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GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
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Your monthly GOMA news & update

Welcome to GOMA's monthly newsletter where you can stay up-to-date on the latest osteopathic news and happenings in the GOMA community.

SAVE-THE -DATE!



GOMA's Annual Fall CME Meeting Dates Announced

GOMA's CME Planning Committee is excited to announce the dates for the Annual Fall CME Meeting. As practicing physicians with their fingers on the pulse of the coronavirus Delta variant situation, they discussed the pros and cons of an in-person meeting.

In 2020, GOMA offered its Fall Meeting in a virtual format for the first time and in April 2021, partnered with other osteopathic state societies to bring you the Virtual Osteopathic Conference (VOC). Both were well received and considered successful for bringing the high quality CME members expect from GOMA.

For this Fall, the committee ultimately decided to again offer 14 hours of CME in a virtual format to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of all. Since this decision, they have been working hard to develop an exceptional program with compelling speakers and fresh topics that will appeal to a broad DO audience.

Registration will be opened and the CME program posted to the GOMA [website](#) by September 8. Keep an eye out on social media for messages and promotion in your email

inboxes so that you can register to participate.

Once again you will have the opportunity to participate, to the extent desired, in the live CME event and up to 30 days beyond November 13 to view any of the sessions you missed live. This flexibility and ability to earn AOA Category 1-A CME credits at the time(s) convenient for you is greatly valued by members and nonmembers alike.

GOMA is eager to offer you a great CME opportunity and looks forward to your participation!



Did you know? GOMA has a new digital home!

GOMA houses its CME on The CME Center (formerly DOcme). it becomes a living resource. GOMA thanks its partner for making CME available to our Georgia DOs!

A 'Prick'ly Issue

Employer Vaccine Mandates



It has made national news that a significant percentage of healthcare workers teachers, firefighters and other essential workers do not intend to get the COVID-19 vaccine. In the near future, many of them will be required to get vaccinated by their employers otherwise they will be barred from their workplace.

Questions about the legality of these mandates have been discussed. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), the agency that enforces laws against workplace discrimination, confirmed what employment lawyers expected in December 2020. While requiring employees be tested for the coronavirus touches on thorny medical and privacy issues covered by the Americans With Disability Act of 1990, the administration of COVID-19 vaccine to a worker by an employer doesn't fit those definitions, the commission said. "If a vaccine is administered to an employee by an employer for protection against contracting COVID-19, the employer is not seeking information about an individual's impairments or current health status," it stated, "an therefore, it is not a medical examination."

On its [website](#), the commission said that requiring an employee to show proof of having gotten a COVID-19 vaccinations would not amount to a disability-related inquiry.

Business leaders are uniquely positioned to tell employees that they may only return to the workplace if they get vaccinated. There's a persuasive argument that a vaccination mandate could be considered that a workplace benefits if employees knew that everyone around them is vaccinated, they would feel more comfortable working there.

In 1905, the Supreme Court ruled against a pastor, Henning Jacobson, who had sued the State of Massachusetts for requiring residents to take a vaccine after an outbreak of Smallpox. "Real liberty for all could not exist under the operation of a principle which recognizes the right of each individual person to use his own, whether in respect of his person or his property, regardless of the injury that may be done to others," the Court ruled. "It is, then, liberty regulated by law."

That ruling, and others after it have repeatedly reaffirmed this principle. As for private businesses, they can choose to hire, fire and transact with anyone, unless discrimination is based on a protected category.

Federal Nursing Home Vaccine Mandates



The reasoning is clear: Medical workers should be protected from passing the virus to the most vulnerable Americans – particularly as the Delta variant refuels the pandemic. The Biden Administration announced in mid-August that it will develop rules requiring nursing homes to mandate that all of their workers be vaccinated as a condition for those facilities to receive federal funds. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which is developing the new regulations, will enforce them with the threat of withholding Medicare and Medicaid dollars. Larry Levitt, senior vice president at the Kaiser Family Foundation, noted it's not the first time the government has taken this tactic. In a tweet on August 18, 2021, he stated, "The threat to withhold Medicare funding more than half a century ago forced America's hospitals to end racial segregation."

