

# Physicians adopt plan to combat pay gap in medicine

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With reports showing persistent male-female disparities in pay among all specialties even after accounting for age, experience, faculty rank, and measures of research productivity and clinical revenue, the AMA House of Delegates (HOD) took sweeping action to study, act and advocate to advance gender equity in medicine and within the AMA.

At the 2018 AMA Annual Meeting in Chicago, the HOD adopted new policy to:

- Advocate institutional, departmental and practice policies that promote transparency in defining the criteria for initial and subsequent physician compensation.
- Advocate that pay structures be based on objective, gender-neutral objective criteria.
- Encourage a specified approach, sufficient to identify gender disparity, to oversight of compensation models, metrics and actual total compensation for all employed physicians.
- Advocate training to identify and mitigate implicit bias in compensation determination for those in positions to determine salary and bonuses, with a focus on how subtle differences in the further evaluation of physicians of different genders may impede compensation and career advancement.

“As the nation’s largest physician organization, the AMA not only wants to advance gender equity in medicine, but also set an example by committing to pay equity for its own employees,” said AMA President Barbara L. McAneny, MD. “I am proud that many women have joined me in leading the AMA at the highest level, and have contributed a strong voice to our comprehensive efforts.”

Delegates also directed the AMA to:

- Draft and disseminate a report detailing its positions and recommendations for gender equity in medicine, including clarifying principles for state and specialty societies, academic medical centers and other entities that employ physicians, to be submitted to the House for consideration at the 2019 Annual Meeting.
- Collect and analyze comprehensive demographic data and produce a study on the inclusion

of women members including, but not limited to, membership, representation in the House of Delegates, reference committee makeup and leadership positions within our AMA, including the Board of Trustees, councils and section governance, plenary speaker invitations, recognition awards and grant funding, and disseminate such findings in regular reports to the House of Delegates and making recommendations to support gender equity. Commit to pay equity across the organization by asking our Board of Trustees to undertake routine assessments of salaries within and across the organization, while making the necessary adjustments to ensure equal pay for equal work.

To reduce gender bias, the HOD also directed the AMA to:

- | Recommend elimination of the question of prior salary information from job applications for physician recruitment in academic and private practice.
- | Create an awareness campaign to inform physicians about their rights under the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and Equal Pay Act.
- | Establish educational programs to help empower all genders to negotiate equitable compensation.
- | Work with relevant stakeholders to host a workshop on the role of medical societies in advancing women in medicine, with co-development and broad dissemination of a report based on workshop findings.
- | Create guidance for medical schools and health care facilities for institutional transparency of compensation and regular gender-based pay audits.

Thirty percent of the AMA Board of Trustees are women, including AMA President Barbara L. McAneny, MD, and AMA President-elect Patrice A. Harris, MD.

Read more news coverage from the 2018 AMA Annual Meeting.