

To American Medical Association  
AMA Plaza  
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### **Reaction to Stop Scope Creep Initiative**

A response to the recent Stop Scope Creep campaign, on behalf of students of the Physician Assistant Class of 2021 and 2022, Carver College of Medicine, University of Iowa. We would like to add our support to the letter sent on by the AAPA while adding a personal addendum to it.

Below is the stated mission of the AMA:

“The AMA is a powerful ally in patient care, giving strength to physician voices in courts and legislative bodies across the nation. The AMA is dedicated to driving medicine toward a more equitable future, removing obstacles that interfere with patient care and confronting the nation’s greatest public health crises.” [1]

The current Stop Scope Creep campaign only supports the first half of the mission while ignoring the second. We believe moving towards, “a more equitable future and removing obstacles that interfere with patient care,” is an enviable and necessary aim, one that all healthcare providers can and should stand behind. However, given that prior to the pandemic the AAMC projected a shortage of up to 139,000 doctors by 2032 [3], we fail to see how the AMA is demonstrating a drive toward “a more equitable future” and “removing obstacles ...[to] care” when they undermine the credibility of a large portion of the very people, Physician Assistants, that are trying to help fill that gap. Furthermore, it is our belief that in the face of ever-mounting hardship for families, communities, and providers across this country and across the world, now more than ever is a time to stand united as one care team intent on doing everything in our power to uphold the principles stated in those final three objectives.

The use of Scrabble tiles in a media campaign that is intended to reduce the scope of practice for PAs insinuates that scope and power are a game in healthcare. This is tone-deaf, insensitive, and undermines the trust and credibility of more than capable healthcare providers who are intent on heeding the call to service when they are needed most. This is both unproductive and antithetical to the stated and admirable goals of the AMA.

Lastly, the data from the AMA survey used as proof points to support this campaign lacks credibility and appears to place AMA politics over the health care needs of the population amid a pandemic [2]. The survey lacked standard citation and sourcing and is in direct contrast with EBCP protocols taught to both future-physicians and PAs at the University of Iowa, where we have the unique opportunity to learn side by side in a joint, fully integrated, program with our medical student colleagues. The poor sourcing in this survey makes it difficult to evaluate the merit of the conclusions and fully understand the methodology to assess the findings. In contrast, the studies cited in the letter from the AAPA President and Chair of the Board, Beth Smolko and Lisa Gables, and numerous other studies clearly demonstrate no lapse in standard of care when a PA or APP is involved with their care across a variety of settings. [4][5]

For these reasons, the students of the PA Candidate Class of 2021 and 2022 at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine humbly but firmly place our support behind the statement from the AAPA and ask that the AMA meet with the AAPA. It is our hope that this collaboration could serve to clearly reaffirm the joint commitment that PAs and physicians have to our communities in this moment of dire need.

Sincerely,

Physician Assistant Candidate Class of 2021  
Physician Assistant Candidate Class of 2022  
Carver College of Medicine  
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