



Acupuncture Poll

Editorial Staff

The Acupuncture Poll's question for April 2004 was:

"Do you think the national associations do a good job of representing and/or supporting the profession's interests on a national level?"

Results are as follows:



These results are based upon 376 responses. As this is a voluntary, non-scientific survey, caution should be used in generalizing the results. Below is a sample of the comments made by those who took the survey and how they voted. Some comments have been edited for clarity and brevity.

Yes: Until we all know where the profession needs to go in 10, 15 or even 20 years, we will be constantly engaging in disputes over everything from scope of practice to educational requirements. The national organizations are apparently establishing a "visioning process" for the profession to set the stage for resolving our disputes, and moving the profession forward. The national organizations should be applauded for their work in this area.

Yes: In general, the national organizations have been working effectively as of late. In particular, they have been coordinating advocacy efforts at the state level when chiropractors, naturopathic doctors, etc., have attempted to include acupuncture in their scopes of practice based on bogus standards of training. This has been very effective in states like New York (podiatrists), Washington, D.C. (naturopaths), etc. Keep up the good work.

No: Too much energy is spent on staving off chiropractors, naturopaths (and) the AMA, and not enough spent getting acupuncture by a licensed acupuncturist covered. Until such time, all the other medical professions will continue to try and sometimes succeed in absorbing our healing modalities into their practices and where will we be? Left in the dust. Licensed acupuncturists will leave the profession if they have don't have a means of supporting themselves.

... On another note, if you want more from your national or state associations or boards, you had better support them financially, legislatively, and become active. It always seems to rest on the shoulders of the few to do the work of the many, and it is the many that don't ever lift a finger to help but are always ready to complain.

Yes: The national organizations have finally gotten their acts together to promote the interests of the profession. The AAOM, in particular, has been extremely effective as of late. (The AAOM president's meeting with Tommy Thomson on the ephedra issue, which was instrumental in getting an "exemption" from the ephedra ban for the OM profession, is a clear example.)

No: Mr. Bauer's letter ... makes a plea for organizations to get together to work out issues in California which were put before the Little Hoover Commission. It is clear that summit meetings between leaders of disagreeing parties should be made a priority on the national level, too. National organizations have made attempts to reconnect via the visioning task force, but this reader's opinion is that little has been accomplished. What has become clear from all the visioning is that there exists no defining consensus of "our profession's interests on a national level." It is time for our national organizations to stop "attempting" and actually "do."

We have done a lot of disagreeing. There have been countless letters back and forth. The profession is confused and turned off by this lack of solid leadership. Division is the rule of the day. The first priority should be to create awareness and unity. Every conference should have significant resources put toward getting solutions to the forefront. These problems must be addressed by the national organizations, with clear objectives being stated and reached within the year. We need progress.

Yes: After years of unproductive fighting, the national organizations have over the past few years finally gotten together in promoting the interest of the profession at the national level. The effective work on the ephedra issue, and seeking to develop a process for establishing a national vision for the profession are clear examples. It's about time!

For more information on the Acupuncture Poll, contact *Acupuncture Today* at editorial@acupuncturetoday.com.

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