As the premier scholarly publication of the osteopathic medical profession, JAOA—The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association encourages osteopathic physicians, faculty members and students at colleges of osteopathic medicine, and others within the healthcare professions to submit comments related to articles published in the JAOA and the mission of the osteopathic medical profession. The JAOA’s editors are particularly interested in letters that discuss recently published original research.

Letters to the editor are considered for publication in the JAOA with the understanding that they have not been published elsewhere and that they are not simultaneously under consideration by any other publication.

All accepted letters to the editor are subject to editing and abridgement. Letter writers may be asked to provide JAOA staff with photocopies of referenced material so that the references themselves and statements cited may be verified.

Readers are encouraged to prepare letters electronically in Microsoft Word (.doc) or in plain (.txt) or rich text (.rtf) format. The JAOA prefers that readers e-mail letters to jaoa@osteopathic.org. Mailed letters should be addressed to Gilbert E. D’Alonzo, Jr, DO, Editor in Chief, American Osteopathic Association, 142 E Ontario St, Chicago, IL 60611-2864.

Letter writers must include their full professional titles and affiliations, complete preferred mailing address, day and evening telephone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail address. In addition, writers are responsible for disclosing financial associations and other conflicts of interest.

Although the JAOA cannot acknowledge the receipt of letters, a JAOA staff member will notify writers whose letters have been accepted for publication. Mailed submissions and supporting materials will not be returned unless letter writers provide self-addressed, stamped envelopes with their submissions.

All osteopathic physicians who have letters published in the JAOA receive continuing medical education (CME) credit for their contributions. Writers of original letters receive 5 hours of AOA Category 1-B CME credit. Authors of published articles who respond to letters about their research receive 3 hours of Category 1-B CME credit for their responses.

Although the JAOA welcomes letters to the editor, readers should be aware that these contributions have a lower publication priority than other submissions. As a consequence, letters are published only when space allows.

Can Laypersons Be Trained to Effectively Deliver Osteopathic Manual Therapy to Patients With HIV?

To the Editor:

Drs Newberry, Bowen, Trubey, and Fernandez present an interesting article in the May issue of JAOA—The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association titled “Can Laypersons be Trained to Effectively Deliver Osteopathic Manual Therapy to Patients With HIV? A Pilot Study.” I was distressed, however, to see the statement on the cover of that JAOA edition: “Training Laypersons to Perform OMT on Patients With HIV.”

The authors carefully distinguished between osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) as performed by osteopathic physicians and osteopathic manual therapy techniques as performed by laypersons. The Glossary of Osteopathic Terminology defines OMT as the “therapeutic application of manually guided forces by an osteopathic physician (U.S. usage) to improve physiologic function and/or support homeostasis that has been altered by somatic dysfunction.” The osteopathic physician component is essential to the practice of OMT.

Interestingly, in a letter to the editor in the May JAOA, Jonathon R. Kirsch, DO, warns of the danger to the osteopathic medical profession of separating treatment techniques from proper diagnosis. Dr Kirsch refers to Irvin M. Korr, PhD, who stressed the importance of practicing OMT “as an integral part of the total interaction between physician and patient.”

Teaching laypersons to assist in a patient’s care with manual techniques may be valuable, but those techniques do not qualify as OMT. Our professional journal should be very clear on this point, especially on its cover.

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References

Editor’s Note: The JAOA apologizes for the cover statement on the May 2011 issue, “Training Laypersons to Perform OMT on Patients With HIV,” which incorrectly implied that Drs Newberry, Bowen, Trubey, and Fernandez equated osteopathic manipulative treatment with osteopathic manual therapy.