



Claire V. Wolfe, MD: A fulfilling career full of firsts

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Staff News Writer



The AMA “Members Move Medicine” series profiles a wide variety of doctors, offering a glimpse into the passions of women and men navigating new courses in American medicine.

On the move with: Claire V. Wolfe, MD, a physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist in Columbus, Ohio.

AMA member since: 1973.

What inspired me to pursue a career in medicine: It’s the only career I ever aspired to, probably since I was 10, maybe younger. I attribute it to the ancient 1950s-era TV show, “Medic,” with Richard Boone. I can still sing the theme music.

How I move medicine: I still spend a lot of time talking to patients, not only about the problem for which I’m seeing them, but their general physical and psychological health as well. When you’re doing an EMG, it’s a good way to keep them from dwelling on the test as well as an opportunity to learn and educate. And I’m still involved with young physicians and students in my office, talking about the rewards of a medical career.

Career highlights: Lots. I’m proud of my “firsts.” First woman president of my county medical society, first woman president of the Ohio State Medical Association, first woman president of the American Association of Electrodiagnostic Medicine (now the American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine that sits in the AMA House of Delegates).

I’ve been president of my specialty society (American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation), and board president of the Columbus Medical Association Foundation that funds our free clinic, supports our trauma system and hosts discussions in the central Ohio community on how to improve health care for our citizens.

Advice I’d give to those interested in pursuing a career in medicine: Do it. Especially for women, medicine provides the opportunity to care for people and yet have the flexibility of a “job” that allows home and children if that is your choice.

Aspect of my work that means the most: I’m still working part-time because I value interacting with patients, educating them on their concerns, as well as interacting with my younger partners who still value my work and my opinions.

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