

The AOA's electronic network

The American Osteopathic Association has taken a giant step in improving its communication system within the organizational structure, and, also, of placing an extremely large, retrievable bank of computerized medical information at our fingertips.

The AOA, in cooperation with Information Companies of America, is developing AONET, a national computer network that will provide a communications system as well as access to a variety of informational databases. AONET will be available on a subscription basis to individual osteopathic physicians and to osteopathic institutions and organizations.

AONET will contain calendars of events, information on AOA physician placement service, news items of interest to the profession, and, ultimately, an index of all osteopathic publications.

With this service, one can also access the American Medical Association's network, which includes continuing medical education courses, in a wide range of subjects, from Massachusetts General Hospital.

From the databases, AONET subscribers will be able to obtain up-to-date information on drug actions and their side effects, patient reactions to specific agents, and the clinical signs and detailed descriptions of diseases. This considerable amount of information would normally be contained in numerous volumes.

Other informational services include EMPIRES[™] (Excerpta Medica Physicians Information Retrieval and Education Service), PHYCOM[™], which provides daily medical news and comprehensive prescribing information, and additional on-line services.

GTE Med/Mail, a nationwide electronic communications service provided through AONET, enables instantaneous and direct communication among the various organizational centers of the osteopathic profession and individual D.O. subscribers. Its uses are practically limitless.

A computer terminal and printer are available from AONET. The terminal is small enough to fit into a briefcase and can be directly attached to a

telephone. AONET is also compatible for use with personal computer systems. Subscribing information may be obtained from AONET in Philadelphia at (215) 875-4650 or by writing Information Companies of America, 1500 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19112.

The development of AONET comes at a particularly opportune time. Our ability to communicate quickly and clearly with each other is imperative to the future of osteopathic medicine. AONET is worthy of your consideration.

GEORGE W. NORTHUP, D.O., FAAO

Medical kits needed on U.S. airlines

For the past 4 years, readers of JAOA will recall, we have urged the nation's airlines to carry adequate medical kits on board their aircraft, so that, when called upon in airborne emergency situations, physicians would at least have basic diagnostic and therapeutic equipment available. Other organizations and associations have also noticed the absence of medical equipment on American-based airlines. (The opposite is true on foreign airlines.) Sen. Barry Goldwater (Rep.) of Arizona and Rep. Mario Biaggi (Dem.) of New York have been in the forefront in urging Congress to adopt rules and regulations requiring airlines to carry adequate medical supplies.

Representative Biaggi introduced HR-3264 on June 9, 1983. This bill, which calls for airplanes to carry automatic fire extinguishers and have smoke detectors, was the result of the June 2 tragic in-flight lavatory fire that spread out of control on an Air Canada DC-9 jetliner and killed 23 people. Ten years ago, the National Transportation Safety Board recommended that all airplanes have smoke detectors and automatic fire extinguishers, yet this request was labeled unnecessary by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). However, on May 17, 1984, the FAA issued a proposed rule that basically called for the same fire safety improvements included in Congressman Biaggi's bill.

This topic was addressed at the annual AOA meeting in Denver, and the following resolution