Whereas, The American Academy of PA (AAPA) House of Delegates adopted “Optimal Team Practice” policy that seeks to eliminate provisions in laws and regulations that require a physician assistant to have a supervisory, collaborative or other specific relationship with a physician as a condition or component of licensure; and

Whereas, Previously adopted AAPA policy promotes exclusive use of the term “PA” instead of “Physician Assistant” to remove reference to other health care disciplines within their title; remove from legislation and regulation the concept that the physician assistant is the agent of the physician; create a separate and independent physician assistant regulatory board; and allow insurers to reimburse physician assistants directly; and

Whereas, AAPA model legislation removes language stipulating that physician assistant scope of practice is determined by physician delegation, and instead, physician assistants should be permitted to provide any medical service within the physician assistant’s education, training, and experience; and

Whereas, States have begun to enact expanded scope of practice for physician assistants and more state medical associations should be prepared for proposals for either independent or collaborative practice in future legislative sessions; and

Whereas, Physician education and training includes at a minimum medical school and residency with 10,000 hours, however, the current physician assistant education model is 2 years with 2000 hours of clinical care and no residency; and

Whereas, In a survey conducted by the Physician Assistant Education Association, the large majority (86%) of physician assistant educators responded that the current physician assistant educational model does not prepare graduates to practice without a supervisory, collaborating, or other specific relationship with a physician1; and

Whereas, Physician-led team based care remains at the center of AMA policy, and physician supervision and responsibility help assure that the highest quality of care is provided to every patient; and

Whereas, Our AMA recently adopted policy in support of maintaining the authority of medical licensing and regulatory boards to regulate the practice of physician assistants; and

Whereas, Although our AMA has policy that states physician assistants should be supervised and that only physicians should practice independently, our AMA policy does not specifically state that physician assistants should not practice independently; and

Whereas, Affirmative policy to oppose physician assistant independent practice would be helpful as our AMA responds to the new AAPA policy statement on “Optimal Team Practice;” therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association adopt policy to oppose legislation or regulation that allows physician assistant independent practice. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

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