Whereas, No credible, double-blinded, randomized controlled trial has been performed to evaluate the quality of care provided by non-physicians vs. physicians in settings that are truly characterized as “independent practice”; and

Whereas, Mid-level providers seeking independent practice falsely cite studies where non-physicians are supervised by physicians with equal outcomes as physicians as a reason to allow independent practice; and

Whereas, Studies show that care provided by mid-level providers is more expensive due to more frequent visits, more testing, and more home visits; and

Whereas, Some healthcare organizations preferentially fill the schedules of mid-level providers over physicians to increase profit or label physicians as “providers” in effort to undermine the trusted physician-patient relationship and challenge the traditional role physicians play as the sole qualified leader of the healthcare team; and

Whereas, If patients ask to be treated by a physician, they are falsely told that mid-level providers provide care that is equal to that of physicians; and

Whereas, There are efforts by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties by 2025 to convert Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degrees into Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees (DNP), many of which are online programs without clear standards or curriculum requirements; and

Whereas, Many healthcare systems have changed National Doctors Day and National Physicians Week on and around March 30th to “National Provider Day” and “National Providers Week” to try and equate physicians with mid-level providers in the minds of patients and legislators; and

Whereas, Other health care team members have holidays to celebrate their contribution solely dedicated to them; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our AMA work with relevant stakeholders to conduct a study comparing care provided by physician-led health care teams versus care provided by unsupervised mid-level providers practicing independently with regard to quality, cost, and access and publish the findings in a peer reviewed journal such as JAMA; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA oppose physicians being referred to as “providers” in all healthcare settings; and be it further
RESOLVED, That our AMA supports that National Physicians Week and National Doctors’ Day be reserved solely for recognizing physicians.

Fiscal Note:

References:

1. The First U.S. Study on Nurses’ Evidence-Based Practice Competencies Indicates Major Deficits That Threaten Healthcare Quality, Safety, and Patient Outcomes - PubMed (nih.gov)
3. NP to DNP: In Less Than 10 Years, All Nurse Practitioners May Need to Hold a DNP - Regis College Online

Relevant AMA Policy: