Medical Educators serves as a policy advisor to the AOA on issues affecting osteopathic medical education. The Bureau's purpose is to provide medical educators with an enhanced role in AOA policy and advocacy and to facilitate interaction between the AOA and medical educators throughout the continuum of osteopathic medical education.

Several years ago, the Bureau was instrumental in urging the AOA to begin considering the impact of physician workforce shortages on the profession. To help structure discussion of this issue, it formulated a number of questions for deliberation at the first AOA-AACOM-Osteopathic Heritage Foundation Medical Education Summit. Members of the Bureau have served on the steering committees for both the first and second Summits. Because the Bureau independently identified all of the questions discussed at MES II as fertile ground for future projects, it is well positioned to assist the AOA as it moves forward on specific questions and recommendations arising during the Summits.

Recent BOME resolutions have been designed to make osteopathic medical education more effective and efficient. For example, a Bureau-initiated resolution urged the AOA to identify model programs and best practices for faculty development programs. The resulting AOA Faculty Development Task Force included several BOME members.

Pursuant to another resolution, the Bureau continues to consider alternatives for enhancing collection and tracking of information on osteopathic trainees. In the Bureau's view, collecting summary end-of-training data would assist the profession in tracking trainees for multiple purposes, including safeguarding trainee records, monitoring membership recruitment and retention, and developing new OGME programs. The Bureau is reviewing current AOA and AACOM data and working with the AOA Departments of Membership and Education to develop recommendations to the AOA on this matter.

The Bureau also is discussing several future projects, including a long-term longitudinal study on benchmarking educational outcomes and in-depth examination of several physician workforce issues. These issues include the potential imbalance between osteopathic graduates and postdoctoral training positions and workforce projections by specialty mix.

The Bureau held its last meeting by conference call on January 21.

BUREAU OF OSTEOPATHIC SPECIALTY SOCIETIES – Alvin D. Dubin DO, Chair

The Bureau of Osteopathic Specialty Societies (BOSS) met on January 10, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Member attendance continues to be high and participants are highly engaged in the discussions.

There were substantive changes in the format for this meeting; one such change was that the BOSS members broke out into four (4) Reference Committees to discuss specific issues – certification, organization and structure, education, and collaboration.

Reference Committee 1 members discussed the Certification Fee Task Force and the Certifying Boards. The Reference Committee concluded that since there hasn't been substantial output from the Certification Fee Task Force, it needs to meet with the Certifying Boards and Specialty Colleges to clarify the financial information they are requesting and stress the urgency of the project. The Reference Committee suggested that the Task Force establish a date for all parties to meet and establish a final report date to the AOA Board of Trustees.

Reference Committee 1 also discussed the certifying boards and how to enhance item writing for the certification examinations and how to pool resources. The Reference Committee recommended using Specialty College newsletters and communications to advertise for volunteers to develop certification examination item writing bank and to encourage their members to engage with the certifying boards in the examination process.

Reference Committee 2 discussed the BOSS Mission and its structure, as well as Specialty College representation at the AOA House of Delegates. Based on the Reference Committee suggestions, BOSS will send a letter to Thomas Ely, DO recommending that the BOSS structure remain the same and requested the possibility of additional meeting(s) via conference call, if necessary. The Reference Committee recommended changes to the BOSS document, *The Evolving Strategic Framework for Osteopathic Specialty Societies*. Lastly, Reference Committee 2 recommended that specialty society delegates meet together as a delegation to review BOSS recommendations concerning Resolutions of importance and to discuss other issues of concern.

Reference Committee 3 discussed issues regarding the BOS Handbook, uniform standards, and accreditation Issues. The Committee mostly focused on accreditation issues. Due to rapid expansion of new osteopathic colleges and new postgraduate education programs the Reference Committee was concerned about timely inspections by Specialty Colleges. The Reference Committee decided that the Specialty Colleges need AOA fiscal and manpower assistance with the inspection process. Also, the Reference Committee supports maintaining the Specialty Colleges as the sole entity to make final accreditation recommendations to the AOA. Lastly, any inspection team must be chaired by a Specialty College representative.

Reference Committee 4 discussed the OGME Development, promoting osteopathic specialties and specialty colleges, and 2010 Joint CME program planning. The Reference Committee found that upon discussing the OGME Development initiative, the core issues on this topic, they increased in number and complexity. The Reference Committee agreed that this topic (and all of its sub-issues) necessitated further discussion and review by each of the individual Specialty Colleges and should be put on the next BOSS meeting agenda.

On the topic of promoting osteopathic specialties and Specialty Colleges/Societies, the Reference Committee suggested three recommendations: Streamline Resolution 42 to encourage and promote more participation, allow Specialty Colleges to access the AOA database, and make the Specialty Colleges more relevant to the recent graduates.

BOSS members discussed the 2010 Unified Convention with Dr. Wickless. The group agreed that they should work to choose topics of mutual benefit, but needed more information about the meeting. Dr. Wickless said he would summarize his thoughts in a letter to the Specialty Colleges' executive directors for input.

BOSS members received an update on the Medical Education Summits from Drs. Wickless and Nichols. Dr. Nichols encouraged BOSS members to work together to gather pertinent data on programs in order to stay in control of their own programs. BOSS members agreed with Dr. Nichols and expressed their willingness to cooperate and collaborate.

The next meeting of the BOSS is scheduled for June 13, 2009 in Chicago.

COMMITTEE ON BASIC DOCUMENTS & OPERATIONS OF AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS - William M. Silverman, DO, Chair

The Committee will meet prior to the Board's Midyear Meeting and will provide a report at that time.

BUREAU OF HOSPITALS – Kathleen Rice, Chair

Under the leadership of its Executive Committee, the AOA Bureau of Hospitals represents its members through policy development and review, nominating hospital representatives to AOA bodies, joining with osteopathic physicians for a stronger voice in advocacy, and communicating regularly with members on external and internal developments that affect their interests.

In keeping with the Bureau's policy function, the Executive Committee will hold a strategic planning meeting on January 26, 2009, in Chicago. Among other topics on the agenda, the Committee will review membership trends, current member services, possible venues and formats for educational programming, collaborative relationships with other organizations and AOA entities, and ways to maximize BOH's role in the AOA policy process. The Committee also will receive updates on the AOA's OGME development activities and the restructuring of the Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP). Bureau goals will be established for 2009-2011.

Although it usually holds its annual Forum in conjunction with the AOA Convention, the BOH is moving forward with plans to hold a collaborative program with the Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators (AODME) in April 2009. Topics under discussion by the BOH Program Planning Committee include physician workforce shortages, managing GME programs within federally established FTE resident caps, and the future of health care given the new Administration and current economic circumstances.

The Bureau continues the steady growth and development it has experienced over the last five years. It serves as its members' link to the osteopathic profession and their advocate on issues that affect their patients, staff, and operations. It works with the AOA and other national organizations to enhance health care quality, change Medicare policies that hurt community hospitals and achieve greater fairness in GME payment.