

Doctors see inequity daily. Fellowship helps them dig deeper.

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News Editor

Physicians have until March 14 to apply to be part of just the second cohort of fellows for the Medical Justice in Advocacy Fellowship. The collaborative initiative is empowering physician-led advocacy to advance health equity and remove barriers to achieve optimal health for all.

Two of the 12 doctors selected from 300-plus applicants for the inaugural fellowship cohort took time to share their perspectives on what they have learned and why other doctors who want to eliminate health inequities should apply to take part in this education initiative from the AMA and the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at the Morehouse School of Medicine.



Ramona L. Rhodes, MD, MPH

The Medical Justice in Advocacy Fellowship will prepare the next generation of physician advocacy leaders to generate and exchange solutions and drive meaningful policy and structural changes. Learn more and apply now.

Geriatrician, hospice and palliative medicine physician Ramona L. Rhodes, MD, MPH, said she has “always had a passion for examining health disparities,” but felt her “on-the-job-training” in the subject was insufficient to the task given the tremendous inequities in care of older adults and people who are

chronically and seriously ill.

The Medical Justice in Advocacy Fellowship “is an awesome opportunity to learn from leaders in the field and to network with like-minded colleagues who represent different disciplines,” said Dr. Rhodes, associate director for health services research for the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center of the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System and associate professor in the Department of Geriatrics at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

For Dr. Rhodes, medical justice is not just about what she’s seen in the peer-reviewed literature. She “has witnessed health inequities personally and had to advocate for family members as a result.”

The fellowship “will influence my clinical practice, research and teaching by giving me the tools to address topics like political determinants of health—things that I would not have thought or known about had I not participated,” Dr. Rhodes said.

Under the mentorship of renowned multidisciplinary health equity experts, the fellows work together over the course of 14 months to generate solutions for implementing healthy equity projects focused on ensuring better health outcomes and closing health gaps for patients and their communities.

Learn more about political determinants of health, and how U.S. policy can shape your patients’ health outcomes.

Called to fellowship



Amber N. Clark, MD

Physiatrist Amber N. Clark, MD, completed her residency training in 2020 but wanted to continue pursuing her interests in health policy, with a primary goal of helping to bring about systemic policy change that will create equitable solutions for African Americans with physical disabilities.

“When I learned about this fellowship,” she said, “I heard my name being called—Amber, Amber.”

And Dr. Clark answered the call, finding the experience very well worth her time.

“I have gotten the opportunity to meet so many amazing physicians throughout the country,” said Dr. Clark, an AMA member who is an assistant professor in the physical medicine and rehabilitation department at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. “Some are still in training, some are attendings and some are in fellowship. The summation of us is something that I don’t think the world has ever seen before.”

Fellows take part in a three-day virtual learning intensive at the start of the fellowship and then in monthly learning sessions with a multidisciplinary group of nationally renowned experts. Participating fellows will get a stipend of \$15,000 for their participation in the program and would be eligible for up to 28 CME credit hours.

The inaugural fellowship cohort runs through November, but Dr. Clark—who serves on the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation’s Health Policy and Legislation Committee—said she has already learned a lot.

Dr. Clark now has “a deeper understanding of why the structure of our country is the way it is, and why the structural inequities have continued and—in a robust way—continue to be perpetuated.” To probe such issues deeply “and to have the protected time to do that was a huge draw,” she said.

The fellowship program aligns with the AMA’s strategic plan to embed racial justice and advance health equity, released last year.