From Ebola to e-cigarettes, delegates pass public health policy

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Staff News Writer

Delegates at the 2014 AMA Interim Meeting in Dallas this week weighed in on a number of timely public health issues. At the meeting, physicians:

- Called for the AMA to continue to be a trusted source of information and education on urgent epidemics or pandemics affecting the U.S. population. The policy was enacted in the wake of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.
- Reinforced its support for regulatory oversight of electronic cigarettes. Delegates also supported regulations that would establish the minimum legal purchase age for electronic cigarettes to be 18 years old, place marketing restrictions on manufacturers, and prohibit claims that electronic cigarettes are effective tobacco cessation tools. Supported efforts to give the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authority and funding to effectively oversee the manufacturing, marketing and sale of dietary supplements.
- Urged the increased use of sobriety checkpoints and called for state medical societies to overturn bans on using them to deter driving under the influence.
- Passed policy recognizing the important role of pharmacists in vaccinating target populations that lack access to a medical home or that otherwise are unlikely to receive immunizations through physician practices. The policy affirms that health professionals who administer vaccines have shared responsibilities to ensure that vaccination administration is documented in the patient medical record. Further, it calls on physicians and pharmacists to work together in the community to encourage patients to follow up with a primary care physician to ensure continuity of care.