Osteopathic Medicine in Uniform

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Overview

• The military and the practice of medicine have been partners since the beginning of time.

• During the next hour, we will explore the role the military played in the growth and development of osteopathic medicine and how osteopathic physicians served the military.
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**Agenda**

- The role of medicine in the military
- Pre commissioning (1892-1967)
- Post commissioning (1967-Now)
- The role of osteopathic physicians in the armed forces of the United States
- How the military affected Osteopathic Medicine
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“He, to defer the fate of a sire sick unto death, chose rather to know the virtues of herbs and the practice of healing, and to ply, inglorious, the silent arts”

Virgil
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Medicine and the Military

- As long as there have been warriors, there have been healers

The wounded Man, 1517
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Civil War

A.T. Still, Major, USA

21st Regiment, Kansas State Militia

Sept. 1861 – Oct. 27, 1864
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Pre-Commissioning

(1892-1966)
“One of the most telling social indicators as to the status of a profession lies in the degree of its putative importance held by government and the public in times of national crisis, most notably war.”

Norman Gevitz, PhD
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1916

- AOA voted “against discrimination by federal Army and Navy departments, and the Red Cross, against osteopathic physicians and surgeons who are qualified for service in war and preparedness work…”
- Licensed in 40 states, 13 equal to MDs
- Seven Schools
- 6,000 DOs
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1917

- Army offers to test applicants not accredited by AMA (homeopaths and osteopaths)
- 25 DOs tested; 15 qualify, but are still not eligible
- Army Surgeon General objects (Gorgas). DOs may serve as enlisted, no OPP
- Osteopathic medical colleges considered inferior (Flexner)
- "lesion osteopaths" vs. "broad osteopaths"
- Colleges change curriculum
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1917

- George Still, DO, established the American Osteopathic Relief Association – ASO, Kirksville
- Individual DOs wrote to Army and Navy Departments and draft boards and volunteered
- HR 5407 – “provide for the selection of osteopathic physicians in the medical services...” with the same rank and pay as MDs
- Critical shortages
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1918

- Public opinion campaign mounted
- “Spanish Flu” epidemic
  500,000 died
- 12-15% MD patients died
- 1% DO patients died
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1918

- Pneumonia:
  - 25-39% died MD
  - 8% died DO

- Increased public understanding and support of osteopathic medical practice and treatment
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November 11, 1918 Armistice Day
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- **1929** Curriculum similar to MDs
- **1929** MDs, DOs equal in the District of Columbia
- **1938** Congress designated DOs as physicians
- **1941** FDR – DOs could be commissioned in the United State Navy
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December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor
America goes to war in the Atlantic and the Pacific
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World War II

• DOs served as enlisted, some were commissioned but in Hospital Corps, not Medical Corps
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World War II

DOs with an MD could serve
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Still a critical shortage – DOs deferred
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Post World War II

- AOA continued pressure
- Osteopathic medical schools approved for GI Bill
- Hill-Burton Act funded building of DO hospitals
- **1946** President Truman permits commissioning of DOs in Navy
- **1947** DOs could be commissioned in the VA
- Public Health Service followed
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Korean war

• DOs were still not commissioned
• AMA strongly opposed DO commissioning
• DOs drafted - non-medical duties
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1950s and 60s

- AMA visited DO colleges
- Found some deficiencies
- **1955** recommended removal of “cultism” label, but was voted down 101-81
- AMA and AOA continued to battle
- Surgeon Generals still refused to allow DOs
- **1962** California Split
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Viet Nam

- The role of the military grew from advisors to participants
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- **1966** Congressman William Cahill (R-NJ) protested non-commissioning of DOs
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• May 3, 1966 Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara authorized commissioning of DOs in Military Medical Corps
Commissioning
(1967-Now)

- **July 13, 1966** Harry J. Walter, DO, took the oath of office and was commissioned a First Lieutenant in the United States Air Force.
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• Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons was chartered in 1976.
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Osteopathic Physicians in the Military

• Currently **over 1,000 osteopathic physicians are serving in the Uniformed Services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Public Health Service)**

• **DOs serve in every capacity, from General Medical Officer to General or Flag officer**
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- Osteopathic graduates are in all specialties and make up about 30% of the primary care workforce in the military
- Osteopathic physicians are serving on the land, the sea, under the seas and in the air throughout the world
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TODAY

DOs serve their country

WORLD WIDE
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Iraq
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Afghanistan
Osteopathic Medicine in Uniform

Wounded
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Tsunami Aid
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Katrina Relief
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How the Military Affected Osteopathic Medicine

- **World War I** – increased public recognition and curricular change to “broad osteopathic”

- **World War II** – MDs go off to war; DOs fill the gap, build practices and hospitals/post-graduate training networks. Curricular changes
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How the Military Affected Osteopathic Medicine

- **Korea and Viet Nam** – Federal recognition and funding

- **Today** – working side by side and spread of profession nationwide
Summary

• **DO graduates today can practice medicine in all 50 states and more than 40 other countries, and can serve in all branches of the military and federal government.**
As long as there are warriors, there will be healers.

DOs will continue to serve their nation in times of peace and war.
U.S. Navy Commander Richard H. Jadick, DO:
“I am an osteopathic physician. I owe everything to this profession. There are 30 Marines and sailors who owe their lives to this profession.”
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Where to Get More Information

- **The Sword and the Scalpel** – the osteopathic “war” to enter the military Medical Corps: 1916-1966 Norman Gevitz, PhD. JOAO Vol 98 No. 5 May 98

- **Association of Military Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (AMOPS)**
  http://www.amops.org
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Where to Get More Information

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Osteopathic Generals and Admirals

- Murray Goldstein, RADM USPHS (ret)
- Louis Eske, RADM MC USN (ret)
- Hugh Scott, RADM MC USN (ret)
- Ronald Blanck, LTGEN MC USA (ret) (Surgeon General of the Army)
- James Black, RADM MC USN (ret)
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Osteopathic Generals and Admirals

- Ogden Dewitt, BGEN MC USN (ret)
- Joyce Johnson, RADM USCG (ret) (Surgeon General of the Coast Guard)
- Clint Adams, RADM MC USN (ret)
- Stephen Hart, RADM MC USN
- Kermit Smith, RADM USPHS (Indian Health Service)
- Richard Jefferies, RADM MC USN
Raymond W. (Ray) Schlueter, DO, was appointed the National Surgeon General of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States in 2001.