

ARC Campaign: Truth in Advertising

In today's health care environment, patients are bombarded with advertisements and claims regarding different health care services that are provided by different health care professionals—by physicians and non-physicians. To learn more about patients' beliefs and expectations, the Scope of Practice Partnership ("SOP Partnership") – a cooperative effort of the American Medical Association (AMA), and other leading national specialty medical societies and state medical associations – commissioned a recent survey¹ that found patients are undeniably confused about who provides their medical care.

Patients must be able to rely on their health care practitioners, which is why the AMA believes that patients deserve to have increased clarity and transparency in health care. They deserve to know the training, education, licensure and qualifications of their health care practitioners. The AMA Truth in Advertising campaign is focused on providing that clarity for patients.

Is this person a medical doctor?	Yes	No	Not sure
Orthopedic Surgeon	94	3	3
Obstetrician/Gynecologist.	92	5	3
General or Family Practitioner	88	8	3
Dentist	77	20	3
Anesthesiologist	76	16	8
Psychiatrist	74	20	6
Ophthalmologist	69	14	17
Podiatrist	67	22	11
Optometrist	54	36	10
Psychologist	49	44	8
Chiropractor	38	53	9
Doctor of Nursing Practice	38	37	25
Audiologist	33	40	27
Otolaryngologist	32	13	55
Nurse Practitioner	29	63	7
Physical Therapist	26	68	6
Dental assistant	12	82	5
Midwife	11	82	7

¹ Global Strategy Group conducted a telephone survey on behalf of the SOP Partnership between August 13th and August 18th, 2008. The survey was conducted among 852 adults nationwide. The overall margin of error is +/- 3.4% at the 95% confidence level.

Should only a medical doctor be allowed to perform the following procedures; or should other health care professionals be allowed to perform this specific activity?	Only a medical doctor	Other health care professional	Don't know
Amputations of the foot?	93	5	2
Surgical procedures on the eye that require the use of a scalpel?	92	6	2
Facial surgery such as nose shaping and face lifts?	90	8	3
Treat chronic pain by prescribing drugs or other substances that have a high potential for abuse?	82	16	2
Write prescriptions for medication to treat mental health conditions such as schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder	80	17	3
Use techniques such as spinal injections to diagnose and treat chronic pain	79	19	2
Administer and monitor anesthesia levels and patient condition before and during surgery	71	27	3
Commit individuals for psychiatric care against their will	70	23	7

Do you agree or disagree with the following?	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
All health care professionals, including licensed medical doctors and non-medical doctors, should be required to clearly state their level of training and licensing in all advertising and marketing materials	96	4	1
Only licensed medical doctors should be able to use the title "physician"	91	7	2
I have a good understanding of the differences in the types of services that licensed medical doctors provide compared with other health care professionals who are not licensed medical doctors, such as nurse practitioners, optometrists and chiropractors	76	20	3
I have a good understanding of the differences in training and education between licensed medical doctors and other health care professionals who are not licensed medical doctors, such as nurse practitioners, optometrists and chiropractors	76	21	3
I am confident that all health care professionals, including non-medical doctors, only advertise and provide services for which they are properly trained	48	48	3
It is easy to identify who is a licensed medical doctor and who is not by reading what services they offer, their title and other licensing credentials in advertising or other marketing materials	46	51	3

	Support	Oppose	Don't know
Would you support or oppose legislation in your state to require all medical advertising materials to clearly designate the level of education, skills and training of all health care professionals promoting their services?	93	6	1