

In June 2025, James L. Madara, M.D., will end his historic run as AMA Chief Executive Officer/Executive Vice President, wrapping up a tenure during which he solidified the organization's long-term strategic vision, financial standing, and membership value proposition. He championed health innovation and equity and propelled the AMA into the 21st Century with a comprehensive reimaging of medical education, physician training and digital innovation.

The AMA has been on the leading edge of national- and state-level efforts to achieve important wins for patients and physicians during Dr. Madara's tenure. The AMA played critical roles defending the [Affordable Care Act](#) against repeal efforts, putting science and evidence first in the battle against [Covid-19](#), battling dangerous medical [mis- and dis-information](#), reducing [opioid](#) overdose deaths, reducing prior authorization burdens, and confronting the interference of courts and governments in the patient-physician relationship.

Under Dr. Madara's leadership and because of initiatives advanced through the strategic framework he created, the AMA achieved consistent membership growth, a combined 31% increase in total members since 2011. AMA membership now exceeds 280,000 physicians, medical students and residents – the highest level in 20 years – a testament to Dr. Madara's vision.

At Dr. Madara's direction, the AMA became a nationally recognized leader and advocate for improved health technology by elevating physician expertise and experience into the creation of new digital tools that create practice efficiencies and reduce burdens. The AMA founded the [Health2047](#) venture studio in Silicon Valley and built the expansive [Physician Innovation Network](#) online matchmaking platform, to bring physician voice and perspective to entrepreneurs that are designing and developing technologies.

Dr. Madara was critical in the push to create the [AMA Center for Health Equity](#), an important voice for racial justice and equitable policies, programs and practices in health care. The Center advances the AMA's commitment to eliminating longstanding health inequities and improving outcomes for historically marginalized communities, equipping physicians with the knowledge, tools, and resources to confront health inequities, and embedding equity across all aspects of the health system.

Dr. Madara's greatest impact and legacy at the AMA is the creation of a long-term [strategic framework](#) that allows it to nimbly address pressing health emergencies like Covid-19 without losing site of its long-term objectives. Responding to a directive from the AMA Board to bring more impact and focus to the organization's work, Dr. Madara worked to conceptualize this strategic framework whose impact continues to reverberate across health care, influencing not only the practice environment for physicians but care delivery for patients.

Since the framework's introduction in 2012, the AMA has continually refined its approach to respond to the changing environment around health care and better align the organization's efforts with its mission. This strategy underpins how the AMA achieves impact and fulfills its essential role as the physicians' powerful ally in patient care:

- **Removing obstacles that interfere with patient care**
- **Driving the future of medicine** by reimaging medical education, training and lifelong learning, and by promoting innovation to tackle the biggest challenges in health care
- **Improving the health of the nation** by leading the charge to prevent chronic disease, confront public health crises, and eliminate health inequities

This work is further empowered by three accelerators – advocacy, innovation, and health equity:

- **Advocacy** – In the nation’s capital, across states, and in the courts, advocacy serves to memorialize our progress in law and regulatory oversight.
- **Equity** –Advancing health equity is how we achieve optimal health for all.
- **Innovation** – Creating new products and solutions that help physicians and improve care delivery for patients.

Record of achievement

Through the AMA’s strategic framework, Dr. Madara, current and former members of the Board of Trustees, Senior Management Group and employees achieved much on behalf of physicians and their patients:

The AMA is removing obstacles that interfere with patient care.

The AMA is working to preserve physician autonomy to care for their patients and achieve an economically sustainable environment for physician practices. The goal is making the patient-physician relationship more valued than paperwork, helping create thriving physician practices, defending against interference in the practice of medicine, and eliminating the drivers of physician burnout.

Under Dr. Madara’s leadership, the AMA created an expansive portfolio of [research](#), [tools](#), [resources](#), and [training](#) to make care delivery more effective and efficient, freeing physicians from common busywork to dedicate more time to their patients. The AMA’s unmatched state and federal advocacy secured important victories, eliminating the Meaningful Use criteria for electronic health records (EHRs), [reforms](#) to onerous prior authorization burdens and other underlying causes of burnout, while prioritizing physician mental health and well-being.

The AMA pursued [legal actions](#) at every level of the court system to protect physician and patient autonomy and safeguard against outside interference in the practice of medicine.

The AMA is driving the future of medicine by reimagining medical education, training and lifelong learning, and by promoting innovation to tackle the biggest challenges in health care.

Dr. Madara prioritized making the AMA a major innovator and facilitator for positive change in life-long physician professional development and learning. In 2013, the AMA established the [Accelerating Change in Medical Education](#) consortium that addressed needed changes such as competency-based education and developing health system science as the third pillar of medical education. Meanwhile, the [Reimagine Residency initiative](#), launched in 2019, generated innovations across residency education including in wellbeing, equity, and coaching. Finally, platforms were created to optimize and provide ongoing and accessible educational content to practicing physicians through the [JAMA Network](#) and [AMA Ed Hub](#) platforms.

Dr. Madara’s tenure also included the establishment and expansion of the [JAMA Network](#) and the [Current Procedural Terminology](#) (CPT®) code set, the evolution of the [AMA Code of Medical Ethics](#), and the launch of the [AMA Ed Hub](#), all to better meet the needs of physicians in a dynamic, technology-centered world of medicine. During Dr. Madara’s tenure, the AMA registered and/or received over 60 trademarks for our expanding portfolio of products and services, significantly broadening and protecting our intellectual property.

The AMA is improving the health of the nation by leading the charge to prevent chronic disease, confront public health crises, and eliminate health inequities.

Under Dr. Madara's leadership the AMA focused on the impact of chronic disease on patients, our society and physician practices. By focusing first on diabetes prevention and then hypertension control that expanded to cardiovascular disease, the AMA developed effective and empirically validated programs that enhanced [blood pressure control](#) rates in large panels of patients. Working with partners, the AMA is scaling these interventions and extending them to other chronic conditions.

The AMA has also worked to confront public health crises – including the Covid-19 pandemic and firearm violence – and empowered physicians and stakeholders to advance equity across health care.

Advocacy

Dr. Madara's tenure saw the successful repeal of the draconian Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula, helping implement a MACRA model that prioritized care value over fee-for-service, and advocacy for continued Medicare reform. The AMA defended against multiple efforts to repeal or substantially change the Affordable Care Act, ensuring that patient protections were preserved and providing greater access to health coverage for millions of Americans.

Over the past decade, the AMA also helped lead a national effort to raise physician awareness about the dangers of unchecked opioid prescribing, leading to a nearly 50-percent decrease in opioid prescribing nationwide since 2012. Confronted with the alarming rise of illicit drug overdose deaths, the AMA pushed for significant policy changes that led to greater public availability of life-saving naloxone and legislation that helped remove barriers to opioid therapy for patients with pain.

Dr. Madara's steady leadership from the earliest days of the Covid-19 pandemic focused the AMA's response as a leading voice for physician needs, science- and evidence-based solutions, and in communicating about vaccine efficacy. The AMA played a key role in telehealth expansions that helped keep patients and physicians connected throughout the pandemic, developed critical resources for physicians in private practice to stay afloat during the crisis, and became a leading voice in pushing back on misinformation and disinformation that jeopardized public health.

In the wake of the pandemic, the AMA launched the [Recovery Plan for America's Physicians](#), a five-pronged approach to help physician practices and our health system recover from an unprecedented public health crisis by helping address common frustrations that drive physician burnout and by putting physician practices on more sustainable financial footing.

Equity

Dr. Madara oversaw the creation of the AMA's Center for Health Equity in 2019 to help facilitate, strengthen, and amplify the AMA's work to eliminate health inequities by addressing historical and contemporary injustices within the health care system.

The Center has advanced the AMA's strategic arcs with initiatives such as [Release the Pressure](#) that is addressing the prevalence of hypertension in Black women, by preparing faculties and medical schools to educate students in caring for diverse populations, helping create more pathways to educate and train a diverse physician workforce, and developing practice sustainability programs to better support the unique needs of minoritized physicians.

Through this work, the AMA created its first [Strategic Plan to Embed Racial Justice and Advance Health Equity](#), positioning the AMA as an important national voice on health disparities and historic injustices in medicine. The work to advance health equity includes partnerships to promote physician understanding of health equity issues ([Medical Justice in Advocacy fellowship](#), [Health Equity Resource Center on AMA Ed Hub](#), [Prioritizing Equity](#), [National Health Equity Grand Rounds](#)), as well as investments to foster equity-center [innovation](#) and to help dismantle structural inequities and improve economic vitality in Chicago ([West Side United partnership](#)).

Innovation

Dr. Madara's leadership elevated the voice of physicians and the AMA into the rapidly changing digital health and health technology environment. Under Madara's direction, the AMA became a nationally recognized leader and advocate for improved health technology by tapping into physician expertise and experience at the earliest design stages of new digital tools.

Recognizing that to be truly impactful the AMA must participate in and positively affect a digital and technology sector with growing influence on health care and physician practices, the AMA established an innovation studio, [Health 2047](#), in Silicon Valley that leverages technological, business development, and entrepreneurial talent to create emerging companies that address technology from a physician-centric perspective. To date, 9 companies have spun out of Health 2047 and investments in these companies by others is ten-fold greater than that by the AMA – even at this early point. Examples of companies created include one that allows small practices to participate in clinical trials, another that characterizes different phenotypes of obesity for bespoke therapeutic interventions.

The AMA established a partnership with the Chicago-based technology incubator [Matter](#) and launched the [Physician Innovation Network \(PIN\)](#), an online platform that connects physicians with digital health innovators and entrepreneurs to help influence technology design. To date, PIN has more than 19,000 users and 30 organizational collaborators from across the industry.

Dr. Madara's leadership played a key role in guiding physicians through the uncertainty of AI-enabled tools in health care with resources, surveys and support, and by creating [principles for AI development, deployment and use](#) to inform policy conversations with government, tech creators and industry stakeholders.

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