

# Podiatrists Are Physicians

BY **BARRY H. BLOCK, DPM, JD**

In late July, Jonathan Michael, DPM wrote a letter to the Editor of *PM News* in which he complained that he was denied the honor of “coating” his daughter at an osteopathic medical school white coat ceremony because they did not consider him a “physician.” This form of discrimination in not restricted to ceremonies. Even in New York State, podiatrists are prohibited by law from calling themselves “podiatric physicians.” This, despite the fact that today’s podiatric medical students take the MCATS for admission, spend 4 years of intensive medical and surgical training and need to complete at least a three-year residency to get licensed.



This archaic thinking along with outdated laws must be changed to reflect the reality of our education and training. Insurers, including Medicare, have known this for a long time, as well as most of the medical establishment and the lay public.

It’s time for a clear and simple definition of podiatrists as “physicians specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of the foot and ankle.” While individual states may choose broader definitions of what a podiatrist can treat, this simple definition should serve as the “floor” or minimum standard for every state.

Respectfully Submitted,

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