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**Published Monthly for the Medical Family**

**February 2011**

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#### **E-Connection updates**

Monthly Alliance updates are sent to those whose email information we have in our database. If you wish to receive regular news from the AMA Alliance for your medical family, we want to make sure we have your correct email address. If you or someone you know would like to be added to our list, please contact us

#### **Welcome to E-Connection**

*E-Connection* is the AMA Alliance monthly member communication. It is designed to keep you informed of everything new and upcoming at the Alliance.

We welcome all comments and suggestions. E-Mail us at [rosetta.gervasi@ama-assn.org](mailto:rosetta.gervasi@ama-assn.org).

#### **A Message from Alliance President Susan Todd**

Having just returned from the AMA's National Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC, I am reminded of how important it is for Alliance members to be engaged and involved in the process of advocating for medicine. With so many challenges facing the delivery of medicine we must all work together to bring about positive changes for physicians, their families and their patients.

There is so much power in a grass roots effort. Better than any professional lobbyist in Washington, Alliance members can give federal legislators the most accurate picture of the effect current health legislation has on patients and families in the US.

Yes, it is effective to visit your legislator in Washington, but rest assured that a phone call, email or letter can also be an important way to deliver medicine's message.

Our voices must be heard on issues like medical liability reform and the Medicare physician payment system (SGR). Both of these systems are broken and place a tremendous burden on the ability to deliver affordable, quality care for patients. The Affordable Care Act will bring new rules and regulations and our voice can play a role in seeing that these changes have a positive impact on how medicine is delivered.



at [amaa@ama-assn.org](mailto:amaa@ama-assn.org).



#### Alliance Web site

Visit [www.amaalliance.org](http://www.amaalliance.org) for all the latest Alliance news and updates including current headlines, the HEALTHeCAREERS Network, Personal Space for the Individual Member and latest Membership Benefit news.

#### Join the Alliance

AMA Alliance supports medical families through advocacy and education. Join this wonderful nationwide network of people, resources and opportunities for medical families.

[Find out more about membership benefits and become an Alliance member today!](#)

JOIN TODAY  
BECOME A MEMBER

#### Quick Links...

[Our Web site](#)  
[Online Shop](#)  
[Advocacy](#)  
[More About Us](#)  
[Calendar](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

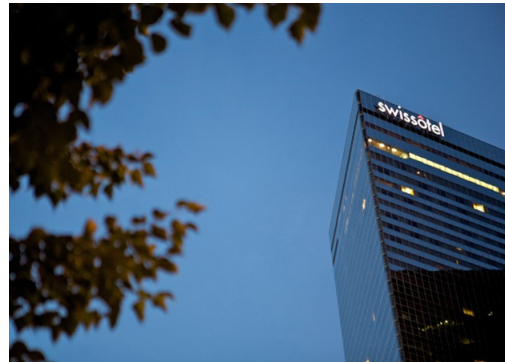
Your help with these advocacy efforts is critical. Read your AMA Advocacy updates and be ready to respond by contacting your legislators when our grass roots voice is needed. You can stay up to date on new legislation and regulations that have an impact on the health care system on the [Advocacy](#) section of the AMA Web Site. By working together with the AMA we can make an impact on issues that are important to physicians and their patients.

*Susan Todd*

### Upcoming Annual Meeting Planned with You in Mind

We've heard what you had to say about past Alliance meetings and have taken your comments to heart. For the upcoming annual meeting in Chicago, June 19 - 21, 2011, we've implemented as many of your suggestions as possible and are featuring the following member-inspired improvements:

- Streamlined Schedule - 1.5 day meeting instead of 4 days.
- Fewer Nights - One to two hotel nights needed instead of 3-4.
- Lower Registration Fee - The discounted early bird registration rate will be \$199 and will include two breakfasts, the welcome reception and one lunch.
- Lower Room Rate - The member-only discounted room rate for single or double rooms will be \$245 per night; if most members share, this represents a significant reduction in cost from prior years.
- New Conveniently located Top-Notch Hotel - The meeting will be held at the world-class Swissotel in Downtown Chicago - next to the AMA's meeting hotel at the Hyatt Regency Hotel and just minutes from Michigan Avenue and all Chicago has to offer. Learn more about the [Swissotel by visiting their Web site](#).
- Stay tuned to [www.amaalliance.org](http://www.amaalliance.org) for more details as they become available.



*NOTE: The link to book at the discounted rate will be available later this month.*

### Explore all that Chicago has to Offer!

Chicago's great magic lies in its mix: sophisticated yet friendly, bustling city streets adjacent to long stretches of green parks and sparkling blue Lake Michigan, and a stunning year-round array of things to see and do unique in all

the world. Discover why so many visitors fall in love with the city every year. Check out the top Chicago attractions that are waiting for you during the annual meeting.

- Countless Ethnic Cuisine Choices
- Green Chicago: A City in a Garden
- Chicago's Endless Nightlife Options

Click on the following options to learn more:

[Navy Pier](#)  
[Millennium Park](#)  
[Lincoln Park Zoo](#)  
[Museum of Science and Industry](#)  
[The Field Museum](#)  
[Chicago Theatres/Shows](#)  
[Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum](#)  
[The Hancock Observatory](#)  
[Museum of Contemporary Art](#)  
[Chicago History Museum](#)  
[Macy's on State Street](#)  
[John G. Shedd Aquarium](#)  
[Art Institute of Chicago](#)



## Annual Meeting Now Open to All Members

If you were at the last annual meeting in June 2010, you remember that the House of Delegates voted to open the Alliance Annual Meeting to all members. That is, starting with the 2011 calendar year, the Alliance will hold an annual meeting at which all registered members and registered guests are welcome to attend and participate in -- without the formality of a House of Delegates. In view of this historic change in the way the Alliance conducts its business, there have been a number of inquires asking how the event will be conducted. 2010-2011 Bylaws Committee Chair Beverly Wright and long-standing parliamentarian Ruth Ryan, along with the Bylaws Committee and the Board of Directors, have composed the following to provide details about this important change:



The Bylaws Committee and the Board of Directors would like to clear up any confusion about the structure of voting in the Annual Meeting format which was adopted by the AMA Alliance in June 2010.

There will be very few changes in the actual procedure. The main change will be that states will not be allotted a specific number of

delegates for voting purposes. Any member, whose membership in the AMAA allows voting privileges, will be allowed to register and vote. This means that there will no longer be a restriction on the number of votes per state. This will also mean that members who attend will all be allowed to sit together with their state rather than being separated out by delegate, alternate, and guest. Now, the assembly will consist of *registered voting members* and *registered guests*. It is still appropriate for the states to refer to the group attending as a delegation and to appoint one person to be the head of the delegation. Having a one person designated as the chief delegate is helpful for communication purposes.

[To view the wording of the pertinent bylaw, check out the bylaws on the Alliance Web site.](#)

## **AMA Applauds President's Acknowledgement of Liability Reform, Improvements to the ACA**

During his [State of the Union](#) address on Jan. 25, President Obama outlined a vision for the nation's future that includes key AMA priorities, such as lowering health care costs through medical liability reform, improvements to the new health reform law and investments in biomedical research, according to a report in the *AMAWire* for 1-26-11.

The [AMA applauded](#) the president's willingness to consider medical liability reform to rein in frivolous lawsuits and help reduce health care costs.

"Medical liability reform is critical as every American pays the price for high medical liability costs," AMA President Cecil B. Wilson, MD, said.

The AMA also is pleased that President Obama acknowledged certain improvements that can be made to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), including eliminating the burdensome 1099 reporting requirement for small businesses.

"We will continue to work with members of Congress from both sides of the aisle and the administration during the implementation phase of this new law to ensure the best outcomes for patients and physicians," Dr. Wilson said.



## **Study Finds that Long Work Hours can Lead to Dissatisfaction with the Profession**

Increased work hours and increased nights on call have a detrimental effect on surgeons both professionally and personally, according to [a study published recently](#) in the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* and cited in the January 19, 2011 *AMAWire*.

As part of the study, published in November 2010, researchers surveyed more than 7,900 surgeons and found that the number of hours worked has a strong correlation to burnout, emotional exhaustion and conflicts at work and at home. And these consequences of working such long hours are affecting the way surgeons view the profession of medicine.



For example, among respondents who work more than 80 hours a week, more than one-third (34.1 percent) said they would not or were not sure if they would choose to become a physician again. And one-fifth of respondents who work more than 80 hours a week (20 percent) said they definitely or probably would not choose to become a physician again.

These numbers are concerning given the [shortage of physicians that's projected to take place in the coming years](#). That's why the AMA is placing a greater emphasis on helping physicians focus on their own health. As part of its Healthier Life Steps™ program, the AMA recently launched a new toolkit, "[A Physician's Guide to Personal Health](#)," to help physicians take time for themselves and reflect on which steps they may need to take to live healthier.

## Making A Real Commitment to Achieving a Healthy Lifestyle

In his blog, AMA President Cecil B. Wilson, MD, writes about the burden of preventable disease, noting that it constitutes more than 75 percent of health care spending in the United States devoted to individuals with chronic conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, lung cancer and stroke. He points out that these are conditions are preventable and that to reduce the associated risks, we all need to eat better, exercise, stop smoking and drink responsibly.

Those four key health behaviors are the same identified in the AMA's Healthier Life Steps program-information and resources for physicians, their families, and patients for a longer, healthier life.



At the 2010 Family Summit, Sonja Boone, MD, AMA Director of Physician Health and Healthcare Disparities and Nancy Kyler, AMA Alliance Immediate Past President, presented a version of the session: Healthier Life Steps for Medical Families, part of the 21st. Century Medical Family Series. Alliance President Susan Todd followed up with another version of the evolving workshop presented to attendees at the Southern Regional Conference in January.

Selected key points from the presentation include:

The key factors that affect the health of medical families:

- Work/Life Balance
- Time Poverty
- Focus on Service to others, reinforced by continuous personal sacrifice
- Self assessment deficit
- Reinforcement from a family member
- Convenience



Steps that can help you achieve balance:

- Define how you spend your time.
- Determine what you need and want out of life.
- Stop and reassess regularly.
- Balance Goals.
- Enlist help of spouse/partner.

The presentation also offered concrete action steps medical families can take to commit to a healthy lifestyle, as well as a robust list of additional resources.

Learn more:

The [AMA Healthier Life Steps - A Physician's Guide to Personal Health](#) toolkit is designed to help physicians support their personal efforts to live a healthier lifestyle and serve as role models to their patients. It is written by physicians and includes action plans and health screening milestones, progress tracking calendars for each of the four health behaviors and CME information.

[Healthy Life Steps Web site](#)

[Alliance Podcasts](#)

## **Michelle Obama and Walmart Join Forces to Combat Childhood Obesity**

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The First Lady and Walmart have signed an agreement geared at preventing childhood obesity, according to numerous media reports, including the big three network television outlets, ABC World News, CBS Evening News and NBC Nightly News. Media sources generally characterized the move as a victory for Michelle Obama's signature campaign. First Lady Michelle Obama "announced that Walmart, which sells more groceries than any market in America, is going to change the food formulations of the foods it sells to make them healthier."

In media reports, the First Lady was shown saying, "I am thrilled about Walmart's new nutrition charter." The First Lady announced she's working with the nation's largest retailer, "which promised to cut prices on fresh fruits and vegetables and to reduce fats, sugars, salt, eliminate trans fats in some of its own store brands by the year 2015."

She was also shown accompanying Walmart executives as they announced the effort in Washington on January 20. "Walmart "plans to reduce sodium and added sugars in some items, build stores in poor areas that don't already have grocery stores, reduce prices on produce and develop a logo for healthier items."

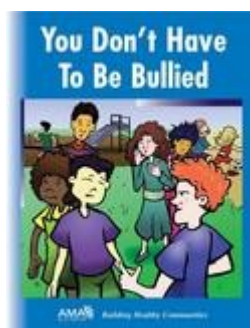
Read the original stories:

[AP](#)  
[Washington Post](#)  
[Washington Times](#)  
[New York Daily News](#)

## **Featured Alliance Resources:**

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Check out the latest Alliance offerings in the [Online Shop!](#)



## Upcoming Observances from the Excerpt from National Observances Calendar

Health observances are special days, weeks, or months used to raise awareness of important health topics. Examples include World AIDS Day or the Great American Smokeout. Here are selected upcoming observances.

### February

- American Heart Month
- National Children's Dental Health Month

### March

- National Nutrition Month

### April

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- National Autism Awareness Month
- World Health Day - April 7
- National Public Health Week - April 4-10

[Click here to view the full National Observance calendar.](#)

## Upcoming Alliance Events

For a full listing of events go to [www.amaalliance.org](http://www.amaalliance.org).

### March 1:

Deadline date for submission of [Health Awareness Promotion](#) Awards (HAP)

### March 1:

Deadline date for submission of [Legislative Education and Awareness Promotion](#) Awards (LEAP)

**March 4-6:** North Central Regional Alliance conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Minneapolis. Minnesota and North Dakota are the host states. As always, there will be outstanding educational sessions, superb food, extreme socializing and of course, shopping at the Mall of America. For further information, please contact Dianne Fenyk at [diannefenyk@prodigy.net](mailto:diannefenyk@prodigy.net).

[For more information about these events, or for a full-calendar listing, click here...](#)

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