



GENERAL ACUPUNCTURE

## Tracking the Burden of Debt: Why the AAAOM Survey Is So Important

Editorial Staff | DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE

There has been plenty of talk within the profession lately about education, employment rates and the burden of debt. Those discussions may be the impetus, at least in part, for the "Burden of Debt" [survey](#) being conducted by the American Association of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine (AAAOM). The AAAOM provided details of this survey in email correspondence with AT:

"The Burden of Debt survey, recently published by the American Association of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine, is part of a project that we at AAAOM had been putting together for some time now. Essentially, this project is looking for insight and, hopefully, solutions into better borrowing strategies and overall professional financial health. Recently we have had more and more members reaching out to us about their unique personal struggles regarding building their careers while trying to pay down student loans. In some cases, the loan debt is massive and seriously affecting the quality of life of that practitioner. Clearly we needed to find a way to respond, but with useful, real-world strategies.



"However, we need more data. In order to search for solutions, we need facts, variables, and quantifiable data, as opposed to anecdotal data from emails and hearsay. We needed to see:

1. How widespread this issue is in our profession.
2. Has it always been that way or is it a recent trend?
3. What types of loans and repayment plans students have chosen, and the impact of those particular interest rates [on] providers.

"This survey is just the first step in our research. We do not take this subject lightly, and want to give it as much due diligence as the weight of it deserves. The results of this survey should hopefully identify patterns in borrowing and repayment. Once these patterns are more fully explored, then we can start to look for better solutions for AOM graduates and professionals for their financial health. As always, we look forward to your input."

To take the AAAOM Burden of Debt survey, [click here](#).

AUGUST 2017