



YOUR PRACTICE / BUSINESS

Professional Organization Membership and You

AAAOM Staff

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I was recently named chair of the American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AAAOM) Membership Committee. I know why I joined the AAAOM and my state association, but I want to know why you have or have not joined yours. If you are not a member, what can we do to show that membership and participation in your national professional organization is a value and a benefit to you? Please go to www.surveymonkey.com/s/3KF8G97 to complete a short survey form.

As a student, I joined both my state association and the AAAOM and continued my membership as a professional practitioner because I want to ensure that the medicine I love, and spent so much time and money learning, would have a secure future for generations to come. There are many issues confronting this growing profession, and it is the number one role of these professional organizations to advocate and promote for our rights and scope of practice on our behalf. The AAAOM works tirelessly at a national level and assists the state organizations to represent our needs and achieve our overall goals. Why else did I join?

Patient referrals: I want to make sure that my name is in every place a patient might look to find a practitioner. The public can easily find practitioner information for their area via the AAAOM Web site at www.aaaomonline.org. Also as a AAAOM member, my name and contact information is listed on www.acufinder.com.

Research: High-quality research is our ally for communicating and creating credibility with other health professionals and patients. It also can provide answers for direct patient care. AAAOM members have access to the latest research via the Members Only section of the Web site.

Business resources: As a new practitioner, it is important to know the options for suppliers of

quality products, and to receive any discounts offered by these companies. The AAAOM provides this benefit for its members. Additionally, coming soon, there will be templates for forms, lists and how-to's of practice management to help you start or improve your practice.

Continuing education units: High-quality continuing education to strengthen and broaden practitioners' knowledge is a must, and it is required of practitioners. The national and state professional organizations are able to offer discounted CEU courses in person and on-line. An updated version of all state and national CEUs can be found on the AAAOM Web site and in the AAAOM's monthly publication, the *Qi Unity Report*.

Camaraderie and support: Many acupuncture and Oriental medicine clinicians practice by themselves and lose touch with other colleagues once they graduate and start practice. Conferences and forums provide a wonderful opportunity to network with other practitioners and to revive the passion that brought you into this medicine in the first place.

Volunteer opportunities: The practice of "giving back" is such an important part of society today. For me, it is very important to give back to and support the profession that I love. The AAAOM has many opportunities for members to donate their time on committees, task forces and at conferences, and we welcome your participation.

These are among the reasons I am a member of the AAAOM. What about you? I want to know what you want and expect from a national professional organization. I want to know what you think about the state of our profession. If you are already a member, thank you! Is there anything we can do to make your membership a better experience and/or value?

This is your professional organization, and we want to work for you. Through your feedback, the AAAOM can better serve the acupuncture and Oriental medicine profession.

Thank you for your support and membership.

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