

Report #6, Minnesota Medical Association-Medical Student Section (MMA-MSS)

TO: Minnesota Medical Association House of Delegates
Convening September 17, 2008

All medical students within the state of Minnesota are members of the Minnesota Medical Association-Medical Student Section (MMA-MSS), and all three medical schools—Mayo Medical School and University of Minnesota Twin Cities and Duluth campuses—have delegates to the MMA-MSS Assembly. At assembly meetings, delegates hear updates from various student representatives, vote on issues concerning the section, elect an executive committee, and engage in discussions regarding health policy. Meetings are held bimonthly from September to April, and all students are invited to attend. Each school has two members on the executive committee, which consists of a chair, vice-chair, delegate, alternate delegate, secretary, and member-at-large (Appendix A). In addition, the MMA-MSS has student representatives that serve on MMA standing committees, the Minnesota Political Action Committee (MEDPAC) Board of Trustees, the Minnesota Medical Association Foundation Board of Directors, and the *Minnesota Medicine* advisory committee (Appendix B).

Priorities of the Medical Student Section

The goals of the MSS for 2008 are as follows:

- A. Enhance student participation in MMA and MSS events
- B. Encourage communication between the MMA and the MSS
by including student representatives on MMA committees
- C. Increase attendance at our student educational day
- D. Forward a student-drafted resolution to the MMA House of Delegates at A-08

A. Enhance student participation in MMA and MSS events

Our focus on increasing student participation has been two-fold: to expose more students to the importance of getting involved in health policy and., therefore, to better understand the focus of the MMA; and to expose the physicians of the MMA to the members and activities of the student section. We have already met this year's goal in terms of student participation. Student attendance at almost all major MSS events has increased since last year. This includes participation in AMA-MSS I-07 (Honolulu), AMA-MSS Regional (Iowa City), and AMA-MSS A-08. In addition, two students from Mayo Medical School attended AMA Lobby Day in Washington, D.C., thanks in part to increased funding for this purpose. Our goal continues to be to increase student attendance at these events, as well to expose more first-year students to these meetings.

The MSS was well-represented at this year's MMA Day at the Capitol. In all, 16 students, representing all three of the state's medical schools, attended this year's event. Many of the MSS attendees were first-year students, who were very enthusiastic about the work of the MMA and the impact that they, as students, could have on state legislation by speaking with their representatives. Prior to the MMA Day at the Capitol, Dave Renner, MMA lobbyist, and former Senator Phil Riveness gave a lunch lecture to students

at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus. Renner explained the workings of the MMA and what being an advocate truly is all about; Sen. Riveness provided an inside perspective on how a legislator learns and takes advice from constituents. Many students signed up to participate in the Day at the Capitol immediately following the event. We hope to have more lectures like this next year for students at all three medical schools in the state. Our goal is to increase attendance at next year's Day at the Capitol through more vigorous student campaigning at all three schools.

B. Encourage communication between the MMA and the MSS by including student representatives on MMA committees

The MSS is pleased to have student representation on multiple MMA committees (Appendix B). Each student representative is expected to communicate fully with the MSS through reports at all bimonthly meetings. The aim is to introduce all members to the actions of the committees and encourage students to serve in these positions in the future. Also, it allows students to reflect on actions taken by each committee and give immediate feedback to our student representatives, who can then carry any MSS questions or concerns back to the committees on which they serve.

We have much work to do to achieve this goal before the year is done. We appreciate the opportunity to serve on these committees, and encourage physician and staff members of each of the committees on which students serve to involve the MSS through its student representative.

C. Increase attendance at our student educational day

Each year, the MSS hosts a student education day for all members on a topic chosen by the assembly. This is a day-long event that features guest speakers and workshops. The event had been held each spring (it was called Spring Ed Day), but the date was changed to the fall (the Fall Retreat) to better fit into students' schedules. This year's event will be held on October 18, 2008, on the University of Minnesota - Duluth campus. The focus will be obesity and how it affects all aspects of care as well as health policy.

We are making numerous efforts to increase attendance at this year's event. First, it will be open to all students in the Academic Health Centers at each school. Secondly, we have been working with MMA members to possibly make this a CME event in order to encourage physician attendance and encourage interaction between members of the MMA and the MSS.

D. Forward a student-drafted resolution to the MMA HOD at A-08

A small group of students representing each of the state's three medical schools worked together to draft a resolution on an issue of concern to the MSS. Titled "Student Loan Forgiveness Programs for Rural Physicians," it will be introduced at this year's Annual Meeting by the MSS.

