Resolution: 2  
(November 2021)

Introduced by: Dr. Varudhini Reddy, MD  

Subject: Gender Equity and Female Physician Work Patterns During the Pandemic

Whereas, Studies show that women carry more responsibility than their male counterparts for personal and family life; and

Whereas, A study following a cohort of faculty from the 1995 National Faculty Survey through 17 years showed persistent gender disparities in rank, retention, and leadership positions; and

Whereas, Prior to the pandemic, due to the culture of medicine, many female physicians made adjustments in their professional roles, including “part-time status, despite the known limitations on professional progression, career advancement, and economic potential. These adjustments further propagate gender inequities and the persistent compensation gap female physicians experience; and

Whereas, The COVID-19 pandemic is requiring additional adjustments to the professional lives of physicians and many of these adjustments will be made disproportionately by female physicians due to childcare and pregnancy; and

Whereas, Since the pandemic, there has been a decrease in the percentage of physicians working full-time, a rise in the percentage who were laid off, and an increase in changes in physicians’ usual activities. The decline in the percentage of parents with preschool-aged children among only female physicians may suggest a disproportionate uptake of childcare responsibilities among female physicians; and

Whereas, In a recent survey, female scientists reported a decline in research time relative to male colleagues during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the most significant factor was having a young dependent less than 6 years of age; and

Whereas, One in five physicians experienced a financial cut or furlough because of the pandemic, but there is limited data on how these cuts and furloughs have impacted female physicians specifically; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That our AMA advocate for research on physician-specific data analyzing changes in work patterns and employment outcomes among female physicians during the pandemic to understand potential gaps in equity, indications for terminations and/or furloughs, and gender differences in those who had unpaid additional work hours while still recognizing the diversity amongst the female physician population and varied preferences in work life balance (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA collaborate with relevant organizations to evaluate obstacles affecting female physician professional advancement during the pandemic. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal note: Modest - between $1,000 - $5,000
Received: 8/29/2021

Relevant AMA Policy:
1. Principles for Advancing Gender Equity in Medicine H-65.961
2. AMA Principles for Physician Employment H-225.950

References: