

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 210
(A-07)

Introduced by: Georgia Delegation
Subject: Taking Back the Profession of Medicine
Referred to: Reference Committee B
(Charles Logan, MD, Chair)

1 Whereas, The President of our American Medical Association, William G. Plested III, MD,
2 delivered a compelling speech to the House of Delegates at its 2006 Interim Meeting pointing
3 out that the profession of medicine is a learned profession; and
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5 Whereas, The physicians of America have suffered a systematic erosion of the prerogatives that
6 make medicine a learned profession; and
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8 Whereas, The President of our AMA, in his remarks to the at the 2006 Interim Meeting,
9 challenged America's physicians to set their sights squarely on our profession and make a
10 commitment to returning the prerogatives of the learned profession of medicine by making the
11 following pledge:
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13 *As of November 12th 2006, the House of Delegates of our American Medical*
14 *Association pledges that in every one of its many endeavors, our positions will be driven*
15 *by an unshakeable and uncompromising commitment to return the rightful prerogatives*
16 *of the profession to the Physicians of America; and*
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18 Whereas, One manner in which third party payers are eroding the prerogatives of the profession
19 of medicine is by rating physicians through the use of "performance measures" that purport to,
20 but in fact do not, measure "quality of care"; and
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22 Whereas, Well respected professional journals, including the *Journal of the American Medical*
23 *Association*, have published peer reviewed articles pointing out that current "performance
24 measures" used by third party payers have serious limitations, including but not limited to the
25 inappropriate conversion of "practice guidelines" intended to offer guidance as to how to care
26 for patients into performance measures that are not, by themselves, standards of quality care;
27 and
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29 Whereas, The public and our patients may suffer the unintended consequences of flawed pay-
30 for-performance mechanisms including the creation of financial incentives to avoid treating
31 elderly or sicker populations; and
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33 Whereas, Flawed pay-for-performance mechanisms undermine the moral and professional
34 value of altruism that is already threatened by the increasing commercialization of medicine;
35 and
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37 Whereas, The publication of the rankings of physicians that are based on faulty "performance
38 measures" can inappropriately portray individual members of the profession in a negative light,

1 demean their reputation in the community and further erode the prerogatives of the learned
2 profession of medicine; and
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4 Whereas, AMA President William G. Plested, III, MD, should be commended for the vision
5 presented in his remarks to the House of Delegates at the 2006 Interim Meeting; now therefore
6 be it
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8 RESOLVED, that our American Medical Association formally accept and affirm AMA President
9 Plested's pledge that in every one of our many endeavors, our positions will be driven by an
10 unshakeable and uncompromising commitment to return the rightful prerogatives of the
11 profession to the physicians of America (Directive to Take Action); and be it further:
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13 RESOLVED, That our AMA strongly oppose the use of any system by any public or private third
14 party payer that purports to rank members of the profession, place physicians into tiers or
15 institute payment mechanisms that are based on "performance measures" that are not clinically
16 sound or are based on data that are incomplete or not statistically significant (New HOD Policy);
17 and be it further
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19 RESOLVED, That our AMA oppose any further federal "pay-for-performance" projects until the
20 data obtained from the July through December 2007 federal experimental incentive has been
21 thoroughly analyzed by our AMA. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Implement accordingly at estimated staff cost of \$4,580.

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