

Physicians decry apparel maker's anti-female DO misfire

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News Editor

What's the news: The AMA and others are decrying the sexist and anti-osteopathic physician implications of a medical apparel supplier's internet catalog listing.

The Los Angeles-based company Figs sells upscale scrubs, medical uniforms and other apparel for physicians and other health professionals. A catalog listing first highlighted by New York physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist Tayyaba Ahmed, DO, showed a woman in pink scrubs holding a copy of *Medical Terminology for Dummies* upside down, a perplexed look on her face. Near the end of the brief video, the camera zooms in on the model's identification badge to show she's a doctor of osteopathy (DO).

Dr. Ahmed criticized the listing as degrading and "not cute." The AMA also weighed in to say: "There is no room for sexism and misogyny in #healthcare—implicit or explicit—and we urge @wearfigs to do a comprehensive review to ensure insensitive posts/ads of this nature don't happen again. We stand with all MD and DO #WomenInMedicine. #equity #inclusion."



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Figs apologized for the “insensitive video” and said, “We are incredibly sorry for any hurt this has caused you, especially our female DOs (who are amazing!).”

Why it’s important: While women now account for a majority of medical students, there are big gender inequities in pay and leadership roles even after controlling for medical specialty and experience.

The AMA recognizes that gender inequity in medicine is a complex issue that requires a multilayered approach. Promoting gender equity in medicine requires an acknowledgement of the underlying causes of gender-based disparities, creation of policies and resources that will promote gender equity, and collaboration to improve the environment for women and the profession overall.

Commercial messages that portray women as somehow unfit to practice medicine or deliver high-quality care are inappropriate. Meanwhile, the depiction of the dim-witted scrubs-wearing model as a DO taps into long discredited ideas about the quality of care delivered by osteopathic physicians as compared with doctors of medicine, or MDs. The two degrees reflect different types of medical school training. MDs attend allopathic medical schools, while DOs attend osteopathic medical schools.

In terms of the requirements to apply to MD and DO programs, the criteria are virtually the same. The 2020 Main Residency Match marked the completion of the transition to a single accreditation system and the consolidation to one Match for U.S. DO seniors and graduates.

Get further background in this excellent AMA news article, “DO vs. MD: How much does the medical degree school type matter?”

Learn more: Discover the opportunities for involvement offered by the AMA Women Physicians Section and how to tackle challenges facing women physicians in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Medicine can be a career that is both challenging and highly rewarding, but figuring out a medical school’s prerequisites and navigating the application process can be a challenge unto itself. The AMA premed glossary guide has the answers to frequently asked questions about medical school, the application process, the MCAT and more.

Have peace of mind and get everything you need to start med school off strong with the AMA.