Shortcomings and Efforts for Improvement

Our section feels that this has been a highly successful year, thus far ; however, we still have more work to do. First of all, we want further for increased student involvement in MMA and MSS events. Although our attendance at most major events greatly increased this year, we still have had minimal attendance at our bi-monthly meetings, with anywhere from nine to 17 people attending. With all students being members of the MSS, this is an unacceptable number, even though all three medical schools were represented at every meeting. We aimed to fix the low attendance by:

1. Having the MMA send a letter to all medical students in the state explaining the organization and introducing students to the MSS. Our hope is that this letter has minimized the number of questions or misunderstandings students have about their membership in the MSS.
2. Sponsoring the lunch lecture for medical students at the University of MN – Twin Cities before the Day at the Capitol in order to get students directly involved in the MMA-MSS. We hope to hold one of these events at each medical school campus during the next school year, and host it earlier in the year in order to involve first-year students early on.

The second challenge we faced this year was financial. The current budget of the MSS is \$4,500, with an additional \$3,600 that is designated for use by students for AMA meeting expenses only (\$600 per school per meeting). The majority of the budget was used for travel by students at Mayo Medical School and University of Minnesota – Duluth to our meetings in the Twin Cities, conference calls, delegate travel expenses for the AMA Annual and Interim meetings, and our student education day (Fall Retreat). To make better use of our money and increase revenue for the remainder of 2008 and the following year, the MSS has:

1. Limited the number of vehicles to be reimbursed for travel expenses to two per school (Mayo Medical School and University of Minnesota – Duluth). This has not affected the attendance at meetings thus far. We will reassess the need for this limitation/changes in the reimbursement on a yearly basis.
2. Looked for outside funding sources for specific student events including the upcoming Fall Retreat. All funding sources will be approved by MMA staff prior to application to ensure that they do not conflict with current MMA or MSS bylaws.
3. Sent a request to the MMA earlier this month to ask for more flexibility with our budget, specifically the \$3,600 designated for AMA meetings.

Future Goals and Final Remarks

For the remainder of 2008, the MSS is focusing on further increasing student involvement and attendance at all MSS and MMA events; increasing student understanding of the MMA through staff-conducted lectures/training; enhancing communication between the MMA and MSS members through student participation on MMA committees; increasing student and possibly physician attendance at our upcoming Fall Retreat; and working to better use our budget. We look forward to ending our year successfully.

The MSS would like to thank the MMA for the giving students the opportunity to become strong, successful advocates and health care leaders. We would also like to thank our mentor, George Schoepfoerster, M.D., as well as MMA staff member Molly Sells for their great leadership and advice throughout the year.

Nicky Te Poel
Chair, MMA-MSS
MS3, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Appendix A: MMA-MSS Executive Committee Members

Chair: Nicky Te Poel, University of Minnesota Medical School – Twin Cities

Vice-Chair: Kevin Christensen, Mayo School of Medicine

Delegate: Nathan Woltman, Mayo School of Medicine

Alternate Delegate: Brent Kudak, University of Minnesota Medical School – Twin Cities

Secretary: Alissa Carrow, University of Minnesota Medical School – Duluth

Member-at-Large: Liz Donovan, University of Minnesota Medical School – Duluth

Immediate Past-Chair: Brian Thomas, University of Minnesota Medical School – Twin Cities

Appendix B: MSS Representatives to MMA Committees

MMA Board of Trustees: Aaron Potretzke, University of Minnesota—Twin Cities

MEDPAC Board

Jason D Meyers, University of Minnesota—Twin Cities

Brian Thomas, University of Minnesota—Twin Cities

Communications

Full Rep - Keith Murphy, University of Minnesota—Duluth

Full Rep - Maria Christine Carrow, University of Minnesota—Duluth

Rep - Kristi Colbenson, Mayo Medical School

Alt. Rep – Jennifer Sauter, University of Minnesota—Duluth

Ethics and Medical-Legal Affairs

Rep - Brian Sauer, Mayo Medical School

Alt. Rep - Elizabeth Vogel, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Legislation

Rep - Nathan Woltman, Mayo Medical School

Alt. Rep – Rebekah Heckmann, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Medical Practice and Planning

Rep - Kevin Christensen, Mayo Medical School

Alt. Rep. – Christopher Janish, Mayo Medical School

Minority and Cross-Cultural Affairs

Rep - Sarah Joslin, Mayo Medical School

Alt. Rep.- Natalie Hedberg, Mayo Medical School

Public Health and Preventive Medicine

Rep – Anne Stowman, University of Minnesota – Duluth

Alt. Rep – Carolyn Bramante, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities

Quality Health Care

Rep - Nicole Beatty, Mayo Medical School

Alt. Rep. – Peter Ragusa, University of Minnesota