

SOMA Public Relations 2011-2012
Key Osteopathic Messages

“What is a DO?”

1. DOs, or osteopathic physicians, (we) are fully licensed physicians who can prescribe medication and practice in all specialty areas including surgery. DOs (we) are trained to consider the health of the whole person and use their (our) hands to help diagnose and treat patients.
2. DOs (we) also have additional training that focuses on the body’s structure and function, and its ability to help heal itself.
3. Osteopathic medicine is one of the nation’s fastest growing health care professions. By the year 2020, it is estimated that at least 100,000 DOs will be in active medical practice.

Depending on the amount of time allowed for an interview or speech, you can use these supporting messages to expand on each key point.

1. **DOs (we) are fully licensed physicians who can prescribe medication and practice in all specialty areas including surgery. DOs (we) are trained to consider the health of the whole person and use their (our) hands to help diagnose and treat patients.**
 - a. Just like MDs, DOs must attend four years of medical school, and complete an internship and residency program. DOs take state board exams and are licensed by the state.
 - b. Other than MDs, DOs are the only other group of physicians in the United States licensed to perform surgery and prescribe medication.
 - c. Like MDs, DOs are complete physicians. That means the medical care DOs (we) provide includes performing surgery, delivering babies, and prescribing medication.
 - d. The DO philosophy of patient care focuses on the whole person, not just a specific illness or injury. This distinct approach has been the foundation of our medical education for more than 130 years.
 - e. The philosophy of patient-focused care allows DOs to provide comprehensive health care, while making the patient feel well cared for.

- 2. DOs (we) also have additional training focusing on the body's structure and function, and how their interrelationship strengthens the body's ability to help heal itself.**
 - a. DOs (we) believe all parts of the body are interrelated and a problem in one system might impact the function elsewhere in the body.
 - b. DOs (we) combine our philosophy of treating the root of the problem with an understanding of the body's ability to help heal itself.
 - c. This distinct group of physicians emphasizes prevention and wellness.
 - d. Some DOs also practice Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment or OMT. This is a technique in which DOs use their hands to help diagnose and treat an injury or illness. It is a non-invasive therapy that can be used with or sometimes in place of medication or surgery. OMT helps treat structural abnormalities allowing the physician to relieve joint restrictions and misalignments. Unlike massage therapy, OMT is a deeper technique that addresses musculoskeletal problems. It is an added expertise that DOs can offer patients.

- 3. Osteopathic medicine is one of the nation's fastest growing health care professions. By the year 2020, it is estimated that at least 100,000 DOs will be in active medical practice.**
 - a. Currently, there are over 70,000 DOs practicing within the United States. This number is on the rise as more than 18,000 students are currently enrolled in colleges of osteopathic medicine nationwide.
 - b. In recent years, more and more colleges of osteopathic medicine have opened to fill the demands of students who want to study osteopathic medicine. Right now, the AOA accredits 26 colleges of osteopathic medicine at 34 locations across the country.
 - c. DOs provide a distinctive field of medicine that fills peoples' demand for patient-focused care.