



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

## Fighting Misinformation and Distrust

Gautam J. Desai, DO, FACOFP *dist.*

This month's issue of *OFFP* is themed around women's health and newborn health, topics that in many ways could not be more timely.

In a time of growing misinformation in American health care, osteopathic family physicians are more essential than ever. As trusted clinicians rooted in whole-person, community-based care, DOs stand on the front lines protecting the health of newborns, women, and all Americans. That role becomes especially critical as preventable diseases such as measles resurface, threatening our most vulnerable patients.

Measles is not a benign childhood illness. It poses serious risks to infants too young to be vaccinated, pregnant women, and individuals with compromised immune systems. Conflicting messages and misinformation from government leaders and public figures have sown confusion. This erosion of trust divides patients from physicians and undermines decades of public health progress. Measles, which had been eradicated from the US since 2000, is spreading through multiple states, with over 2,000 cases recorded in 2025, including multiple deaths.

Osteopathic family physicians are uniquely positioned to counter this moment. Our training emphasizes prevention, patient education, and the understanding

that individual health is inseparable from community health. We do not treat diseases in isolation. We care for families across generations, often from birth through adulthood. When misinformation spreads, it is the family physician who must sit with anxious parents, answer difficult questions, and advocate for evidence-based care grounded in compassion and respect.

Protecting our patients requires more than clinical skill; it demands moral clarity and professional courage. As public discourse fractures, osteopathic family physicians must continue to lead with science and personalized care. Our patients are not political abstractions. They are real people who depend on us to provide clear, science-based guidance and safeguard their health, now more than ever.

Osteopathically yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gautam J. Desai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

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