



American Society of Echocardiography

2025 American Medical Association Interim House of Delegates **Meeting Summary**

This is a brief summary of the 2025 interim AMA HOD meeting from November 14 to November 18, 2025, in National Harbor, MD. This report was written by ASE Delegate, Peter Rabko, MD, FASE.

The format of the meeting was slightly different this year as the AMA is trying to modernize their large assemblies. More information was discussed prior to the meeting online as each reference committee had an online presence. The members of the reference committee then had initial discussions of all the resolutions presented to them and they then developed a preliminary agenda. This agenda categorized resolutions and reports into those that could be discussed at the actual in person reference committee, those recommended for approval, those recommended for approval with modification or rejected. Some other resolutions were reaffirmed as already contained in AMA resolutions from the past. The outcome of all this premeeting work was shorter reference committee meetings, a smaller number of resolutions discussed in person, and a more streamlined meeting. The AMA leadership will be evaluating the effect of this change. What it does is reduce the number of in-person presentations, reduce the number of resolutions discussed which may or may not be a good thing. One needs to keep that in mind when reviewing information or thinking about sending in a resolution or signing on to a resolution because my impression is that things have sped up a bit and we will have to be more alert regarding things going on before the meeting than just gathering forces in the last few days before the meeting.

The meeting also gives a chance to meet with the cardiovascular caucus. The caucus seems to grow every year. Virtually every specialty society such as our own along with the American College of Cardiology is represented at this meeting so it does give us a good chance to see what other society members are thinking. This year's caucus did not yield any startling results.

To summarize a few house of delegates resolutions that may impact ASE membership I will start with Committee J, the one that I attended. This is a committee on medical practice.

There was considerable discussion about health savings accounts and the incredible difficulty of families trying to determine how to pay for insurance premiums particularly if they lose their supplement from the current plan. Much discussion revolved around the fact that health savings accounts may be a mechanism that is better for people of greater means than poorer individuals. In general organizations supported the principle of health savings accounts and supported measures to subsidize silver and bronze plans for individuals.

Resolution 807 discussed protecting hospitals and patients from inappropriate denials of admissions this has been a constant issue. The resolution focused on insurance company denials of full admission status and recommended that the insurance company must revert at least to observation status to protect the patient in the hospital from significant charges. Resolution 810 discussed unilateral down-coding of physician's services by insurance companies. Apparently, this goes on in some areas and this resolution suggests that the AMA work with State Medical Associations, specialty societies and regulatory authorities to challenge these down coding policies through regulatory legislative and other means.

Resolution 817 discussed the issue of insurance companies arbitrarily denying payment or full payment based upon site of service. Apparently, some insurance companies for some procedures are determining that in-hospital outpatient services should only be paid at the lower rate based upon their determination of where the procedure could have been performed. This appears to be affecting infusion therapy in offices the most.

As with all meetings, there was a resolution regarding prior authorizations, Resolution 827. The AMA supports reforms in prior authorization and during the period there was discussion of the WYSer model regarding Medicare and potential prior authorization coming in the future.

Reference Committee K discussed predominantly public health related issues. One resolution, which was a report from the Council of Science and Public Health, discussed radiation protection predominantly focused on adequate protection for all people working under circumstances that produce ionizing radiation and advocated the use of the radiation badges for everybody associated with any ionizing radiation. It also advocated continued research into new ways to lower the radiation levels and exposures and proposed further education for all healthcare personnel on the potential risks of radiation exposure. One other resolution, Resolution 919 strongly advocated for evidence-based medicine for helping determination vaccine policy.

Reference Committee C was on medical education and there were no significant issues related to echocardiography.

Reference Committee F: there was one resolution that was depressing. The AMA, because the Journal is losing money, is shutting down the AMA Journal of Ethics. To most of us this seems like a short-sited poorly thought-out decision. AMA claims it will distribute ethics issues through their other journals in lieu of having a separate journal on ethics. The resolution offered in the house of delegates was to rethink this issue and to continue the separate journal.

Reference Committee B discussed several government legislative issues. Three resolutions 213, 214 and 218 pleaded for H1B reforms and rolling back all of the extremely high cost of these visas. The resolutions also ask for exception and exemption for physicians coming into the country for training from these requirements and asked for expedited pathways for physicians in these situations to gain a pathway to permanent residency. Another resolution in this group asked for guarantees of timely J1 visa appointments processing for physicians who have matched into United States programs. There was considerable discussion of this issue and support for these resolutions.

The final committee was the committee on ethics and bylaws. There was no new information in this committee directly affecting echocardiography.

One other aspect of the meeting was hearing a lecture from Dr. Oz. He took a relatively aggressive tone discussing the principles that the administration is following. Of course, he emphasized the small restoration pay that the administration supports. On the other hand, he vigorously defended the new efficiency doctrine of Medicare, which means that one hand gives us 2.5% raise while the other hand takes away at least related activities that fall under the efficiency clause. The implication was that more of this would be coming as AI gets incorporated into certain aspects of medicine. Of course, most of these speeches function in broad brush generalities so it is hard to determine any specifics. I will note however, that Oz claimed there was so

much massive fraud and money being siphoned off to foreign countries at unbelievable rates that simply eliminating all of this could balance the Medicare budget. That of course remains to be seen.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the activities at the meeting. It is my pleasure along with Dr. Shah and Katherine to represent ASE and the AMA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter S. Rahko', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter S. Rahko, M.D. FASE
Professor of Medicine
University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health