

Ontario Medical Students Association

Health and Political Advocacy Values Statement

Effective date: September 30th, 2017

Review date: As needed

The Ontario Medical Students Association (OMSA) represents Ontario's over 4000 medical students, and is entrusted with acting and speaking as a recognized authority on their behalf. Part of our mandate is to represent medical students on issues of emerging importance to the health and well-being of Ontarians.

OMSA has been increasingly called on to express its support of campaigns and initiatives that seek to protect the wellbeing of medical students and patients. Consequently, OMSA created the Health and Political Advocacy Values Statement to enable the organization to respond in a timely and transparent manner. It was distributed for review by each Ontario Medical Student Society prior to being adopted by OMSA Council. This statement **defines the values and principles of the health system that OMSA firmly supports and will strive to uphold. This commitment will be reflected in OMSA press releases, position papers, communications, and initiatives.**

Medical students

With the understanding that medical school can be a challenging physical, mental, intellectual and emotional experience, we are committed to supporting our membership by advocating for:

1. Undergraduate medical education that is comprised of high quality, current evidence-based practices that reflect the principles of social justice and patient safety;
2. Support for students requiring accommodations and that no opportunity is limited by the student's specific abilities;
3. Availability of adequate resources to support medical students' wellbeing, including their mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health, until transition into a residency program or the alternate career of their choosing;
4. An evidence-based provincial health human resources strategy that ensures appropriate allocation of undergraduate and postgraduate medical positions relative to the needs of the Ontario health system.

Patients

OMSA is committed to learning safe, culturally-competent healthcare practices to prioritize patient-centered care.

In recognition of health as a reflection of individual physical, social, mental, and environmental health, OMSA is dedicated to ensuring that all of our future patients experience to the fullest extent possible the prerequisites for health, as laid out by the World Health Organization in The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion.

OMSA supports patient access to:

1. **Peace**, defined as sociopolitical and physical environments that are safe and health-promoting;
2. **Shelter**, defined as safe, affordable accommodations;
3. **Education**, that is of high quality and accessible from early childhood through to adulthood;
4. **Food**, defined as access to healthy, affordable food options regardless of area of residence or socioeconomic status;
5. **Income**, defined as a livable wage relative to the cost of living in Ontario;

6. **A stable ecosystem and sustainable resources**, defined as the judicious use of natural resources with an intent to maintain their quality and availability to future generations; and
7. **Social justice and equity**, defined as a society that is free of discrimination and that tolerates and promotes principles of diversity in all personal, professional, social and educational environments.

Health system

OMSA affirms a commitment to the values set out in the Canada Health Act, such that a healthcare system should ensure:

1. **Universality**, in that public health insurance coverage should be provided to all those residing in the province of Ontario without discrimination;
2. **Comprehensiveness**, in that all medically necessary procedures be insured;
3. **Accessibility**, in that no financial, geographic, or physical barriers may exist that impede reasonable or timely access to medically necessary services;
4. **Public administration**, in that health insurance must be financed by a public, not-for-profit authority; and
5. **Portability**, in that health coverage not be denied of the insured who travel within or outside of Canada and that quality of care not be diminished regardless of location of receipt.

OMSA will support initiatives that are in accordance with its stated values and principles, at the discretion of the active OMSA Council.

The support may be demonstrated through: written or verbal statement; signature, sponsorship, hosting, or participation. OMSA may withhold its support should support be deemed not appropriate for, outside the scope of, or otherwise not in alignment with, the OMSA Health and Political Advocacy Values Statement.

Signed this **September 30th, 2017**, to remain in effect indefinitely and until any subsequent Council or Executive formally proposes to revisit or revise these terms.