

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Resilience During a Pandemic

Robert C. DeLuca, DO, MBA, FACOFP *dist.*

2019 - 2020 ACOFP President

These past two months have been challenging for people all over the world. As health care providers, we have not had the privilege to stay at home to avoid exposure. While we have worked to have our patients reduce their contact and have recommended the cancelling of local events including church services, meetings and dining in at restaurants, many of us have had to continue to see patients, attend to emergency rooms and care for those in hospitals and nursing homes. As family physicians we have made ourselves available by phone, online and, at times, in person. Our first duty has been to our communities and our patients.

ACOFP has worked to keep you updated not only with information concerning public safety and control measures, but also with information on billing, coding and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services rule changes that will assist physicians with managing their offices.

In the beginning of March, ACOFP had some very difficult decisions to make. At first, the Board of Governors felt that it might still be possible to continue plans to have our annual convention in New Orleans. At that time, the cases were localized to only a very small area of the country. We continued to monitor the progression and within a few days, the ACOFP board voted to cancel the convention.

We recognized that many physicians would have been unable to attend. Many worked for a college of osteopathic medicine or a large health care system that was already beginning to limit travel. The most important reason to cancel was that physicians were going to be needed in their own communities, and the risk of contracting the illness would remove them from the medical workforce.

While we understand the financial liability that this cancellation could have placed on ACOFP, we felt confident in the decision, particularly when within the next week cases of COVID-19 spiked in New Orleans. We were also fortunate enough to have had our staff add a communicable disease rider to our event insurance, which gave us an extra layer of protection. As the events unfolded, the conference headquarters hotel and the A/V company accepted the terms of our cancellation, waiving us of contractual liability.

The ACOFP board and staff quickly decided to move to a virtual platform for both the Faculty Development/Program Directors Workshop and the main session programming. Dr. Nicole Bixler had already developed a plan to launch the Task Force on Convention

Innovation at ACOFP '20. Little did we know that circumstances would make this a reality before the task force could meet.

Under the direction of ACOFP Executive Director Bob Moore and Director of Knowledge, Learning and Assessment Steve Legault, ACOFP had five days to launch this plan. The staff was able to notify the registrants, provide options including the virtual convention, arrange for the speakers to be online, adapt the Zoom platform and find a suitable location from which to have unimpeded online access. As such, both the FD/PD Workshop and four days of CME went off perfectly. In fact, the live lectures had better daily attendance than the in-person events historically. Even Sunday's programming featured over 500 attendees at each lecture. The speakers did a fabulous job.

I would especially like to thank the Program Committee led by Joel Feder, DO, FACOFP *dist.*; Convention Education Program Chair Bernadette Riley, DO, FACOFP and Convention Education Program Vice-Chair Matthew Told, DO; as well as the FD/PD Committee led by Rob Danoff, DO, MS, FACOFP, FAAFP. Your leadership and commitment were instrumental in this ground-breaking endeavor.

The ACOFP Board of Governors wishes to thank the staff and volunteers for the amazing job they did to move our educational programs forward. We are going to review all the comments from attendees to build on this year's success. While we all missed the in-person comradery and fellowship (as well as the hugs), this virtual platform will certainly find its way into future educational endeavors.

The ACOFP Board also had to consider the other components of the meeting, including the Congress of Delegates. ACOFP Congress of Delegates Speaker Elizabeth Palmarozzi, DO, FACOFP, and Vice Speaker Antonio Tsompanidis, DO, FACOFP, worked on contingency plans for cancelling the convention. As part of their due diligence, ACOFP's legal counsel was consulted to learn what options existed. The attorney reviewed our bylaws and noted that there is a legal principle called "cy pres," which means when you can't do what you are required to do under your bylaws due to an emergency, you can do the next closest thing, such as an electronic vote.

The attorney suggested that the board make a motion clarifying important items of business that they request the speaker conduct

so that the board can continue the work of the organization. The board unanimously passed a motion asking the speaker to seek an electronic vote from Congress approving the 2020 budget. Secondly, they unanimously passed a motion asking the attorney to draft a temporarily bylaws amendment effectively staying the current board—with the exception of the student and resident governors who are graduating—until Congress next meets in person in March 2021. Additional information on this was sent to the membership on March 24. In summary, the board felt that the extreme circumstances we face as a country and organization requires consistency in leadership. The Congress of Delegates has until April 30, 2020 to cast their votes.

The ACOFP Board would like to thank all the members who have worked in their offices and communities during the COVID-19 crisis as a vital part of patient care. We also want to thank you for the support of the ACOFP '20 Virtual convention. We hope you all remain healthy and safe during this pandemic.

Osteopathically yours,



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 17 - 19, 2020

Direct Primary Care Summit
Kansas City, Missouri
www.dpc.org

JULY 29 - AUGUST 2, 2020

ACOFPCA 44th Annual Seminar & Convention
Anaheim, California
www.acofpca.org

JULY 30 - AUGUST 2, 2020

Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians
Traverse City, Michigan
www.maofp.org

AUGUST 7 - 9, 2020

POFPS Annual CME Symposium
Hershey, Pennsylvania
www.poma.org

AUGUST 13 - 16, 2020

North Carolina Society of the ACOFP
Pinehurst, North Carolina
www.nc-acofp.org

OCTOBER 16 - 19, 2020

OMED 2020
Austin, Texas
www.osteopathic.org

DECEMBER 4 - 6, 2020

Indiana Osteopathic Association
Indianapolis, Indiana
www.inostep.org

CME Resource: Osteopathic Family Physician Offers 2 Hours of 1-B CME

ACOFP members who read *Osteopathic Family Physician* can receive two hours of Category 1-B continuing medical education credit for completing quizzes in the journal. Visit the eLearning Center at www.acofp.org to access the quizzes.