

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
POLICY

Subject: Use of the Term “Health Care Provider”

Document Number: PS-170-0

Attachment: Attachment A: AMA Policy, H-405.968 Clarification of the Term "Provider" in Advertising, Contracts and Other Communications

Effective Date: May 29, 2026

Revision Date(s): NA

POLICY STATEMENT

The South Dakota State Medical Association (SDSMA) affirms the American Medical Association (AMA) position on clarification of the term “provider” in advertising, contracts, and other communications.

The SDSMA shall also:

1. Encourage health care entities to cease using the term "health care provider" in their communications;
2. Promulgate through the journal of the SDSMA the negative consequences of the use of the term "health care provider;" and
3. Educate all physicians on the negative consequences of the use of the term, “health care provider,” and refuse to be referred to as such.

AUTHORITY

South Dakota State Medical Association Policy Council, 5/29/2026; Affirmed by South Dakota State Medical Association Board of Directors 5/29/2026.

American Medical Association (Sub. Res. 712, I-94 Reaffirmed: Res. 226, I-98 Reaffirmation I-99 Res. 605, A-09 Reaffirmed: CLRPD Rep. 1, A-09 Modified: Speakers Rep., A-15 Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 09, A-19 Reaffirmed: Res. 260, A-23)

Attachment A:

H-405.968 Clarification of the Term "Provider" in Advertising, Contracts and Other Communications

1. Our American Medical Association supports requiring that health care entities, when using the term "provider" in contracts, advertising and other communications, specify the type of provider being referred to by using the provider's recognized title which details education, training, license status and other recognized qualifications; and supports this concept in state and federal health system reform.

2. Our AMA:

1. considers the generic terms "health care providers" or "providers" as inadequate to describe the extensive education and qualifications of physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches.
2. will institute an editorial policy prohibiting the use of the term "provider" in lieu of "physician" or other health professionals for all AMA publications not otherwise covered by the existing JAMA Editorial Governance Plan, which protects editorial independence of the Editor in Chief of JAMA and The JAMA Network journals.
3. will forward to the editorial board of JAMA the recommendation that the term "physician" be used in lieu of "provider" when referring to MDs and DOs.

Sub. Res. 712, I-94 Reaffirmed: Res. 226, I-98 Reaffirmation I-99 Res. 605, A-09 Reaffirmed: CLRPD Rep. 1, A-09 Modified: Speakers Rep., A-15 Reaffirmed: BOT Rep. 09, A-19 Reaffirmed: Res. 260, A-23