

Remarks – WMA, Iceland

Ladies and gentlemen, my dear colleagues,

When I attended the General Assembly for the first time, 9 years ago in New Delhi, I was overwhelmed by the presence of so many prominent leaders of medicine from all over the world.

Since then, every time I participate in WMA events, I feel deep appreciation and admire your sapient leadership, vision and commitment to our profession, its goals and values.

Dear distinguis

I believe that it is the time for WMA to take a sophisticated, scientific and innovative look to the future and to help both physicians and patients become prepared for the huge changes in medicine over the next decade.

Are we prepared for the future?

We can, and to my mind, we should, embark on a critical venture to predict how medicine will look in 2030, what will be the role of a physician, physicians' organizations and what can be done to spur significant positive changes.

I ask to dedicate my year of presidency to this agenda.

It is our mandate as leaders, since an effective leader is one who creates an inspiring vision of the future.

Working on this agenda I believe that three kinds of scenarios are to be developed: one that reflects maximal possible changes, another one for minimal changes and the third- the middle one.

The predictable societal changes, technological changes, changes in the role of a physician, and in patients' preferences should be addressed.

The goal will be to develop a report that can help physicians and NMAs become prepared for the future.

What will be the role of a physician in 2030?

In 1903, more than one hundred years ago, the future for Thomas Edison as he predicted was "The doctor will give no medicine, but instruct his patient in the care of the human frame, in diet and in the cause and prevention of disease"

Today, we can predict that the future world of medicine will be a world of electronic health records, robots, artificial intelligence and machine learning as well as highly developed communication means.

However, moving to a future of medicine is probably like driving on a country road with its ruts, convolutions and unexpected turns rather than driving on a highway. Recent problems with the Watson supercomputer demonstrate that.

"A new study from MIT computer scientists, suggests that human doctors provide a dimension that, as yet, artificial intelligence does not". They have found that

An additional issue that cannot be separated from planning the future is the role of the physician in contemporary society.