

SPS member profile: Ved V. Gossain, MD



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June 2022 member spotlight

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Chair, AMA Senior Physicians Section Governing Council (2021-2022)

Former chair, International Medical Graduates (2017-2018)

Retired endocrinologist: Swartz professor of medicine and chief, division of endocrinology (Emeritus) Michigan State University

Medical School: Medical College of Amritsar, India (MB, BS); All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India (MD)

Q: When did you become an AMA member and how did that lead to your current role as AMA Senior Physician Section chair?

A: I joined the faculty of Michigan State University in 1975. At that time, it was customary and expected that all practicing physicians belong to the County and State Medical Society as well as AMA. So, I joined the Ingham County Medical Society, Michigan State Medical Society and the AMA.

For the initial many years, I concentrated on my academic career, and although I was a member, was not very active in the affairs of the organized medicine. {Incidentally, I am also an International Medical Graduate [IMGs].} However, in the later years, I realized that the issues related to the IMGs had not changed in the last several years. So, I decided to get involved and contested for a seat on the IMG Governing Council in 2010 and was elected.

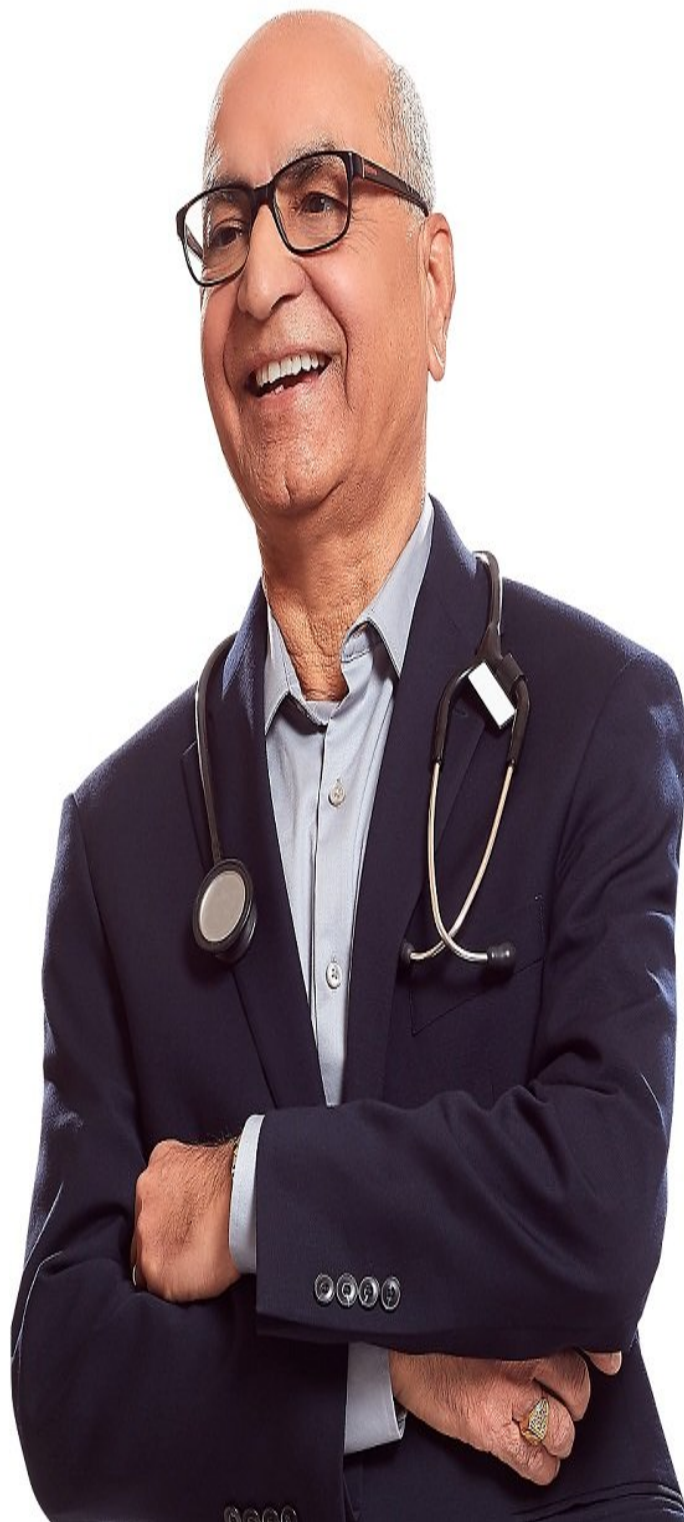
During my tenure there, I served as an alternate delegate, a delegate and ultimately the chair of the IMG Governing Council in 2017-2018. By this time, I was convinced that getting involved with organized medicine was a worthwhile cause and now that I had retired from my regular job, I also had the time to do so. Therefore, I ran for a seat on the GC of the Senior Physicians Section (SPS) in 2020 and was elected to be the chair-elect in 2021.

Q: As you take office in July what is your top priority over the coming year?

A: SPS is one of the larger Sections of the AMA. We have approximately 61,000 members. One of my top priorities is to get more members become engaged in the affairs of the Section. A Section cannot function well unless its members are fully engaged. Towards this goal, we already have physicians who serve as "liaisons" to the SPS from their respective state medical society. However, we only have liaisons from approximately 35 medical societies. My goal is to not only have a liaison appointed in each state, but to have a functioning SPS in each state medical society.

Beyond this, we are working on the following policy topics: recognizing, publicizing and combating ageism, promoting oral health as a health equity concern (especially for seniors) and lowering the cost of drugs for seniors. The current Governing Council is very much interested in implicit bias and ageism and preparing the next generation to care for elders.

Q: As a physician leader, why is physician advocacy important to you? How can physicians have a significant impact outside the practice of medicine?



A: Physicians are natural leaders. They are highly respected in the communities where they live or practice. Nothing changes without advocacy. The recent pandemic is a good example. There were and there still are many people who are resistant to getting vaccinated against COVID-19. There is also a lot of false information floating around in the media and lay public about this virus and the damage that it causes. Only physicians can provide accurate information and by their advocacy ask for requirements such as wearing a mask in schools and other public places.

Another example is the Flint water crisis, where recognition of the contamination of water with lead by physicians resulted in advocacy and ultimately a meaningful change for the community.

On a personal note, after writing and rewriting for nearly seven years, I have managed to get the story of my life published as “My journey through the United States: 8 dollars and no dream.” I was lucky enough to have it published this year.

Contact us

Have information about SPS members doing great work? Email us at sps@ama-assn.org.