The fear is that healthcare workers – whose vaccine hesitancy rates are similar to those among the general public – might choose to leave their jobs rather than get the shots. And that could intensify personnel shortages that are already a problem across the country. Only 62 percent of nursing home staff were vaccinated.

Medscape Medical News found 1 in 4 hospital workers who have direct patient contact hadn't received a single coronavirus vaccine dose by the end of May, when it analyzed government data from 2500 hospitals around the country.

About one-third of hospitals have announced mandatory vaccination policies for their workers so far according to a spokesperson of the American Hospital Association. A similar U.S. Government vaccine mandated could be on the way for hospitals.

Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act Passed U.S. Senate



During the first week of August, the U.S. Senate passed the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act, a bipartisan bill developed to address the high rates of burnout among health care professionals and the high suicide rate among doctors.

Advocacy from the osteopathic medical profession on DO Day 2021 as well as ongoing online grassroots partnering with the Osteopathic Advocacy Network (OAN) helped contribute to the Lorna Breen Act's success in the Senate.

If enacted, the Lorna Breen Act would authorize grants for mental and behavioral health treatment for health care professionals as well as education and training on strategies to reduce and prevent burnout, suicide and mental health conditions.

This bill moves to the U.S. House in mid-September. If you value the mental health of your friends and co-workers, contact your U.S. Representative and express support for the Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act. Read more [here](#).

Going "Viral" on Social Media

GOMA Facebook Advertisement to Promote COVID-19 Vaccinations

Osteopathic physicians, residents and medical students are using social media to emphasize the importance of the COVID vaccine.

On July 23, GOMA initiated an advertising campaign via Facebook to Georgia citizens between the ages of 18 and 64 years old.

It stressed the surge of Delta variant, and the fact that COVID vaccinations help protect patients from dying or serious illness.

This ad campaign reached 38,265 people with 1,925 clicking on the video to learn more. GOMA is one of the few medical organizations that is reaching out to the general public to try to make an impact on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks for being a member of GOMA. Together, we can make a difference!

Misinformation

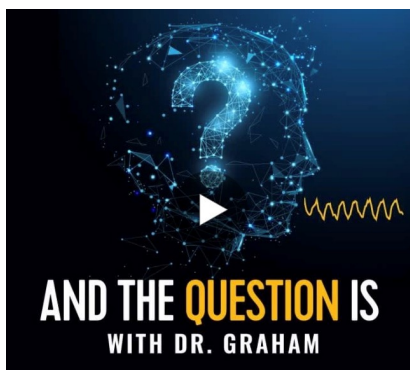
Physicians who intentionally spread misinformation or disinformation about the COVID-19 vaccines could be disciplined by state medical boards and may have their licenses suspended or taken away, said the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB).

Due “to a dramatic increase in the dissemination of COVID-19 vaccine misinformation and disinformation by physicians and other health care professionals on social media platforms, online and in the media,” said a FSMB spokesperson.

The American Osteopathic Association supports the FSMB statement warning of disciplinary action for physicians who generate and/or spread vaccine misinformation.

Have You Heard?

And the Question Is...



Antonio Graham, DO has started a new Podcast series entitled “And the Question Is . . . with Dr. Graham”. Dr. Graham is a professor of Internal Medicine and Geriatrics at Emory University who has presented lectures to GOMA on geriatric subjects multiple times. This lifestyle podcast series has a focus on everyday questions such as aging successfully, racial injustice, popular culture and multicultural perspectives in American life.

Dr Alberto Joins Faculty of PCOM South Georgia

Gino Alberto, DO, MPH is a Professor of Emergency Medicine with experiences ranging from practicing medicine in the Navy to emergency rooms in New York City during the COVID-19 pandemic. He has joined the faculty of PCOM South Georgia in Moultrie, Georgia. Read more about Dr. Alberto [here](#).

