



## A Conversation With AAOS President David D. Teuscher, MD

Peter D. McCann, MD

For the past 9 years, I have interviewed the president of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) to better understand the roles the AAOS and its president play in our professional lives.

At the 2015 AAOS Annual Meeting in Las Vegas this past March, David D. Teuscher, MD, assumed leadership of the AAOS as its 83rd president. Dr. Teuscher is a partner and past president of the Beaumont Bone & Joint Institute in Beaumont, Texas, and has had a broad experience in leadership positions in both Texas medical professional societies and the AAOS. Dr. Teuscher obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana and his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical School at San Antonio. He completed his orthopedic residency at the Brooke Army Medical Center, in Fort Sam Houston, and, following 13 years of military service, he entered private practice in 1993.

He has led numerous AAOS committees over the years, most notably the team that in 2014 completed a revision of the AAOS Strategic Plan, "Vision 20/20," which outlines the Academy's goals over the next 6 years, including the following elements:

- AAOS Mission: Serving our profession to provide the highest-quality musculoskeletal care.
- AAOS Vision: Keeping the world in motion through the prevention and treatment of musculoskeletal conditions.
- Core Values: Excellence, Professionalism, Leadership, Collegiality, Lifelong Learning.
- Strategic Domains: Advocacy, Education, Membership, Organizational Excellence, Quality and Patient Value.

Read more at: <http://www.aaos.org/about/strategicplan.asp>.

Dr. Teuscher explained that his role as president for the coming year is really that of spokesperson for a leadership group that has developed a 4-year presidential line and governance structure to ensure a solid platform for continuity and to achieve the goals of the AAOS Strategic Plan year after year. While the

Academy president does not set his or her own agenda for the year, David has several priority goals during his tenure, which include ensuring that the rules governing the repeal and replacement of the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula treat our patients fairly, opening of the new digital and modular Orthopaedic Learning Center (OLC), preventing the harmful effects of unnecessary and premature ICD-10 (*International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision*) implementation, leading a cultural change in surgical patient safety, and advances in AAOS technology offerings in education and online lifelong learning.

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Dr. Teuscher stated that the repeal of the SGR formula this year was a major step forward for orthopedic surgeons. Averting a 21% reduction in physician reimbursement in 2015, the new legislation will increase physician payments by 0.5% annually through 2019, at which time the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will begin a new payment system, based not on the traditional fee-for-service model, but on a new incentive: the quality and value of care.<sup>1</sup> David firmly believes that the AAOS has a major role to assist the practicing orthopedic surgeon manage this new payment system by:

- establishing standards of performance and quality that will drive payment for medical services.
- helping the practicing orthopedic surgeon report useful quality outcomes in a simple and accessible format.
- linking these new reporting measures to satisfy Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirements.

Dr. McCann is Editor-in-Chief of this journal; Chair, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Beth Israel Medical Center; and Professor of Clinical Surgery, Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University, New York, New York.

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David is especially proud of the recently opened OLC. This cutting-edge facility, sponsored by the AAOS and its equity partners (Arthroscopy Association of North America, American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons, OLC), is clear evidence of the Academy's commitment to the highest quality of musculoskeletal care and lifelong learning for its members.

Dr. Teuscher is concerned that CMS may not be fully prepared for implementation of the new ICD-10 codes on October 1, 2015. In the spirit of advocacy for its members, the AAOS is actively engaged to recommend delay of ICD-10 implementation until reliable operating systems to process this new system can be ensured.

David and orthopedic patient safety experts are working with national perioperative stakeholders to plan and implement a National Surgical Patient Safety Summit in 2016. This will cause a cultural change in how we lead treatment teams to deliver a highly reliable and safe surgical experience for all our patients.

Finally, Dr. Teuscher is extremely excited about improvements in technology offered to Academy members. Many of us

enjoyed the new AAOS *My Academy* app available this year at the Las Vegas meeting that enabled review of the 2015 program on your smartphone. Dr. Teuscher anticipates that upgrades to the AAOS *Access* app will provide the most comprehensive mobile platform for continuing medical education and educational videos available to all Academy members. The AAOS website is undergoing a complete update and expansion of offerings by the end of this year.

Over the years of interviewing current presidents of the AAOS, I have been impressed by consistent characteristics of our leaders: enormously energetic, engaging, articulate, and tirelessly committed to the Academy and its members. David Teuscher processes all these qualities. We are very fortunate to have someone of David's organizational and leadership skills navigate our course through the turbulent health care waters that lie ahead of us in the coming years. ■

### Reference

1. Lowes R. Congress repeals Medicare SGR formula. Medscape website. <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/843078>. Published April 14, 2015. Accessed June 8, 2015.

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