



Delegate to the American Medical Association (AMA) Resident Fellow Section (RFS) 2023 Annual Report

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Purpose & Scope of Work

As AAFP Delegates to the American Medical Association (AMA), we participated as voting representatives in both the AMA Resident Fellow Section (AMA-RFS) and in the AMA House of Delegates (HOD). The AMA-RFS is one of several sections that compose the overall AMA; the section gathers for national meetings twice per year to advocate for health policies. At the Annual Meeting in June 2023, there were 70 residents/fellows representing numerous states and specialty societies. The AMA-RFS has approximately 35 delegate roles in the AMA HOD, and the HOD is composed of 500+ members (medical students, residents/fellows, active physicians).

The HOD is the policy-making body of the AMA, which is analogous to the AAFP Congress of Delegates (COD). Our AMA-RFS is tasked with providing the physician in-training perspective. Our resident and fellow members are routinely vocal about issues that promote public health, advance medical education, and advocate basic human rights. Our section leans into issues that directly impact resident and fellow training. Such topics are often considered controversial making the RFS one of the most bold and powerful sections within the house. Resolutions from delegate groups like the AAFP and RFS influence policies created by AMA.

As AAFP Delegates, our role has been to enhance communication between AMA-RFS and our governing body while always representing family medicine based on current AAFP policies. This year, we were fortunate to attend meetings in two exciting destinations: Honolulu, HI in November 2022 for the AMA Interim Meeting and Chicago, IL in June 2023 for the AMA Annual Meeting. Functioning as a delegate for the AAFP within the HOD resulted in assignment to reference committees where we were afforded the opportunity to testify on behalf of the AAFP. We were also asked to provide opinions and vote alongside our delegation on electing new council members. In this report, we discuss our actions within the AMA and AAFP Delegation over the past year, future directions for our delegate positions, and key takeaways from our year in AAFP resident leadership.

Activities & Achievements

At the Interim Meeting, we participated in RFS discussions regarding reproductive healthcare access. Providing our patients with full spectrum reproductive health care is imperative. Having the

appropriate training so that we can provide such services is important. Members took this opportunity to advocate against the restrictive mandates placed on individual states and urged our AMA to support all trainees interested in providing this type of patient care. The RFS also drafted a new policy to assist new doctors who do not match under the current NRMP match process. These are just two examples of controversial topics the RFS drew attention to, which ignited conversation in both reference committees and within the HOD.

At Annual Meeting, RFS focused efforts on spearheading the adoption of gender-neutral language within all AMA policy, advocating for unmatched medical students, highlighting medical education deficiencies by increasing MSK education in primary care specialties and medical schools, suggesting the removal of discriminatory filters which include but are not limited to IMGs, and developing Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) efforts. One major win was the AMA House of Delegates passing a resolution introduced by the RFS to address the NRMP Match and calling upon the AMA to study alternatives to the residency match that would be less restrictive on free market competition. In addition, the JEDI committee gave a dynamic presentation on affirmative action and emphasized recent supreme court cases that challenge DEI initiatives in university admissions. The AMA and RFS in particular are in favor of maintaining affirmative action admission practices.

“Scope creep” was also a key topic across meetings. Discussions pertained to balancing the need to ensure patients have access to care in geographic locations where physicians are sparse, while prioritizing patient safety and maintaining physician-led teams. Of note, there are funds set aside by the AAFP provided to each state to assist with scope creep initiatives.

Lessons Learned and the Value of Serving on AAFP Delegation

Representing the AAFP in the RFS and holding active voting roles within the AMA HOD were certainly unique experiences. We were exposed to the true magnitude and breadth of the work completed in each forum. Although we were not afforded the opportunity during our term, there are also standing committees within the RFS who welcome all interested members to participate. There were countless opportunities for mentorship especially within our own AAFP delegation, which is composed of family doctors and support staff from around the country. From the beginning, our opinions were welcomed, and voices valued. There is interest in training both residents and medical students to continue with leadership development beyond our assigned term. Being at the table during discussions about candidates encouraged personal reflection and helped us understand what qualities and skills are necessary to participate in various leadership roles within the AMA.

Overall, this position was a meaningful foray into both AAFP and AMA policy. It taught us how to utilize current AAFP policy to evaluate proposed AMA resolutions. We also gained experience crafting and delivering verbal testimony on topics relevant to Family Medicine, which will be invaluable in any future policy discussion. We envision future AAFP delegates continuing engagement with the AMA-RFS as a whole and building coalitions with physicians in training from other primary care specialties, such as the AAP, ACOG, ACP, and AOA. It is genuinely an honor to represent the AAFP among our peers and to represent Family Medicine among national leaders at the AMA HOD.

Note: This report was prepared by the resident or student representative(s) listed and includes their account(s) of the business conducted during their term. This is not an official record of business proceedings from the AAFP or any other entity. To find out more about the business of the AAFP, its congresses, commissions, and current policies visit aafp.org.