

Betty S. Chu, MD: CMO works to help physicians excel

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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: Betty S. Chu, MD, is an ob-gyn, chief medical officer and vice president of medical affairs at Henry Ford Health System.

AMA member since: 1997.

What inspired me to pursue a career in medicine: My passion for understanding people’s stories, combined with an interest in science, made pursuing healing a natural fit.

How I move medicine: My responsibility as a physician executive is to focus on ensuring that my physicians and staff have the resources they need to be able to effectively do their work. I move medicine by ensuring that clinical resources are available, regulatory burdens are minimized and that we allow for physician autonomy to care for patients.

Career highlights: Serving as president of the Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS) has allowed me to connect with physician of all specialties, practice locations and demographics throughout the state and advocate on their behalf. Moving from full-time private practice to the role of CMO at a community hospital has involved a steep learning curve and a lot of humility to be effective!

I also represent the MSMS in the AMA House of Delegate and sit on the AMA Council on Medical Service.

Advice I’d give to those interested in pursuing a career in medicine: We need you! There are multiple ways you can impact the care of health for our population. Whatever interests or skills you have, you can find a place in our industry if you are looking to create positive change.

Aspect of my work that means the most: Speaking to patients in my clinic, during hospital rounds or out in the community allows me to reconnect to purpose. Being able to help solve problems and get patients the care that they need is what keeps me motivated to go to work every day.

How I advocate for physicians and patients: I have a particular interest in helping women and Asian-Americans achieve their leadership goals. I serve as a mentor and speaker for early career individuals within our community in Southeast Michigan.

My hope for the future of medicine: Physicians will lead health care by example—that all physicians will embrace their responsibility as leaders in local, state and national policy; as leaders in the business community; and as leaders in education and innovation.

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