

**STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY/ASSOCIATION
HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

NO. **X**
DATE:

INTRODUCED BY: STATE DERMATOLOGICAL SOCIETY

SUBJECT: PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

ASSIGNED TO: NAME OF COMMITTEE

- 1 Whereas, physician assistants are a valuable member of the physician-led team;
2
3 Whereas, physician assistants complete a 26-month physician assistant programs followed
4 by 2,000 hours of clinical rotations, which emphasize primary care in ambulatory clinics,
5 physician offices and acute or long-term care facilities;
6
7 Whereas after finishing a rigorous undergraduate academic curriculum, physicians
8 receive an additional four years of education in medical school, followed by 3 – 7
9 years of residency and 12,000-16,000 hours of patient care training;
10
11 Whereas, there are substantial differences in the education of physician assistants
12 and physicians, both in depth of knowledge and length of training;
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14 Whereas, new health care models, including accountable care organizations, require
15 increased teamwork among physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other
16 providers of care;
17
18 Whereas, efforts to disassemble the physician-physician assistant relationship would further
19 compartmentalize the delivery of health care;
20
21 Whereas, the American Academy of PAs (AAPA) House of Delegates approved the
22 “Optimal Team Practice” policy, which supports the removal of state laws requiring a formal
23 supervisory relationship between physicians and physician assistants; establishment of
24 autonomous state licensing boards with a majority of PAs as voting members or for PAs to
25 be full voting members of medical boards; and ensures that physician assistants are eligible
26 to be reimbursed directly by public and private insurance.
27
28 Whereas, according to four nationwide surveys, 84% of respondents prefer a physician to
29 have primary responsibility for diagnosing and managing their health care and 91% of
30 respondents said that a physician’s years of medical education and training are vital to optimal
31 patient care, especially in the event of a complication or medical emergency;
32
33 Whereas, as physicians, our number one priority is the health and welfare of our patients; and
34 be it
35
36 **RESOLVED**, that the STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY/ ASSOCIATION oppose efforts authorizing
37 the independent practice of physician assistants.