Dr. Nicole Redenius Awarded for Surgery Presentation

Nicole “Niki” Redenius, DO is a third year general surgery resident at Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville, Georgia. She is a graduate of Edward Via



College of Osteopathic Medicine in Auburn, Alabama. On August 15, 2021, Chad M. Copper, MD, FACS and Dr. Redenius, DO made a presentation at the Georgia Society of the American College of Surgeons annual meeting at St. Simons Island, Georgia. It was entitled: "Robotic Parastomal Hernia Repair: A five year retrospective single institution series". They received a second place award for the presentation.

Monica Borza, DO and Blue Angels are Scheduled to Fly in Georgia October 30-31.



Monica Borza, DO, a native of Virginia Beach, Virginia, was announced as one of the officers selected for the Blue Angels 2021 air show season approximately one year ago. She replaced another osteopathic physician Aaron B. Hicks, DO who had served as the flight surgeon the previous flight season.

"The Blue Angels is the best platform in the military for boosting patriotism and inspiring future service members," said Dr. Borza. "This extraordinary team represents the sailors and marines who are working hard every day to protect our country. To represent my fellow service members would be a terrific gift and honor." Dr. Borza is a 2008 Catholic High School graduate and a 2012 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University graduate. In 2016, she graduated with a D.O. degree from the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia, and proceeded directly to an Naval internship. She is currently serves as a Lieutenant in the Navy

Many highly qualified Navy and Marine Corps officers submit applications to join the Blue Angels each year. "This year offered an exemplary group of applicants from around the fleet, making our selection process very difficult," said Cmdr. Brian Kesselring, commanding officer and flight leader of the Blue Angels. "With these fantastic new additions to the Blue Angels team for 2021, we are all well equipped to head into our historic 75th show season." The Blue Angels selected finalists to interview via video

conference call in order to follow all Department of Defense policy and CDC social distancing guidelines.

Dr. Borza was selected as the Flight Surgeon and is currently a flight surgeon assigned to the “Black Knights” of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314. “As a Flight Surgeon, your job is to keep the aviators healthy and flying,” said Dr. Borza. “Fighter pilots today have to be in peak athletic physical form to fly a high-performance jet. My favorite part of the job is when I get to go up and fly in the jet with them!”

The mission of the Blue Angels is to showcase the precision and professionalism of the United States Navy and Marine Corps by inspiring a culture of excellence and service to country through flight demonstrations and community outreach.

See an interview of Dr. Borza last year by clicking [here](#).

The Blue Angels will be flying out of Rome, Georgia at the Russel Regional Airport on the weekend of October 30 & 31 providing a great airshow for the whole family.

Tickets can be purchased at [Wings Over North Georgia](#).

Sharing

“Kind words, kind looks, kind acts, and warm handshakes – these are means of grace when men in trouble are fighting their unseen battles.” – John Hall

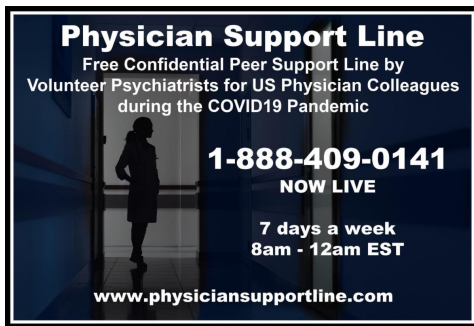


Support GOMA!

*Helping your professional society,
and the osteopathic community weather these
uncertain times.*

CLICK HERE to: Renew or Join GOMA!

Mona Masood, DO is a general adult psychiatrist in the greater Philadelphia area is the founder and chief organizer of the Physician Support Line. , a free



confidential peer support line by volunteer psychiatrists was started. It is supported 8 AM to Midnight seven days a week.

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