

Podiatric Medicine Backgrounder

Overview

Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPMs) are podiatric physicians and surgeons, also known as podiatrists, qualified by their education and training to diagnose and treat conditions affecting the foot, ankle and related structures of the leg. Podiatrists are uniquely qualified among medical professionals to treat the foot and ankle based on their education, training and experience. DPMs are licensed by the state in which they practice podiatric medicine.

Qualifications

Podiatrists are defined as physicians by the federal government and in most states. DPMs receive medical education and training comparable to medical doctors, including four years of undergraduate education, four years of graduate education at one of eight accredited podiatric medical colleges and two or three years of hospital residency training. Within the field of podiatry, practitioners can focus on many different specialty areas, including surgery, sports medicine, biomechanics, geriatrics, pediatrics, orthopedics or primary care.

Board Certification

Most practicing APMA members are board certified. Certification is considered to be an earned credential for those podiatric physicians who have achieved certain levels of skill and ability based upon completion of specific advanced training and clinical experience and examination. The American Board of Podiatric Orthopedics and Primary Podiatric Medicine (ABPOPPM) is the certifying board for the specialty areas of podiatric orthopedics and primary podiatric medicine. The American Board of Podiatric Surgery (ABPS) is the certifying board for the specialty area of foot and ankle surgery.

About APMA

Founded in 1912, the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA), headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, is the leading resource for foot and ankle health information. Currently, the organization represents a vast majority of the estimated 15,000 podiatrists in the country. In addition to the national headquarters, APMA boasts 53 state component locations throughout the United States and its territories, as well as affiliated societies.

APMA's staff, comprised of approximately 60 professionals, is dedicated to promoting foot and ankle health, member service and professional excellence. Looking toward the future, the APMA will continue to advance the growth and stability of podiatric medicine by increasing nationwide awareness of foot and ankle health through public education and legislative advocacy.

