

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **American Osteopathic Association Supports Transparency in Medical Costs**

**(CHICAGO)** — Being hospitalized for a medical procedure can be a stressful event but for many patients the financial burden of unexpected costs associated with care can add undue stress. To better educate patients, the American Osteopathic Association’s House of Delegates approved a policy advocating hospitals and other sites of medical services to provide patients in advance of scheduled procedures an estimate of all costs involved in their care, such as laboratory fees and medications, and whether it is covered by their insurance.

“Patients should be focusing on their recovery after a medical procedure, not worrying how to pay for costs not disclosed prior to treatment,” says Cleanne Cass, DO, a board-certified family physician in Dayton, Ohio. “Hospitals and other sites of medical services should supply patients with an estimate of all costs associated with their procedure so they are prepared to cover their medical expenses.”

The policy calls for full disclosure of all costs patients will incur as a result of a procedure, including ancillary costs such as imaging, laboratory, medications and services provided by professionals other than the physician providing their health care.

#### **What is a DO?**

DOs are licensed physicians who can prescribe medication and practice in all specialty areas, including surgery, in the United States. They complete approximately four years of medical school followed by graduate medical education through internship and residency programs typically lasting three to eight years. In addition, DOs receive extra training in the musculoskeletal system, providing them with an in-depth knowledge of the ways that illness or injury in one part of the body can affect another. As one of the fastest-growing segments of health care professionals in the nation, the number of DOs has grown more than 200% during the past 25 years.

#### **About the House of Delegates**

The AOA’s House of Delegates, comprised of more than 500 delegates representing osteopathic state medical associations, specialty societies, interns, residents and students from throughout the country, meets annually in July to set organizational policies and elect new officers.

#### **About the American Osteopathic Association**

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) proudly represents its professional family of more than 104,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students; promotes public health; encourages scientific research; serves as the primary certifying body for DOs; is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools; and has federal authority to accredit hospitals and other health care facilities. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at [www.osteopathic.org](http://www.osteopathic.org).

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