RESOLUTION

Subject: Improving Representation of Skin of Color (SoC) in Medical Education

Submitted by: Margo Nelis, Michael Nichols, Armin Razavi, and Maggie Stull (Medical Student Section)

Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, the racial distribution of the US population as of 2022 is 75.5% White only, 13.6% Black only, and 10.9% Other Race; of this population, 19.1% of individuals identify as being of Hispanic or Latino origin[1]; and

WHEREAS, the US is projected to become a majority-minority nation for the first time in 2043[2]; and

WHEREAS, the racial distribution of Kentucky as of 2022 is 86.9% White only, 8.7% Black only, 4.5% Other Race; of this population, 4.3% of individuals identify as being of Hispanic or Latino origin[1]; and

WHEREAS, in medical texts, the representation of race approximates the distribution of race in the general population, but the representation of skin tone does not approximate the distribution of skin tones in the general population[3]; and

WHEREAS, online resources typically have a greater representation of dark skin images than printed texts[4]; and

WHEREAS, the skin tones represented in medical textbooks was found to be 74.5% light, 21% medium, and 4.5% dark[3]; and

WHEREAS, a 2018 study of general medicine texts found that under 5% of images included dark skin tones in visual representations of dermatologic findings[5]; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that popular USMLE study materials, such as FirstAid and UWorld, have an underrepresentation of SoC images, specifically in dermatologic conditions[6]; and

WHEREAS, there is an underrepresentation of medium and darker skin tones in medical textbooks[4]; and

WHEREAS, the lack of representation in dermatology medical education is a major concern as numerous diseases have cutaneous manifestations that differ in darker skin tones and thus can impact patient presentation and outcomes[6]; and

WHEREAS, Black children are more often seen for the diagnosis of Atopic Dermatitis than White children[7]; and

WHEREAS, the most common melanoma subtype occurring in Black individuals is acral lentiginous melanoma which is diagnosed at a later stage in Blacks compared to non-Hispanic whites, resulting in a lower specific survival compared to cutaneous malignant[10]; and

WHEREAS, in a 2011 study, 47% of dermatologists and dermatology residents reported that their medical training (medical school/residency) was inadequate in training them on skin conditions in Black individuals[8]; and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association (AMA) encourages "comprehensive, inclusive, and equitable representation of a diverse range of skin tones in all dermatologic and other relevant medical educational resources for medical students, physicians, non-physician healthcare providers, and patients"[9]; and

WHEREAS, the biases that underrepresentation of dark skin tone images create ultimately exacerbate disparities in dermatologic outcomes between patient populations with light and dark skin tones[5]; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA encourages and supports expanding representation of darker skin tones in medical education, especially in printed texts/textbooks.

References:

1 Population Censes. United States Census Bureu. Published online July 1, 2022. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045222

2 US Census Bureau Public Information Office. "U.S. Census Bureau Projections Show a Slower Growing, Older, More Diverse Nation a Half Century from Now - Population - Newsroom - U.S. Census Bureau." United States Census Bureau, 12 Dec. 2012, www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20people%20who,the%20first%20time%20in%20 204

3 Louie P, Wilkes R. Representations of race and skin tone in medical textbook imagery.

4 *Social Science & Medicine*. 2018;202. doi:10.1016

5 Alvarado, Savannah M., and Hao Feng. "Representation of Dark Skin Images of Common Dermatologic Conditions in Educational Resources: A Cross-Sectional Analysis." Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, vol. 84, no. 5, May 2021, pp. 1427–1431, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaad.2020.06.041.

6 Kaundinya, T., & Kundu, R. V. (2021). Diversity of Skin Images in Medical Texts: Recommendations for Student Advocacy in Medical Education. *Journal of Medical Education and Curricular Development*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.1177/23821205211025855

7 Jones VA, Clark KA, Shobajo MT, Cordova A, Tsoukas MM. Skin of color representation in medical education: An analysis of popular preparatory materials used for United States Medical Licensing Examinations. J Am Acad Dermatol. 2021;85(3):773-775. doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2020.07.112

8 Yousuf Y, Yu JC. Improving Representation of Skin of Color in a Medical School Preclerkship Dermatology Curriculum. Med Sci Educ. 2021;32(1):27-30. Published 2021 Nov 30. doi:10.1007/s40670-021-01473-x

9 Buster, Kesha J., et al. "Dermatologic Health Disparities." Dermatologic Clinics, vol. 30, no. 1, 13 Aug. 2012, pp. 53–59, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.det.2011.08.002.

10 "Representation of Dermatological Pathologies in Varying Skin Tones H-295.853." AMA, 2021, policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/skin%20tone%20?uri=%2FAMADoc%2FHOD.xml-H- 295.853.xml.

11 Kai Huang, Ji Fan, Subhasis Misra,Acral Lentiginous Melanoma: Incidence and Survival in the United States, 2006-2015, an Analysis of the SEER Registry,Journal of Surgical Research,Volume 251,2020, Pages 329-339, ISSN 0022-4804, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jss.2020.02.010

KMA House of Delegates
August 2023