

Candidate Questions

Alan Darnowsky, State Representative House District 65

1) Ohioans receive the best health care when physicians serve as the leader in a team approach to medicine. Physicians are trained and licensed to provide comprehensive patient assessment and diagnosis and may order x-rays, chest scans, perform surgeries, and have full prescriptive authority. Physician extenders such as physician assistants, advanced practice registered nurses, physical therapists, and other providers have less education and training than physicians. However, organizations and lobbyists supporting physician extenders often pursue legislation granting access to patients that reach beyond their education and training, endangering patient care.

Would you support legislation that extends the scope of practice rights for physician extenders that would allow them to evaluate, test and treat patients without physician supervision? No

Comments: My real answer to this question is It depends on the bill. I generally agree with the team concept of providing care. However, it may need some adjustments around the edges to meet Ohio's health care in the future.

2) HB 177, which would remove the collaboration agreement between APRNs (advanced practice registered nurses) and physicians, is being considered in the House Health Committee. The bill effectively allows independent practice authority for APRNs. Unfortunately, HB 177 jeopardizes optimum care by circumventing the physician-led, team-based approach.

Would you support or oppose HB 177? Oppose

Comments: In reference to my answer above, this would seem to give too much autonomy to health care extenders. I am prepared to listen to other legislation that could adjust the relationships in the health care team.

3) Medicaid providers care for those most in need of health care services. The state's Medicaid system has endured fluctuating federal funding the last several years. Far too often, budget savings are proposed through cuts to Medicaid provider rates. These huge cuts would restrict access to health care for those who cannot seek treatment elsewhere.

As a legislator, would you support or oppose Medicaid provider rate cuts? Oppose

Comments: We have a health care crisis in Ohio with over a million of our neighbors lacking health insurance. We need to ensure that these people have access to health care and that people on Medicaid can actually use their health insurance. We need to concentrate on preventive care and healthy aging minimizing crisis visits to the emergency room. The emergency room is the most expensive and least effective way to deliver health care. Now is no time to be cutting Medicaid provider rates.

4) As our state continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, do you support the following to help slow the spread of the virus?

- Masks/facial coverings: Yes
- Physical/social distancing: Yes
- Limited indoor gatherings: Yes
- A CDC-approved vaccine: Yes

5) Generally, do you support vaccines and immunizations as a way of preventing disease? (Examples: Hepatitis B, measles/mumps/rubella, polio, etc.) Yes

Comments: Vaccinations have been shown to be effective in exerting control over infectious diseases. Anti-vaxxers are on shaky scientific ground, especially when you consider what their lack of vaccinations may mean to the population in general.

6) The Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OU-HCOM) is the state's largest medical school. OU-HCOM now graduates 1,000 osteopathic physicians every four years. Further, OU-HCOM consistently maintains the highest in-state residency program match rate of the seven medical schools in Ohio. Now more than ever, osteopathic physicians are providing and benefiting health care throughout the state.

To that end, will you protect state funding for OU-HCOM as a means to benefit health access and provide quality health care in Ohio? Yes

Comments: As long as DO's can pass the state licensing exams at equivalent rates as MD's, I will support Osteopathic Medical education. I believe that the whole body concept of Osteopathic Medicine does have something to offer patients.

7) Do you know a DO? If so, who are they and how are you connected to them?

I don't know any personally, right now. I am sure that in the past I have been treated by a DO, because I choose my doctors on how effective they are, rather than on their degree.