Susan Skochelak, MD, MPH, on innovation in medical education

Each month, the AMA highlights institutions that are part of the AMA Accelerating Change in Medical Education Consortium to showcase their work with the consortium and innovations in medical education.

In this edition, the AMA speaks with Susan E. Skochelak, MD, MPH, AMA chief academic officer and group vice president of medical education, who retired at the end of May.

Featured leadership

Susan Skochelak, MD, MPH
Susan E. Skochelak, MD, MPH Former chief academic officer and group vice president of medical education at the AMA

What accomplishment from your time at the AMA are you most proud of?

Building a culture of innovation in medical education, supported by the leadership and resources of the AMA. I’m proud that the AMA has deeply invested in improving medical education—more than $30
million dollars in the last decade. It’s gratifying that the AMA is now seen as the “go to” place for innovation—and that we have a fantastic team in place that will carry on this work with enthusiasm.

Where do you think medical education will be in ten years?

We will have achieved our vision of adding the “third pillar”—health systems science—to all levels of medical education and will have implemented true competency-based progression through our pathways of education and training. Learning will be contextual and include deeper longitudinal relationships with patients, families and communities, augmented by our new AI, simulation and data-informed tools. Are you ready for this? I am!

What are you looking forward to in retirement?

An opportunity to satisfy my curiosity and love of learning through travel, a second language, enjoying nature and photography. And visiting many friends who I have deeply missed during the pandemic.

What question that we haven’t asked would you like to answer?

What’s been the best thing about working at the AMA? Being part of an organization that puts its values out front and strives to improve the lives of patients and physicians every day. To be part of an amazing team dedicated to achieving our mission “To promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health.” I was proud to quote the AMA mission statement at every talk I gave, as our organization truly strives to meet this mission. And I am grateful every day for the friends and colleagues that have been part of my AMA work. It’s been a heck of a ride!