

# Members Move Medicine: Making every patient count

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Staff News Writer

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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:** Thomas W. Eppes, MD, a family physician in Forest, Virginia.

**AMA member since:** 1981.

**What inspired me to pursue a career in medicine:** Medicine for me is a calling. It was a prayer offered after an accident for a dear friend and answered when I was in college. Every day and every patient is an opportunity to fulfill the answer to that prayer.

**How I move medicine:** By making every patient encounter one that is cost-effective, best quality, and best experience that is deeply personal. Patients physically undress and spiritually undress in a sacred opportunity for me to care for the whole person.

**Career highlights:** Every event in your life prepares you for the step that you are currently taking. Changing the way that the Medical Society of Virginia did its meetings to make them more interactive was gratifying—to do that again with the AMA Integrated Physician Practice Section was icing on the cake. We have lots of very smart people who we can learn from instead of sitting at a table listening to a lecture.

**Advice I’d give to those interested in pursuing a career in medicine:** Every day, every patient, every illness: what an opportunity to be challenged and be a blessing.

**Aspect of my work that means the most:** I find it amazing that I get paid to do what I love and am called to do.

**How I advocate for physicians and patients:** Physicians are at the top of the intellectual food chain. “MD” or “DO” do not stand for “many dollars” or “dollars overflowing.” It demands that we be leaders in our community for individual health, fitness, public health, mental health, sports, education, etc. Pick your passion and just do it!

**My hope for the future of medicine:** May medicine never forget the roots of where we have been so we can know where we are going.

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