

## Frequently Asked Questions About Using *The Pulse*

### **What is *The Pulse*?**

*The Pulse* is an electronic policy development and polling tool designed to capture the ideas and opinions – “the pulse” – of MMA members. MMA members can use it to request action of the MMA, react and respond to proposed policies, monitor proposals, review decisions made by the Board of Trustees, and review archived proposals.

### **Does *The Pulse* Replace In-Person Meetings?**

Not necessarily. In-person meetings and events remain a key strategy to engage members – particularly at a time when physicians are feeling more isolated from colleagues. The MMA is committed to providing members with opportunities to network and discuss critical issues. The MMA also understands it is imperative to find new methods of engaging members. *The Pulse* offers members simple, accessible, and direct means to developing and shaping MMA policy solutions.

### **What Can I Accomplish Using *The Pulse*?**

MMA members can use it for these functions:

- Submit a policy or action proposal
- Vote and provide comment on proposals prior to Board of Trustees discussion
- Offer feedback on the Board of Trustees’ decision about a proposed policy or action
- Monitor and review archived proposals

### **What Information Do I Need to Include on a Proposal?**

*The Pulse* asks for information in these key areas:

- Proposal title
- Your name or the name of the section/society/committee submitting the proposal
- A description of the problem to be addressed
- A succinct explanation of the supporting evidence for the proposal, similar to the “whereas” statements in a resolution
- The specific policy or action request of the MMA
- A description of the health equity impacts of the proposal

### **Once I Submit a Proposal, What Happens Next?**

Immediately after submission, you will receive an automated confirmation email. Within seven to 10 days, MMA staff will contact you to discuss the review process and next steps.

### **Does MMA Review All Proposals?**

Yes. MMA staff will review all proposals and work with you to clarify questions, offer feedback, review current MMA policy, and finalize the submission.

You should expect one of three outcomes from the MMA staff review:

1. Advance Proposal for Consideration by the Board of Trustees
2. Request Revisions to the Proposal: MMA staff may work with you to revise your proposal if any of the following apply:
  - Includes inappropriate or illegal content

- Includes an unclear or unactionable ask
  - Duplicates existing MMA policy
  - Mirrors an issue that has been rejected by a committee or the Board in the past two years and for which there is no change in the clinical or legal landscape to warrant reconsideration.
3. Refer Proposal to an MMA Committee: MMA staff reserves the right to refer your proposal to the Policy Council or a standing committee if it is determined that it would benefit from broader deliberation and refinement prior to member voting.

**Do All Proposals Go Directly to the MMA Board of Trustees for Deliberation?**

No. MMA reserves the right to send your proposal directly to the MMA Board of Trustees (as agendas permit) or assign it to the Policy Council or a standing committee for further deliberation.

**What Happens to My Proposal if it is Assigned to an MMA Board of Trustees Meeting?**

The decision to add your proposal to a Board of Trustees agenda triggers a 14-day window in which MMA members can review, vote, and comment on your proposal through *The Pulse*.

When the two-week voting window closes, the Board of Trustees has seven days to review comments received. On the designated board meeting date, the Board of Trustees will review the proposal along with the member votes and comments. The Board of Trustees will make one of the following decisions: (1) adopt the proposal; (2) reject the proposal; (3) edit the proposal; or (4) refer the proposal for further deliberation and information.

After the Board of Trustees takes action on your proposal, its decision will be sent to all MMA members for reaction through *The Pulse*. This final voting period will be open for seven days.

**What Happens to My Proposal if it is Assigned to the MMA Policy Council or a Standing Committee?**

As the author of the proposal, you will be invited to participate in the committee’s discussion of the issue. In most cases when a committee or the Policy Council takes action to advance the proposal, your original proposal will be replaced with the Policy Council’s or standing committee’s proposed policy language.

**What Do I Need to Understand About the Voting Process?**

*The Pulse* was designed to facilitate transparency in the MMA’s decision-making process. Members have two opportunities to vote on each proposal. The first occurs after a proposal has been assigned to a Board of Trustees meeting. This action triggers a 14-day window in which the proposal is open for MMA member vote and comment. The Board of Trustees considers voting results as part of its discussion, but it is not bound by the voting results. The second vote comes after the Board of Trustees’ action on your proposal. In this final vote, MMA members have a one-week period in which the Board of Trustees’ decision is open for MMA member vote and comment.

### **Are Policy Proposals Adopted or Rejected Based on Member-wide “Voting” on *The Pulse*?**

No. Voting via *The Pulse* is designed to gather broad member input and feedback on proposals. This input offers the Board of Trustees, the ultimate policy-setting body of the MMA, comprehensive information on where members stand on an issue. Voting results do not restrict the actions of the Board of Trustees.

### **Can MMA Staff Withdraw My Proposal?**

MMA staff, with notice to the author, may withdraw a proposal if legal or other considerations deem it necessary. You will be notified if this decision is made. Once a proposal is withdrawn, MMA staff will offer you assistance with revisions.

### **Will My Name Be Attached to the Proposal?**

Yes. For transparency’s sake, your name and all the text you share in the proposal will be visible to other members and the Board of Trustees.

### **When I Weigh In On Proposals Using *The Pulse*, Are My Comments Anonymous?**

No. All votes and comments are linked to the member’s name to facilitate transparency and help members of the board evaluate feedback.

### **I Forgot My User Name and/or Password. Now What?**

Your username for *The Pulse* is the email address you use to normally receive correspondence from the MMA. If you forgot your password, you can reset it automatically on the Home page of *The Pulse*.

### **How Do I Track My Proposal Once It is Submitted?**

You will find all proposals you have saved under “My Proposals,” where its current status will be displayed and updated as it moves forward to member voting and Board of Trustees consideration.

