AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 415
(A-18)

Introduced by: Colorado

Subject: Reducing Gun Violence in America

Referred to: Reference Committee D
(Shannon Kilgore, MD, Chair)

Whereas, Our AMA has formally recognized gun violence as a public health issue; and

Whereas, Public health research has led to interventions which save countless lives such as research on smoking and motor vehicle deaths; and

Whereas, US homicide rates were seven times higher than in other high-income countries, driven by a gun homicide rate that was 25.2 times higher. For 15- to 24-year-olds, the gun homicide rate in the United States was 49 times higher. Unintentional firearm deaths were 6.2 times higher in the United States. The overall firearm death rate in the United States from all causes was ten times higher. Ninety % of women, 91% of children aged <14 years, 92% of youth aged 15 to 24 years, and 82% of all people killed by firearms were from the United States; and

Whereas, The Rand Corporation has recently produced a review of current literature regarding effectiveness of current state level gun laws; and

Whereas, The Rand report identifies specific statutory interventions likely to reduce gun violence, gun related suicides and accidental shootings; and

Whereas, Policy dealing with public health issues should be based on evidence; and

Whereas, The Rand report cites the lack of funded research on the causes and potential remedies for gun violence as a barrier to addressing the problem; and

Whereas, Our AMA policy calls for the AMA to “actively lobby Congress to lift the gun violence research ban”; therefore be it


RESOLVED, That our AMA work with other physician organizations to actively lobby for restoration of funding for gun violence research at the CDC and elsewhere (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

1 Am J Med. 2016 Mar;129(3):266-73
2 https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2088.html
RESOLVED, That our AMA review the Rand report on gun violence and other credible sources of research on causes and effective policy to reduce gun violence and report back at the 2018 Interim Meeting with findings and recommendations for further advocacy to reduce gun violence in the US. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 05/01/18

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Gun Violence as a Public Health Crisis D-145.995
Our AMA: (1) will immediately make a public statement that gun violence represents a public health crisis which requires a comprehensive public health response and solution; and (2) will actively lobby Congress to lift the gun violence research ban.
Citation: Res. 1011, A-16;

Firearm Safety and Research, Reduction in Firearm Violence, and Enhancing Access to Mental Health Care H-145.975
1. Our AMA supports: a) federal and state research on firearm-related injuries and deaths; b) increased funding for and the use of state and national firearms injury databases, including the expansion of the National Violent Death Reporting System to all 50 states and U.S. territories, to inform state and federal health policy; c) encouraging physicians to access evidence-based data regarding firearm safety to educate and counsel patients about firearm safety; d) the rights of physicians to have free and open communication with their patients regarding firearm safety and the use of gun locks in their homes; e) encouraging local projects to facilitate the low-cost distribution of gun locks in homes; f) encouraging physicians to become involved in local firearm safety classes as a means of promoting injury prevention and the public health; and g) encouraging CME providers to consider, as appropriate, inclusion of presentations about the prevention of gun violence in national, state, and local continuing medical education programs
2. Our AMA supports initiatives to enhance access to mental and cognitive health care, with greater focus on the diagnosis and management of mental illness and concurrent substance abuse disorders, and work with state and specialty medical societies and other interested stakeholders to identify and develop standardized approaches to mental health assessment for potential violent behavior.
Citation: Sub. Res. 221, A-13; Appended: Res. 416, A-14; Reaffirmed: Res. 426, A-16;

Firearms as a Public Health Problem in the United States - Injuries and Death H-145.997
Our AMA recognizes that uncontrolled ownership and use of firearms, especially handguns, is a serious threat to the public's health inasmuch as the weapons are one of the main causes of intentional and unintentional injuries and deaths. Therefore, the AMA: (1) encourages and endorses the development and presentation of safety education programs that will engender more responsible use and storage of firearms; (2) urges that government agencies, the CDC in particular, enlarge their efforts in the study of firearm-related injuries and in the development of ways and means of reducing such injuries and deaths; (3) urges Congress to enact needed legislation to regulate more effectively the importation and interstate traffic of all handguns; (4) urges the Congress to support recent legislative efforts to ban the manufacture and importation of nonmetallic, not readily detectable weapons, which also resemble toy guns; (5) encourages the improvement or modification of firearms so as to make them as safe as humanly possible; (6) encourages nongovernmental organizations to develop and test new, less hazardous designs for firearms; (7) urges that a significant portion of any funds recovered from firearms manufacturers and dealers through legal proceedings be used for gun safety education and gun-violence prevention; and (8) strongly urges US legislators to fund further research into the epidemiology of risks related to gun violence on a national level.
Citation: (CSA Rep. A, I-87; Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. I-93-50; Appended: Res. 403, I-99; Reaffirmation A-07; Reaffirmation A-13; Appended: Res. 921, I-13)