



Veronica M. Alvarez-Galiana, MD: Advocate for reproductive health

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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: Veronica M. Alvarez-Galiana, MD (@justcallmevero), an ob-gyn in Miami.

Dr. Alvarez-Galiana also is a member of the AMA Ambassador Program, which equips individuals with the skills and knowledge to confidently speak to the AMA's initiatives and the value of membership. The program also increases overall awareness about what the AMA does for physicians and their patients.

AMA member since: 2010.

What inspired me to pursue a career in medicine: Wanting to have a career where I could help others was the foundation. I also loved science. My grandmother was in the hospital for a long time after a bad car accident as well—seeing how important it was for a doctor not only to be competent but also compassionate was ingrained in my mind.

How I move medicine: By advocating for maternal health, specifically to extend pregnancy Medicaid to one year postpartum. Also, for access to contraception and reproductive health.

Career highlights: My most notable accomplishment was when our AMA House of Delegates adopted the resolution that supports extending pregnancy Medicaid for 12 months in lieu of one that I helped write (and passed through the AMA Resident and Fellow Section) for the same purpose. We also adopted, through the RFS and our AMA, a resolution I helped write for Medicare coverage of contraception, which is very important for patients with disabilities. Giving my testimony during last year's Annual Meeting for these two resolutions has been the highlight of my career thus far.

Advice I'd give to those interested in pursuing a career in medicine: Volunteer, shadow and get involved in medicine somehow to make sure it is what you really want to do. This is a vocation. If you're in it for the money, you're in the wrong business. More than ever, patients need doctors who truly care.

How I give back to the community: I am in the National Health Service Corps, work for a federally qualified health center and low resource community hospital, work with the family medicine residency at Community Health of South Florida and am volunteer faculty for Florida International University. I also am the ACOG [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists] Section 6 vice chair-elect for District XII, which includes Florida.

Aspect of my work that means the most: Patient care—hands down. Whether working individually or in a group prenatal care model—getting to a diagnosis, educating, empowering, treating, delivering babies, performing surgeries—the overall patient-physician relationship is the most meaningful aspect

for me. I use those experiences to inform my advocacy because I hear directly from my patients what they are going through.

My hope for the future of medicine: That we continue to work together to improve access and collaboration and decrease costs for patients and for the system in general. My hope is that we shift our focus from intervention to prevention, and that we continue to work on educating and empowering our patients and communities.

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