

POMA



PENNSYLVANIA
OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION

717-939-9318
In Pa. 1-800-544-POMA
Fax 717-939-7255
e-mail poma@poma.org

October 18, 2019

State Board Osteopathic Medicine
PA Department of State
Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs
PO Box 2649
Harrisburg, PA 17105

RE: Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Family Medicine Residency Program

Dear Dr. Litman:

The Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association (POMA) has received multiple comments concerning a letter that was email to fourth-year osteopathic medical students from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the above referenced family medicine residency program. The letter states, in part, that:

"Our understanding is that presently in Pennsylvania, if a graduate of an osteopathic medical school does all three years of family medicine residency training in an allopathic/ACGME program (like ours) in Pennsylvania, that resident is not then allowed to practice in the state of Pennsylvania after residency."

The letter further states:

"There is a very important 'loophole' you should know about -- the possibility of applying and obtaining a waiver to the rule. We have heard that such are approved about 60% of the time.

An alternative is that the resident can do one transitional year in an osteopathic program and may then do three years of an ACGME residency, after which they would be permitted to practice in Pennsylvania.

Again, we share this with you for the sake of full disclosure and to help you in your residency search and hope that you will consult your mentors and advisors for a more complete explanation. We look forward to meeting you on your interview day!"

As you might guess, POMA, the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and osteopathic physicians working with osteopathic medical students are very concerned. The correspondence leads one to believe that applying for a waiver is a waste of time since it is rarely granted. We are aware that the SBOM has been working to remove barriers to practice which the rotating internship has become, especially considering the June 30, 2020 deadline for the single accreditation system under the ACGME to occur.

POMA has become involved because there continues to be confusion regarding the relationship the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine (SBOM) and POMA. We have been Implored to "fix" the issue, and clearly a fix is beyond our control. We are reaching out to the board to request four things:

1. Clarification on the statement made that indicates that osteopathic medical students in an allopathic residency programs are not permitted to practice in Pennsylvania. We believe this to be a misinterpretation of the facts.
2. Clarification on the percentage of waivers granted in the past two years. The 60% waiver figure comes from an article published in April 2011 in the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association*. POMA believes the waivers granted are much higher than stated eight years ago.
3. Request the AAMC send a notification out to the same osteopathic students who received this notice from Penn State with the clarification regarding licensure and the percentage of waivers granted.
4. Implement a solution to the issue before the consolidation of post graduate osteopathic medical education on June 30, 2020. Without a permanent solution, Pennsylvania will send a clear message that osteopathic physicians are not welcome in the Commonwealth which will have a significant negative impact for patients seeking the care osteopathic physicians provide.

Thank you for your consideration.



Pamela S.N. Goldman, DO
President, POMA