

SUBJECT: Addressing COMLEX-USA Discrimination in Family Medicine Residency Programs and Promote Transparency for Osteopathic Medical Students

SUBMITTED BY: SAACOFPP Resolution Committee

REFERRED TO: 2025 American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFPP)
Congress of Delegates

RESOLUTION NO. 10

- 1 WHEREAS, osteopathic medicine is one of the fastest growing segments of healthcare in the
2 United States, representing more than 11% of US physicians, and Colleges of Osteopathic
3 Medicine currently educate more than 35,000 physicians, 25% of all US medical students
4 [1]; and
- 5 WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination of the United States
6 (COMLEX-USA) is the licensing exam series required by the Commission on Osteopathic
7 College Accreditation (COCA) to be taken by all osteopathic (DO) medical students in order
8 to graduate from COCA-accredited medical schools [2]; and
- 9 WHEREAS, the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) is the licensing exam series
10 taken by all allopathic (MD) medical students [3]; and
- 11 WHEREAS, the COMLEX-USA and USMLE are equivalent medical licensing exams, supported by
12 published predictive validity and score concordance studies [4]; and
- 13 WHEREAS, despite, from 2015 to 2020, residency training consolidation under a single accreditor,
14 the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) for all US residency
15 and fellowship programs, many US residency programs do not report both minimum
16 COMLEX-USA and USMLE scores [5, 6]; and
- 17 WHEREAS, many prospective osteopathic family medicine students wish to do their best to get
18 into their preferred programs; and
- 19 WHEREAS, there are current efforts, such as The Fair Access in Residency (FAIR) Act introduced
20 to the 118th Congress in 2023-2024 [7]; and
- 21 WHEREAS, 63.79% of graduated DO students in 2022 and 60.80% of graduated DO students took
22 USMLE 1 [8-10]; and
- 23 WHEREAS, 71.19% of graduated DO students in 2020 and 59.71% of graduated DO students took
24 USMLE 2 [8-10]; and
- 25 WHEREAS, most osteopathic students take the USMLE to gain advantage in residency selection,
26 but at a financial and mental strain [11-12]; and

WHEREAS, osteopathic students are unaware of measures to advocate for themselves and their osteopathic distinctiveness and the COMLEX-USA [13]; and

WHEREAS, family medicine residency programs can help alleviate these strains and provide more transparency for qualified and interested osteopathic family physicians in their journeys to residency; now, therefore be it

WHEREAS, the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) may help to encourage such efforts; and, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) submit a resolution to the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) House of Delegates encouraging the AOA to advocate for residency programs to provide yearly statistics on their incoming residency classes, examples including but not limited to, the mean COMLEX-USA score of accepted students, the percentage of DO students accepted, and the percentage of accepted DO residents that took USMLE Licensing Examinations; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the ACOFP encourages osteopathic medical students and graduates to report any instances of COMLEX-USA discrimination from family medicine residency programs to the AOA and to the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners to assist in increasing the number of DO medical trainees accepted into their desired family medicine residency programs.

FINAL ACTION: AMENDED & APPROVED as of April 2, 2025

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