

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) Statement on Clinician Well-Being

AACOM is strongly committed to the well-being of trainees, clinicians, staff and all health professionals within a healthy learning environment. As the unifying voice in osteopathic medical education, AACOM represents and supports its member colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs) and clinical education partners in preparing osteopathic physicians who are ready to meet the evolving health care needs of our society. AACOM is engaged in efforts to decrease clinician burnout through medical education excellence, research, and interprofessional collaboration.

- **Education**

- **Mental Health Awareness Task Force**

The Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP), the official AACOM national student leadership council comprised of the student government presidents, has launched a five-part project to assess the state of mental health and prioritization of individual and system health in osteopathic medical education. Throughout this project, the Council will survey the osteopathic medical student population on the effect of their educational experience on mental health, determine what mental health services are being provided for students at the nation's COMs, and help to highlight best practices for managing mental health issues at osteopathic medical schools.

- COSGP worked with faculty at the Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OU-HCOM) to conduct a [nationwide mental health survey](#).
- AACOM published a book of essays, *Inner Strength: Osteopathic Medical Students Reflect on Resiliency*, written by Student DO of the Year recipients from each of the nation's colleges of osteopathic medicine.
- COSGP [produced a video](#) encouraging students to address mental health.
- COSGP worked with the deans of all osteopathic medical colleges to collaborate on college-specific issues related to student well-being.
- COSGP was instrumental in strengthening accreditation standards on mental health services for all students.

- **Educating Leaders**

Educating Leaders, the AACOM Annual Conference, consistently offers content related to well-being, including wellness programs and mentoring.

- **Revised Accreditation Standards**

AACOM supported the recently (July 1, 2017) [updated accreditation standards by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation](#) that heightened student health and wellness resources during all four years of medical education, with a new focus on the clinical learning environment. The increased core requirements included confidential access to an effective system of counseling and mental health care.

- **Research**
 - **Groundbreaking Project on Osteopathic Medical Education and Empathy**
AACOM is sponsoring a [nationwide project](#) to study medical student empathy and its relationship to osteopathic medical education (OME). The [Project on Osteopathic Medical Education and Empathy \(POME²\)](#) is the first of its kind to measure and examine reported empathy levels of students, starting with all newly entering first-year medical students (summer 2017) and of all first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year students at the end of the 2017-18 academic year. Over 90% of the 48 campuses of colleges of osteopathic medicine are participating. The POME² is a two-phased project. Phase I is a cross-sectional two-year study of empathy norms followed by Phase II, which will be a longitudinal study.
- **Interprofessional Collaboration**
 - **Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience**
AACOM is a sponsor of the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience. Along with more than 20 fellow health professions organizations, AACOM will address physician, medical student burnout and other health professional depression, and suicide; develop resources; support research; and provide data to support this initiative.
 - **Interprofessional Education Collaborative**
AACOM is one of the founding members of the interprofessional education collaborative, a group of 20 health professions education associations focused on promoting efforts to advance substantive interprofessional learning experiences to help prepare future health professionals for enhanced team-based care of patients and improved population health outcomes. A focus on health professional wellness and resilience has been one focus of the organization's activities.
 - **National Academy of Medicine (NAM) Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education**
AACOM is an original and ongoing member of the [NAM Global Forum](#), which includes multiple organizations convening to advance innovations in health professions education in a transforming educational and health-care delivery environment. One focus of that forum has been the theme of alleviating work-induced stress and improving health, well-being and resilience of health professionals within and beyond education.

About AACOM

[American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine \(AACOM\)](#) represents the 34 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 49 teaching locations in 32 states. In the current academic year, these colleges are educating over 28,500 future physicians—more than 25 percent of all U.S. medical students. Six of the colleges are publicly controlled, 28 are private institutions.

AACOM was founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education. AACOM provides leadership for the osteopathic medical education community by promoting excellence in medical education, research, and service, and by fostering innovation and quality across the continuum of osteopathic medical education to improve the health of the American public.